



STRATEGIC PLAN 2017-2020

Directions Disability Support Services Inc.

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Background

This document seeks to formalise Directions' existing strategy into a simple strategic plan with the intention of having the plan reviewed and endorsed by the Board, and then to use it as the basis for managing future strategic activity.

Most importantly, the plan summarises a number of strategic projects that when implemented will support the strategy and the organisation's broader success; it also seeks to integrate the strategic activity already underway across the organisation and at board level.

The plan seeks to answer four simple strategic questions:

- Where are we now? (Our current situation)
- Where do we want to be? (Our long-term direction)
- How will we get there? (Our overall strategy)
- Who is doing what, by when, to get us there? (Our action plan)

An important theme of this plan is balance: balancing "business as usual" with strategic activity; balancing a short-term vs. longer-term focus; and balancing a "portfolio" of client services with varying degrees of growth potential and risk.

OUR LONG TERM DIRECTION (“Where Do We Want To Be?”)

Our Vision for the People We Support

Our vision for the people we support is for them to:

- Have a fulfilled life - with healthy relationships, friendships and purpose
- Be part of an inclusive community, which accepts people as they are and looks beyond disability
- Be empowered to make choices and have control over how they live: to decide not only what is important *for* them, but what is important *to* them

Our Vision for the Organisation

Our long-term vision for Directions is:

- To have a reputation for quality which inspires, and shows others what is possible for people with disabilities
- To grow to serve people across Western Australia, while keeping our unique, values-based approach
- To recruit, develop and retain the best people in the sector, because they are the source of the value we provide to the people we support
- To build strong links with government and the communities in which we operate

Our Core Values

Our core values define who we are as an organisation, what we believe in and what makes us unique. They also describe what we expect from our team. All of us at Directions have agreed to uphold these values (and the behaviours they represent, which are detailed separately), and to be held accountable for doing so:

- *Working Together*: How well we work together is directly linked to how well we can support the people we work with.
- *Being Creative and Flexible*: People who are creative and flexible thrive at Directions.
- *Having Energy and Enthusiasm*: The energy and enthusiasm of our team is what makes Directions a special place to work.
- *Being Compassionate*: Compassion for the people we support and for our colleagues is at the heart of how we work together.
- *Making a Difference*: We are united in our desire to improve people’s lives and make a difference in our community.
- *Being Honest*: Trust is fundamental to our work, and we build trust through being honest with each other.

Our Goals for 2022

We have set four strategic goals for 2022:

1. Maintain strong relationships with the people and families we support
2. A passionate, skilled and productive team where everyone feels valued and engaged
3. Thriving linkages and partnerships with the communities in which we work
4. Grow to approximately \$12m revenue – while being financially sustainable, appropriately resourced and maintaining service quality

OUR CURRENT POSITION (“Where Are We Now?”)

Current Key Challenges, Opportunities & Risks

A snapshot of the organisation’s current position revealed the following challenges and opportunities:

- Directions is a values-based and relationships-based organisation – which extends to the organisation’s culture and individualised, person-centric working practices.
- The organisation has experienced significant growth, having doubled in size in the last 2 years. This has included a merger with a smaller group-focused organisation, and the recent launch of therapy services (albeit on a modest scale).
- This growth has taken place during major external change: most significantly the introduction of individualised funding and the NDIS (and with the ongoing uncertainty of Commonwealth involvement, with potential impact on funding for activity seen as “recreational”).
- The expectations of the people we support and their families have also changed alongside (or in response to) this.
- There may be challenges in seeking to deliver a ‘premium’ quality service to the people we support, while remaining within the constraints of the types and rates of NDIS funding; we will address this if and when required.
- At the same time, there has been significant internal change with staff turnover, a restructure to a lean management approach, and changes to industrial relations arrangements.
- Addressing the strategic challenge of approaching the “dangerous middle ground” in organisational size, that is, being large enough to achieve economies of scale, but not so large that the individualised and relationship focus of the organisation is diluted or lost.

OUR STRATEGY (“How Will We Get There?)

Summary of Proposed Strategy

In light of our current position, how will we achieve our goals for 2022? Overall, our strategy for the next several years is to:

- Continue an overall growth strategy while preserving what makes us unique: our relationships, and our service model of standing alongside the people we support, supporting their choices, and enable them to achieve their goals.
- Broaden our geographic focus:
- From a focus on the Southern/eastern metropolitan area for individual supports (south to Pinjarra and north to Butler)
- Broader metropolitan area for group activities, and
- Opportunistic growth outside of Perth (eg large country centres)
- Build a broader portfolio of services that enhance what we currently do, balancing the needs of the people we support with funding availability and viability.
- Pursue a premium market position based on our quality of service and depth of relationships.

Our “Playing Field”

In pursuing this strategy, the organisation has decided its strategic “playing field” is:

- Western Australia
- People with disabilities, with a focus on (but not limited to) supporting late teens and young adults
- Four service areas:
- Individualised/customised services
- 24-hour/365-day support through host family services
- Therapy services
- Group services: including peer to peer learning
- Directions has actively chosen not to enter the group homes or day centres areas.

Strategy Pillars

Our strategy has five pillars which are simply focus areas which will help us achieve our goals:

1. Strong Relationships
2. Passionate Team
3. Grow Therapy Services
4. Grow Group Services
5. Enabling Success

Projects that will support the achievement of these goals have been identified and a business plan created.