

**DOWN SYNDROME NSW
INTERIM STRATEGIC PLAN 2007-2008**

PREAMBLE

At the time of writing (October 2007) Down Syndrome NSW is in the process of preparing a five year Strategic Plan to set the purpose and direction of the organisation for the future.

The Management Committee of DSA NSW believes it is vital that this process is conducted carefully and comprehensively so that all of our stakeholders have the opportunity to participate fully in determining the future of the organisation. This will involve extensive consultation through discussions, surveys and focus groups with staff, with people with Down Syndrome, their parents, carers and families, and with the many external stakeholders who have an impact and an influence on our activities.

This inevitably means that the task will take some time to complete as we lack the internal infrastructure for administration and planning processes to enable us to move this type of project ahead quickly. The Management Committee has developed an Interim Strategic Plan for the period 2007-2008. The purpose of this plan is to bridge the gap until we develop, in conjunction with our many stakeholders, a comprehensive blueprint for the future. This plan will meet our immediate needs to have a plan in place to meet various requirements, including those of the Department of Ageing, Disability and Homecare (DADHC).

This Interim Strategic Plan was developed by the Committee on 20 September 2007.

PHILOSOPHY, VISION AND MISSION

Down Syndrome NSW is an independent, registered charity established and run by parents. The work of Down Syndrome NSW depends on the generosity of its members and the general public in supporting its fundraising efforts and through donations. Annual funding from the State Government through the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care assists in meeting administrative costs.

*The **Aim** of Down Syndrome NSW is to encourage people with Down syndrome to fulfil their potential for successful and happy lives, in a society which knows their abilities and is supportive of their needs.*

*The **Work** of Down Syndrome NSW is to represent the interests and respond to the needs of people with Down syndrome in the major aspects of their lives; as members of the family, in their individual pursuits, and as members of the community.*

*The **Vision** of Down Syndrome NSW is for all people with Down syndrome to reach their full potential as individuals and citizens within the wider community in NSW and Australia.*

*The **Mission** of Down Syndrome NSW is to support and promote the interests of all people with Down syndrome, their families and carers in NSW.*

We will work to improve the quality of life of people with Down syndrome by empowering and enabling our membership and supporters through:

- Contact support for families and carers of individuals of all ages with Down syndrome.*
- Generating and disseminating information to our membership, professionals and the community at large.*
- Creating and promoting innovative programmes which further the development of individuals with Down syndrome.*
- Raising positive public awareness about Down syndrome.*
- Promoting equal rights for people with Down syndrome both individually and collectively.*
- Contributing to the shaping of Government policy and service provision.*
- Representing the interest of our constituency in local state and national forums.*
- Encouraging and assisting research initiatives into issues relating to Down syndrome.*
- Raising funds for the above purposes.*

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The activities of Down Syndrome NSW are underpinned by a number of guiding principles:

Support

We recognise above all that our stakeholders want from us a very high level of support to help them cope with what are often difficult situations. We must always be there to provide support to the maximum possible level – using the very best skills and techniques available.

Excellence

We must excel in everything that we do in all our relationships and dealings with all of our stakeholders.

Accountability

We must be accountable as an organisation and our Management Committee and staff must have the skills, training and the capacity to be accountable to our stakeholders.

Innovation

We must always strive to be creative to ensure that we are the leaders in the way we support and interact with our stakeholders.

Governance

We must ensure that we govern the organisation effectively and with integrity, utilising the skills and experience of the widest possible range of stakeholders, and that our actions are always in the best interests of our stakeholders.

People

We recognise the skills and experience of our staff and our volunteers and must always ensure that they are valued and rewarded appropriately for the commitment they make to the success of the organisation.

KEY OBJECTIVES

1 SERVICES AND SUPPORT

Ensure that we provide the best and most relevant services to our stakeholders in the most effective manner.

2 SUSTAINABILITY

Develop funding models that ensure that we become and remain self-sufficient so that we can meet the needs of existing and future generations of stakeholders. Develop an effective mix of government, corporate and public funding and sponsorship.

3 INNOVATION

Develop innovative programs and services that meet the real needs of people with Down syndrome, their parents, carers and families. Ensure that we are aware of and bring to Australia those developments that are relevant to our communities.

4 PROFILE

Ensure that we become highly visible and effective activists for our stakeholders and utilise all contemporary and developing means to increase our profile within the community.

5 GOVERNANCE

Develop the highest possible standards of accountability and integrity within our organisation and ensure that the Management Committee and internal management processes use the principles of best practice.

6 MANAGEMENT

Ensure that internal management processes are best practice and recognise the value, skills and experience of the staff. Ensure that issues of compliance and accountability are given priority and that we meet all the requirements of funding and governing bodies.

OBJECTIVES , OUTCOMES AND STRATEGIES

OBJECTIVE 1: SERVICES AND SUPPORT

OUTCOME

Our services and support are equal to the best available, meet the needs of our stakeholders, reflect world's best practice and utilise contemporary tools and information.

STRATEGIES

- Ensure that our people delivering programs and services are well trained, highly motivated and effectively supported – and are committed to our policy of excellence in service delivery.
- Ensure through our own internal analysis and research that we are abreast of research and innovation locally and internationally and are able to bring this to our stakeholders.
- Provide our staff with Professional Development opportunities to ensure that they are kept up to date with contemporary developments and are aware of best practice in the delivery of programs and services.
- Ensure that new parents have immediate access to relevant and contemporary material. In particular, recognise the needs of those in rural and regional areas and to expand our services to them .
- Ensure that the Information Services we provide are consistent with world's best practice and keep stakeholders up to date with contemporary practices locally and internationally.
- Implement measures to ensure that the CALD community is able to take full advantage of our services and those of the community generally.

OBJECTIVE 2: SUSTAINABILITY

OUTCOME

We are largely self sufficient and have adequate resources to provide core services without undue government support. We are developing a funding base that will enable us to invest in new programs and provide increasing levels of services to our stakeholders.

STRATEGIES

- Pursue additional government funding for targeted programs and projects – and those projects which can be developed as innovative and may not necessarily be funded under current guidelines.
- Develop our established suite of Major Events (Buddy Walk and Tea for 321) and Fundraising Campaigns (Christmas Appeal, Mid-year appeal). Develop programs to encourage individual donations, planned giving and workplace giving.
- Develop a plan for sponsorships from the corporate sector for specific programs and events such as the UP! Club, Tea for 321, Buddy Walk. Build sustainable partnerships with the corporate sector.
- Continue to develop an active grant application program to support both existing and new projects. Pursue philanthropic funding opportunities. Develop a bequests program to provide for the future development of the organisation.
- Conduct a review of our Membership. Develop a new concept of membership and conduct a program to increase membership substantially during the next few years.

OBJECTIVE 3: INNOVATION

OUTCOME

We are able to identify and implement new programs that add value to our range of services. We embrace technology and use the best available tools to improve our services to our stakeholders. We are able to identify trends in research and technology and use these to plan for the future.

STRATEGIES

- Develop our database so that it provides a central and comprehensive tool for the management of all of our membership activities, donations and events – and provides appropriate administrative support and management information.
- Continue to develop the website so that it is the primary tool for our stakeholders in terms of information, support and training.
- Be a leader in the use of technology to engage and inform our stakeholders and provide a range of services and information electronically.
- Work closely with sister organisations (and as appropriate develop formal ties) throughout the world to ensure that we are at the forefront of providing contemporary information and techniques to our stakeholders.

OBJECTIVE 4: PROFILE

OUTCOME

We are a highly visible organisation which is seen as a leader in providing services and leading change. We are active in the human services sector and contribute to the wider debate on issues of health and disability. We attract support through our position as industry leader.

STRATEGIES

- Continue to develop our website and our e-information and e-marketing capacity to engage and inform a wide range of stakeholders. Extend the range and depth of coverage of our e-newsletters.
- Take a more active role in engaging the media at all levels.
- Engage government in our activities to ensure their knowledge and understanding of our work – and to ensure that they see us as a reliable and constructive community partner.
- Work with NCOSS and similar agencies to promote our work and that of the sector. Participate in industry forums and conferences at a range of levels.
- Take a leading role in providing the community with information about Down Syndrome and issues of intellectual disability.

OBJECTIVE 5: GOVERNANCE

OUTCOME

Our governance standards reflect best practice and set benchmarks for the sector. The Management Committee is committed and effective and provides leadership for the organisation and for the community it serves.

STRATEGIES

- Continue to develop and implement a model of governance that incorporates best practice and draws on the wide range of contemporary material available
- Continue to develop and implement an organisational structure that meets the needs of the organisation.
- Provide governance training to the Management Committee and ensure that elected Officers have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities.
- Conduct an ongoing program of recruitment for the Management Committee so that it continues to be committed and enthusiastic – and has an appropriate mix of experience and skills.

OBJECTIVE 6: MANAGEMENT

OUTCOME

Our professional environment provides services of excellence to the community. We value our staff and provide them with a holistic and caring environment in which they are well trained, motivated and rewarded. Our management activities reflect best practice and we meet the expectations of funding bodies.

STRATEGIES

- Ensure that the organisation provides for staff a supportive and holistic environment that helps them achieve their personal workplace goals and retain high levels of professionalism and commitment. Ensure that we have the practical means to enable staff to do their jobs efficiently and effectively.
- Ensure that the wages and working conditions for all staff are consistent with industry best practice and are reflective of their commitment to the organisation. Continue the development of Staff Appraisal systems and put in place Position Descriptions and Contracts for all staff.
- Continue to develop a comprehensive set of Policies to ensure that we meet all of the requirements of funding bodies and regulatory bodies. Meet the timelines for the implementation of all the requirements of the DADHC IMF Review.
- Continue to develop procedures to ensure that we meet all of the requirements – in a timely manner – of funding bodies and regulatory authorities. Continue to develop robust accounting policies and procedures to ensure that our financial reports are accurate and effective.