



Strategic Plan

January 2007 - June 2009

Introduction

We are pleased to present the inaugural Strategic Plan for UnitingCare West, covering the period January 2007 to June 2009.

The Plan represents a further significant step forward in the formation of UnitingCare West as a new community services agency of the Uniting Church in Western Australia seeking to give expression to the Church's ministry of service.

It presents a far-reaching vision of "justice, hope and opportunity for all" and positions us to deliver our vision "to support, serve and empower people most in need". One of the most important steps is the strategy whereby "we will engage with all our staff and volunteers to develop the future direction of our programs and services, creatively bringing together their knowledge, expertise and passion to make a difference". The Plan is therefore not prescriptive, but a way of working together to shape our new agency.

The Plan is the culmination of many months of reflection, discernment and discussion by members of the Board, staff and volunteers of UnitingCare West to articulate the key directions for UnitingCare West in the immediate future. Consultation has also occurred with various external stakeholders.

It builds on and seeks to give further expression to the Aspirational Statement that was adopted for UnitingCare West by the Interim Board in October 2005 and which formed one of a number of key foundational documents for the new agency of UnitingCare West.

The Plan's overall purpose is to set out a shared understanding of what we want to achieve in guiding the growth and development of UnitingCare West in its early stages of formation, together with strategies to help us achieve these goals.

It will enable UnitingCare West to better predict, adapt and respond to a changing environment and to community needs.

The Plan will form the basis for the development of a comprehensive and integrated performance management system for UnitingCare West. This will encompass regular performance management planning and reporting at all operational levels across the agency as they relate to specific strategies and operational directions.

We invite members of the Board, staff and volunteers to work closely together to implement and embed the Plan throughout UnitingCare West.

We have pleasure in commending this Strategic Plan to you.



Revd Des Cousins

Chair of Board

February 2007



Chris Hall

Chief Executive Officer



Our Vision

Justice, hope and opportunity for all.



Our Mission

To support, serve and empower people most in need.



Our Values

As part of the life and mission of the Uniting Church in Australia in pursuit of justice, hope and opportunity for all, we at UnitingCare West will act with:

- Empathy
- Inclusiveness
- Respect
- Integrity
- Commitment

Our Journey

We are an integral part of the Uniting Church in Australia working for a transformation of humanity and the reconciliation of all creation.

As a pilgrim people of vision and hope, we are a learning, growing, challenging, transformative community, open to change and always ready to discern where we can best support, serve and empower people most in need.

Key steps in the journey towards our vision will be to:

- Work together to build UnitingCare West as a new agency, including taking a lead role in the community services sector.
- Develop, value and equip our staff and volunteers.
- Build a workplace based on shared values and a strong sense of belonging.
- Develop a culture of innovation based on research, assessed need and sound models of practice.
- Direct our resources to go where others are not prepared or able to go.
- Integrate and coordinate our services to meet the physical, emotional, spiritual and social needs of individuals, families and communities.
- Strengthen our advocacy role, speaking out against injustice and oppression.
- Create collaborative relationships with Uniting Church congregations, agencies and schools, other service providers, government and industry.
- Create new ways of engaging with our service users and program participants, valuing their input, feedback and participation in our services.

Our Identity

UnitingCare West is a community services agency of the Uniting Church.

Our organisation is founded on Christian principles and values and the particular Christian ethos of the Uniting Church in Australia.

UnitingCare West was formed on 1st July 2006 as a result of the merger of some or all of the programs and services of eight Uniting Church agencies and parish missions. The merger increased our capacity to work together to deliver a diverse range of interrelated community services, programs and social justice initiatives, focusing on those people most in need.

As at January 2007, we are delivering 25 programs in 23 locations covering the Synod of Western Australia (the geographic area south of Broome). Our aim is to locate our services where people most in need can easily access them.

The agencies that formed UnitingCare West have been serving the community of Western Australia since 1830 and touch the lives of approximately 30,000 families and individuals each year.

Taking Action

We will deliver the strategic plan through:

- **Service and Program Development**
- **Advocacy and Social Justice**
- **People Development**
- **Profile Development**
- **Organisation Development**

Service and Program Development

Our Goal

To go where others are not prepared or able to go, understanding and fully responding to people most in need.

Our Strategies

Engage with all our staff and volunteers to develop the future direction for our programs and services, creatively bringing together their knowledge, expertise and passion to make a difference.

Key steps will be to work together to:

- Identify opportunities in the growth and delivery of each program and service.
- Increase staff knowledge and understanding of our programs and services.
- Build strong relationships and connections between our programs and services to fully address client* needs.
- Truly engage with our clients, valuing their input, feedback and participation.
- Understand gaps in services to people most in need and find groundbreaking ways to make a difference.

Develop an implementation strategy for the future direction that fosters a culture of innovation and collective action, united by our vision, mission and values.

Introduce theoretical rigour in our programs and services, focusing on assessed need and sound models of practice.

Our Performance Assessment

We will use a variety of qualitative and quantitative information to assess our performance.

Examples include:

- Feedback from our clients about our effectiveness in understanding and responding to their needs.
- The extent to which we go where others are not prepared or able to go.

** The term “client” includes service users and program participants.*

Advocacy and Social Justice

Our Goal

To take a leading role in speaking out against injustice and oppression, influencing social policy and advocating for social change.

Our Strategies

Increase the impact of our advocacy role by:

- Strengthening alliances with UnitingCare Australia, Uniting Church Social Justice Unit and congregations, and other organisations.
- Developing the evidence base and stories (in alliance with research and education bodies).
- Encouraging governments to recognise that community service providers have a key role in advocacy and social justice.
- Creating dialogue to change community attitudes and fears that foster an unjust society.

Engage our staff in advocacy and social justice by:

- Communicating social justice initiatives to staff and providing opportunities for input, especially identification of emerging social issues.
- Ensuring ethical practice across our organisation.

Our Performance Assessment

We will use a variety of qualitative and quantitative information to assess our performance.

Examples include:

- Changes achieved in social policy.
- Level of media coverage and other exposure for our advocacy and social justice role.
- Evidence of ethical practice.

People Development

Our Goal

To be a leading agency in people development, valuing our staff and volunteers as our greatest resource.

Our Strategies

Further develop professional relationships amongst our staff and volunteers by:

- Introducing cross-agency team-building initiatives, training programs and groups to progress specific strategies.

Develop a satisfying and motivating working environment by:

- Implementing training and development plans for all staff, volunteers and Board members aligned to our vision and mission.
- Fostering leadership and a team environment at all levels of the organisation.
- Assisting staff to achieve a healthy balance between work and family life.
- Ensuring there is appropriate information sharing across staff, volunteers and Board members.
- Enhancing supervision (managerial and practice), team meetings and performance review and development.
- Developing new industrial arrangements in collaboration with staff.

Our Performance Assessment

We will use a variety of qualitative and quantitative information to assess our performance.

Examples include:

- The extent to which our staff and volunteers find professional satisfaction in their work.
- Capacity to attract and retain staff and volunteers.

Profile Development

Our Goal

To be recognised as an inspirational leader in community services and programs, working with people most in need and creating justice, hope and opportunity.

Our Strategies

Develop UnitingCare West's brand, consistent with the national UnitingCare brand development strategy, and introduce and commit to common use of our brand across all programs and services.

Further develop our profile by:

- Sharing our best practice in the professional community through training programs, conferences and articles in professional journals.
- Strengthening our networks with the media.
- Celebrating our achievements in the public arena.
- Participating in public debate and serving on public committees.
- Partnering and collaborating with all relevant sections of the community.
- Building networks with congregations, schools and other agencies of the Uniting Church.

Our Performance Assessment

We will use a variety of qualitative and quantitative information to assess our performance.

Examples include:

- Increased funding and revenue generation.
- Increased positive representation in the media.
- Increase in sponsors, donors, partners, volunteers and people offering to be Board members.

Organisation Development

Our Goal

To achieve a well-functioning and appropriately resourced organisation to support the effective delivery of our programs and services.

Our Strategies

- Create a user-friendly, integrated and well-functioning IT system and associated policies and procedures.
- Finalise and implement the property strategy.
- Develop and implement a sustainability and growth strategy.
- Establish clear planning and reporting cycles.
- Review and enhance risk assessment and risk management systems.

Our Performance Assessment

We will use a variety of qualitative and quantitative information to assess our performance.

Examples include:

- Financial capacity and sustainability.
- Appropriateness of accommodation, facilities and equipment to meet the needs of programs and services.
- Effectiveness of the IT system.
- Capacity to deliver the strategic plan.

A large, stylized graphic of a leaf or flame shape, rendered in various shades of green and olive, positioned on the right side of the page. The shape is abstract and organic, with a pointed top and a curved bottom edge.

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West