Victorian Autism Plan update
May 2018

What is the Victorian Autism Plan?

Work is progressing on the Victorian Autism Plan.
The Victorian Autism Plan is being developed in response to a Parliamentary Inquiry <www.parliament.vic.gov.au/fcdc/inquiries/article/2588> into services for autistic people.

The Inquiry report highlighted the challenges faced by autistic people and their families in Victoria, and made 101 recommendations to improve the supports, services and inclusion of autistic people.

Drafting the plan

The Victorian Government is now preparing the plan, informed by advice from autistic people, their families and supporters, autism organisations and other relevant individuals and organisations.

This includes advice from the Victorian Autism Plan Advisory Group, which is made up of representatives from:

- Amaze
- Aspergers Victoria
- Association for Children with a Disability
- Autism Family Support Association
- I CAN Network
- Victorian Advocacy League for Individuals with Disability (VALID)
- Victorian Disability Advisory Council
- National Disability Services
- Spectrum Intersections
- Yellow Ladybugs.

Consultation

The Victorian Government held a series of consultation workshops during February, March and April on topics including diagnosis, education, health and mental health, needs of autistic adults, and rural and regional issues.

Over 100 people attended these workshops, including autistic people, parents and carers of autistic people, organisations supporting autistic Victorians and representatives from the early years, education, health, employment, housing, justice and disability sectors.

Key issues raised by participants across the workshops included:

- the importance of engaging people with lived experience of autism in the planning and delivery of all services for autistic people
• the need to treat each autistic person as an individual, requiring personalised support and services at all stages of their life
• the importance of early diagnosis and intervention
• ensuring that there is access to information on services and support that is appropriate in content and style for autistic people and their carers at all stages of life
• increasing the understanding and capability of workforces that interact with autistic people
• ensuring that services provided to autistic people are integrated to meet their needs
• improving data collection on services needed by autistic people, and the performance of those services
• increasing community understanding of the needs of autistic people.

An online survey was also made available through Advisory Group organisations so that more people in the autism community could inform the plan development. A total of 787 people took part in the survey, including 116 autistic Victorians and 598 family members or carers. Regional Victoria was well-represented in the survey – just under one in four people who took part were from regional areas.

In addition, targeted consultation meetings have been held to ensure that the Victorian Autism Plan reflects the views of autistic women and girls, autistic LGBTI people, Aboriginal people with autism, and culturally diverse people with autism.

What happens next?
The Victorian Government is now considering all the feedback from the workshops, meetings and online survey, and preparing the Victorian Autism Plan. Stakeholders will be updated on progress of the plan.

How can I find out more?
If you have any questions about the Autism Plan, please email the Victorian Autism Plan project team <vic@victorianautismplan@dhhs.vic.gov.au>

To receive this publication in an accessible format phone 9096 0344, using the National Relay Service 13 36 77 if required, or email the Victorian Autism Plan project team <victorianautismplan@dhhs.vic.gov.au>

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