



VISION AUSTRALIA

STRATEGIC PLAN 2014 – 2018

Supporting people who are blind or have low vision to live the life they choose.



**vision
australia**

blindness and low vision services

THE PROMISE

This Strategic Plan sets a clear new direction for Vision Australia with client choice and control central to the organisation's purpose. The reason Vision Australia exists will not change. The way we do things is changing to reflect the changing world around us.

This change is a constant. People are living longer; superfast technological developments can help us engage with clients in a way that only a decade ago we could not have imagined; the policy environment is shifting rapidly; and people want to exercise choice about how they live their lives.

Over the past two years Vision Australia has questioned how we work. We have listened to the views of more than 550 people - clients, staff, Board, volunteers and donors - in an unprecedented listening exercise across 14 of our 28 locations.

This plan shifts us from an institutionalised way of doing things, to a results-driven, client directed approach. This is our **New Way**, delivering services more effectively and giving choice to the client.

This Strategic Plan has been developed by you. We will continue as we started - working together. We'll keep listening, being clear about what we do, and building robust relationships with a firm focus on the client. The Plan is our promise for the future.

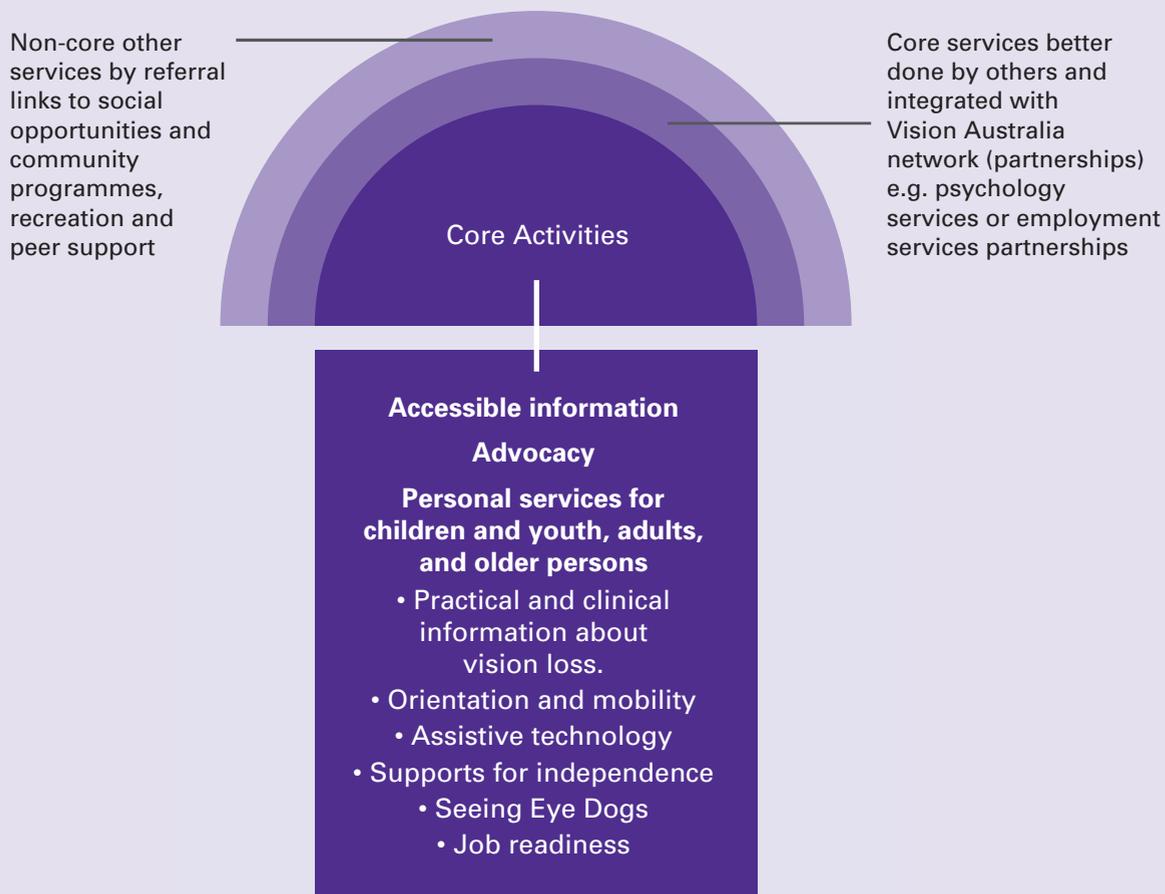
TEN GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. Focus on the client.
2. Communicate clearly.
3. Work together for the best result.
4. Fairness and equity.
5. Strong national voice on blindness and low vision.
6. Flexibility and responsibility.
7. Learn and develop constantly.
8. Processes and systems fit the purpose.
9. Financial management is transparent.
10. Measure for success.



INTRODUCING OUR NEW WAY

Our new service model reflects consumer choice and control over personalised services and focusses on client results. We deliver services in a **New Way**, more effectively and with the whole person in mind. The **New Way** is across multiple delivery channels: online, over the phone, in home, in client convenient locations.



Our specialist blindness and low vision services have three strong core elements:

- **Accessible information** - Access to increasing amounts of information, faster, and in the client's format of choice.
- **Advocacy** - Advocating for social reform, particularly the removal of barriers to participation in education and employment.
- **Personalised services** - Organised around three recognised life stage segments to provide professional support and training for clients and their family and close networks.

OUR CLIENTS

Vision Australia offers a lifetime of independence to people who are blind or have low vision.



Older adults (65+)

Seventy per cent of Vision Australia's clients at June 2013 were in the 65 years plus age group. The **New Way** offers a streamlined service for this age group which includes in-home support and improved response times. This acknowledges the need to address issues early with older clients, as much as it recognises that people of all ages want to fully participate in life.



Adults

The **New Way** for adult clients focuses on social and economic inclusion opportunities such as job and education readiness, assistive technology training and crisis intervention. Providing support in different settings, the use of technology in service provision, and partnerships will develop these services in a way that better meets client needs.



Children

Our **New Way** for children and their families means greater use of technology, convenient service settings including in-home advice and assistance, an information centre offering practical material on vision loss, peer support and partnerships with other providers as well as a close working relationship with the education sector.

CORE SERVICE: PERSONALISED SERVICES

Children (0 – 18 years). Supporting child/youth and family goal achievement

Specialist child, youth, school age disability, education and other health supports:

- a. mobility services;
 - b. physio, occupational, speech therapies;
 - c. counselling (including family);
 - d. early education, such as introduction to Braille and adaptive technology training;
 - e. school age Braille and adaptive technology and equipment supports;
 - f. readiness for school and further education, including interaction with peers;
 - g. daily living and recreational information in formats of choice; and
 - h. referrals, working with and connection to other services
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Adult (19 – 65 years). Supporting individual goal achievement

Specialist supports for:

- a. readiness for chosen education opportunities;
 - b. job readiness and employment opportunities;
 - c. mobility services (including Seeing Eye Dogs);
 - d. occupational therapy;
 - e. community and in-home independence;
 - f. adaptive equipment and technology training;
 - g. daily living and recreational information in format of choice; and
 - h. referrals, working with and connection to other services, such as counselling, social, and peer engagement.
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Older adults (65+ years). Supporting individual goal achievement

Specialist supports for:

- a. in-home independence; mobility services (including Seeing Eye Dogs);
- b. adaptive equipment and technology training;
- c. connection to community-based supports;
- d. daily living and recreational information in format of choice; and
- e. referrals, working with and connection to other services, such as counselling, social, and peer engagement.

CORE SERVICE: ACCESSIBLE INFORMATION

Vision Australia's ability and expertise in providing print material in accessible formats is sought by clients, government bodies, businesses and the community. People who are blind or have low vision experience barriers accessing material for daily living, education, employment and leisure and recreation. We will:

- Provide all service related information in the client's preferred format;
- Continue to build the i-access[®] service and collection of accessible digital DAISY audio and e-text, and soft copy Braille content;
- Facilitate access to daily living material including appliance manuals, personal correspondence and documents through a Personal Information Provision service;
- Implement new digital delivery channels to give clients more choice over the content they access and when and how they access it;
- Support clients to gain the skills to independently access alternative format material and assist those clients who lack the knowledge or means to adopt online technologies to transition to our online service;
- Create awareness of print disability through relationship building and consultancy services to encourage government entities and businesses to be enablers of accessibility; and
- Provide high value outcomes for people who are blind or have low vision by making accessible government and business information that is useful, meaningful and valued by the community.

CORE SERVICE: ADVOCACY

Our advocacy role will strengthen across the organisation. We will work closely with other organisations to focus on systemic advocacy seeking big change in four key policy areas: access to information, education; employment and meaningful opportunities for older (65+) people. We will:

- Build the capacity and skills (communications, influencing and lobbying) of clients and client representatives as self-advocates on issues important to them. Together we will create a critical mass of effective lobbyists and campaigners.
- Work with the three levels of government, taking an evidence-based, solutions focussed approach. Our effort will be co-ordinated across Vision Australia, oversighting government contracts; optimising influence on policy; finding new avenues of funding and building fee-for-service opportunities for our specialist advice.
- Work closely with our community and the sector to maximise benefits and impact. We will prioritise our involvements, representation, collaborations and networking to ensure we are effective and influential.

VISION AUSTRALIA'S PRIORITY OBJECTIVES

Objective 1 - Introduce new personalised services reflecting individual goals and choice

How we'll do this

- a. Build and introduce service changes through:
 - Innovative delivery channels
 - Convenient locations
 - Purposeful partnerships
 - Client accessible information
- b. Prepare and educate clients and their families to make informed services choices
- c. Develop our role as the provider of choice for service coordination, and as a credible information source
- d. Measure performance through clients achieving goals and outcomes

Success measures

- ✓ Clients achieve goals
- ✓ Positive client experience
- ✓ Growth in referrals and clients
- ✓ Increased awareness of what we do with referrers, clients and potential clients
- ✓ High level awareness of where to get blind and low vision information

Objective 2

- Market our personalised services so referrers and clients know exactly what we do

How we'll do this

- a. Market our personalised services to clients, referrers, the health sector, and communities
- b. Develop deeper relationships with institutional and corporate donors

Success measures

- ✓ Increased level of referrals
- ✓ Service innovations funded to meet the specialist needs of the blindness and low vision community
- ✓ Reputation as "go to" provider improves

Objective 3 - Create new business systems and processes so staff can provide great service

How we'll do this

- a. Ensure administrative and business processes are designed for effective client outcomes
- b. Front line services generate income with transparent allocation and management of funds for services and back office costs
- c. Integrate data management for effective client records and a single system of workflow across all systems
- d. Implement performance measurement across all functions of the organisation and use this to drive improvement and innovation
- e. Regularly benchmark services against comparable organisations to identify areas of performance improvement

Success measures

- ✓ Positive financial performance
- ✓ Greater understanding of the client and all their relationships
- ✓ Back office costs are less than 20% of total costs

Objective 4 - Advocate for social reform using evidence and a human rights approach

How we'll do this	Success measures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Identify systemic approaches to advocacy for the greatest gain to the most people who are blind or low vision, including working with our sector partners and the broader disability community. b. Monitor political environment and develop our relationships with government using a solutions approach to big issues such as lack of employment opportunities c. Build on existing consultative and representative structures to develop clients as their own advocates d. Develop research partnership to support service delivery and provides opportunities for staff professional development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ High level awareness of what we do ✓ Improved social, educative and job participation ✓ A more potent advocacy force ✓ Greater use of evidence to influence public policy

Objective 5

- Shift leadership and workforce culture to client focus, integrity, professionalism, respect

How we'll do this	Success measures
<p>On Values:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Instil a client focus and client as decision maker through a systematic professional development programme b. Ensure all roles and functions have a clear line of sight to achievement of our new strategic direction c. Create a flexible, positive staff environment the centre of which is "Freedom Within Boundaries" (discretionary decision-making within clearly defined boundaries) <p>On Responsibility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> d. Invest in the skills and professional development of all staff, particularly frontline specialist clinical staff e. Build high levels of performance, trust and engagement through a leadership development program f. Implement a governance structure with oversight of our specialist services, including quality, maintenance of professional standards, clinical professional development, clinical registration and accreditation, statutory obligations and service delivery risk management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Improved cross-functional collaboration to achieve objectives ✓ Organisational leaders demonstrate integrity, sound judgement ✓ Staff report high levels of purpose, engagement with the client ✓ Positive performance against key workforce indicators ✓ Higher professional standards