



**Youth  
Solutions**

Promoting Health • Preventing Harm

# Strategic Plan

2019 – 2022



[youthsolutions.com.au](http://youthsolutions.com.au)

## Introduction

Youth Solutions' Strategic Plan for 2019 – 2022 involved consultation with our service users, stakeholders, staff and Board. Their feedback, ideas and suggestions have been incorporated.

We are confident that the operationalisation of the 2019 2000 2 Strategic Plan will ensure that our vision of ***A community of healthy, safe and connected young people*** is at the forefront of everything we do.

We have defined three key priority areas of:

- Youth & Community
- Excellence
- Grow

These give focus to our; service users and stakeholders, service and funders, as well addressing our responsibility to build our capacity to create a strong and sustainable future for Youth Solutions and the growing community we serve.

We look forward to reporting our achievements in the coming years.

Kind regards,

Rebecca Whitford  
President

Geraldine Dean  
Chief Executive Officer

## Vision

A community of healthy, safe and connected young people

## Mission

Youth Solutions works to educate and empower young people to be healthy, safe and connected. Our drug, alcohol and wellbeing strategies focus on learning, participation and support.

## Values

- Empowering
- Accountable
- Collaborative
- Supportive

## Guiding principles

- Prevention
- Early intervention
- Harm minimisation
- Health promotion
- Social marketing
- Youth participation
- Community engagement

## Environment / context

Tobacco, alcohol and illicit drug use remain among the leading risk factors contributing to disease burden among populations [ABS, 2018], and in Australia, preventing and curbing the harms remains a state and federal priority [AIHW, 2017, NSW Ministry of Health, 2017]. As outlined in the National Drug Strategy 2017 – 2026, alcohol and tobacco in particular remain the top ‘priority substances’ which contribute significantly to chronic illness, injury and premature death [AIHW, 2017; ABS, 2018].

While younger Australians are now drinking less than previous youth cohorts, they are more likely to drink to get drunk [FARE, 2019] and are prioritised in national and state strategies to reduce alcohol harm [AIHW, 2017; SWSLHD, 2018]. In the communities which Youth Solutions services and supports, the demand for holistic and integrated alcohol and other drug (AOD) services is high, and the need for community education and understanding of AOD issues has been flagged as an area for improvement in the region [SWSPHN, 2018].

As the region grows, these needs will be further exacerbated. South West Sydney LHD is among one of the most populous and increasingly diverse districts in metropolitan Sydney. Given the large geographical coverage, population growth is predicted to reach 1.256 million by 2031 [SWSPHN, 2018]. South West Sydney is also home to some of the most disadvantaged and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities, with close to half of residents born overseas [SWSLHD, 2014]. The need therefore for culturally sensitive approaches to AOD topics, including smoking cessation, is clear.

## Strategic Priorities

Youth Solutions’ Strategic Plan mirrors the priorities set out in a number of national and state plans including:

1. **National Drug Strategy Household Survey 2016**, AIHW 2017
2. **NSW State Health Plan: Towards 2021**, NSW Ministry of Health 2014
3. **SWSLHD Strategic Plan: Leading care, healthier communities**, SWSLHD 2018
4. **NSW Youth Health Framework 2017 – 24**, NSW Ministry of Health 2017

## Stakeholders

Stakeholder consultation formed an important step in the strategic planning process for 2019 – 2022. Youth Solutions identified key organisational Stakeholders to comment on the purpose of the Youth Service and to relay their expectations for its future direction. Staff, volunteers, Board members, sponsors, Youth Advisory Group (YAG) Members, peer educators, and funders were asked to contribute preliminary thoughts and to complete a stakeholder survey to help the team review the Mission and Vision for 2019 – 2022.

## Attributes and resources

Youth Solutions acknowledges our key attributes and resources that will support our service in operationalising the Strategic Plan. In particular, our need to commit and invest in sound governance, professional development, innovation, and research will assist in realising our goals and objectives. We understand that to be responsive to the community's needs we must continue to grow, prioritising financial efficiency and partnering with like-minded services.

## Reporting

Youth Solutions Strategic Plan will be operationalised and reported upon in Youth Solutions' Operational Plan. Care has been taken to ensure the areas of growth, namely, Peer Education, Early Intervention and Research have been itemised in the Operational Plan. Progress on the Operational Plan is reported from staff to the CEO on a quarterly basis in the Quarterly Operational Plan. The Strategic Plan and Operational Plan will be monitored by the Board.

## References

Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), *Causes of Death Australia 2017*, Cat. No. 3303.0, Canberra.

Australian Institute of Health & Welfare 2017, *National Drug Strategy Household Survey 2016*, accessed 15 July 2019 via <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/illicit-use-of-drugs/2016-ndshs-detailed/contents/table-of-contents>

Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE) 2019, *2019 Annual Alcohol Poll: Attitudes & Behaviours*, accessed 15 July 2019 via <http://fare.org.au/wp-content/uploads/FARE-Annual-Alcohol-Poll-2019-FINAL.pdf>

NSW Ministry of Health 2017, *NSW Youth Health Framework 2017 -24*, accessed 15 July 2019 via [https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2017\\_019.pdf](https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2017_019.pdf)

South Western Sydney PHN 2018, *Health of our Region: Needs Assessment 2019 – 2022*, accessed 15 July 2019 via <https://www.swsphn.com.au/healthofourregion>

South Western Sydney Local Health District 2014, *Health Profile of Local Communities*, accessed 15 July 2019 via <https://www.swslhd.health.nsw.gov.au/planning/content/pdf/SWSLHD%20Community%20Profile%20Summary%20070814.pdf>

South Western Sydney Local Health District 2018, *Strategic Plan: Leading care, healthier communities*, accessed 15 July 2019 via <https://www.swslhd.health.nsw.gov.au/pdfs/2018-StratPlan.pdf>

## Strategic Priorities, Goals and Objectives

### KEY PRIORITY AREA: YOUTH & COMMUNITY

**Aspirational goal:** *By engaging with young people and our stakeholders through various strategies, we will deliver positive health outcomes for our young people and in turn the broader community.*

Goals	Strategies
1.1 Embed a strong culture of youth participation into our service delivery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Strengthen active youth participation in project innovation and design.</li> <li>b) Support peer education as a key principle of service delivery.</li> </ul>
1.2 Engage with young people through drug, alcohol and wellbeing strategies that are responsive, flexible and targeted.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c) Deliver alcohol and other drug prevention and early intervention projects for young people.</li> <li>d) Deliver health, and wellbeing education for young people and key stakeholders, including educators, parents and carers.</li> <li>e) Implement health promotion and social marketing campaigns in the community.</li> <li>f) Deliver referral and information services to young people and community.</li> </ul>
1.3 Connect with likeminded stakeholders to enhance the effectiveness of our program to activate a positive flow on effect for our service users and the broader community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>g) Develop mutually beneficial engagement partnerships to strengthen sector capacity and support positive community action.</li> <li>h) Complement our strategies by working in partnership with other youth, health and wellbeing services.</li> <li>i) Enhance community relations and engagement by hosting and participating in community events and activities.</li> </ul>

## Strategic Priorities, Goals and Objectives

### KEY PRIORITY AREA: EXCELLENCE

**Aspirational goal:** *By striving for and celebrating excellence, Youth Solutions will be held in high regard by our stakeholders and services users. Youth Solutions will be an organisation of choice for employees and volunteers alike, with a commitment to continued improvement and learning.*

Goals	Strategies
2.1 Engage in sound governance practices that are transparent and accountable to funders, stakeholders, services users and community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) Maintain robust governance process.</li><li>b) Submit all reports required from external funding bodies on a timely basis.</li><li>c) Develop and distribute reports and documents to corporate partners, service users and stakeholders regarding organisational performance and outcomes achieved.</li></ul>
2.2 Commit to evidence-based practice and continued quality improvement for prevention and early intervention.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>d) Research and maintain knowledge of currently accepted good practice for health promotion, prevention and early intervention.</li><li>e) Incorporate findings from research and internal evaluation into programs and project design.</li><li>f) Add value to our sector by disseminating our learnings.</li></ul>
2.3 Live and celebrate a culture of learning and sharing knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>g) Seek appropriate professional development opportunities for the staff and volunteers.</li><li>h) Continue sharing knowledge and skills with the staff and volunteers to enhance service governance and service delivery.</li></ul>



## KEY PRIORITY AREA: GROW

**Aspirational goal:** *By pursuing thoughtful and measured growth, Youth Solutions acknowledges our responsibility to build our capacity, to create a strong and sustainable future for our growing community.*

Goals	Strategies
<p>3.1 Maintain a well-positioned organisation, including planning for service scope and design.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Develop and maintain systems for understanding the needs of our community.</li> <li>b) Foster an appetite for growth to identify and be ready to embrace opportunities in the sector.</li> </ul>
<p>3.2 Maintain a well-managed organisation, including planning for workforce development, consumer feedback and service evaluation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c) Develop and maintain systems for workforce development, including physical and human resources.</li> <li>d) Develop and maintain systems for service users and stakeholders to provide feedback to Youth Solutions.</li> </ul>
<p>3.3 Create and embrace appropriate opportunities to enhance service capacity and sustainability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>e) Develop diverse opportunities for all stakeholders to invest in Youth Solutions to achieve our vision.</li> <li>f) Seek fundraising and income generation opportunities through corporate sponsorship, government grants, community grants and donations.</li> <li>g) Develop partnerships to deliver additional strategies.</li> </ul>

## Office

Suite 13 Level 4  
Macarthur Square Shopping Centre  
200 Gilchrist Drive  
Campbelltown NSW 2560

## Post

PO Box 112  
Macarthur Square NSW 2560

## Contact us

02 4628 2319  
[info@youthsolutions.com.au](mailto:info@youthsolutions.com.au)

[YOUTHSOLUTIONS.COM.AU](http://YOUTHSOLUTIONS.COM.AU)  
[WHYICHOOSE.COM.AU](http://WHYICHOOSE.COM.AU)



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