



# DIVERSITY & INCLUSIVITY **FRAMEWORK**



East Grampians  
Health Service

## OUR VISION

To improve the health, well-being and the quality of life for our community.

## OUR PURPOSE

To meet people's health needs through leadership, strong partnerships, and wise use of resources.

## OUR VALUE STATEMENTS



### INTEGRITY

We value integrity, honesty and respect in all relationships



### EXCELLENCE

We value excellence as the appropriate standard for all services and practices



### COMMUNITY

We respect the dignity and rights of our community and acknowledge their beliefs, regardless of their cultural, spiritual or socioeconomic background



### WORKING TOGETHER

We value equally all people who make a contribution to EGHS to achieve shared goals



### LEARNING CULTURE

We strive to continually learn and develop through education, training, mentoring and by teaching others

This document was endorsed by the EGHS Board in December 2023.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT  
OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS

East Grampians Health Service acknowledges the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia, Jupagalk and Eastern Maar peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which our health service operates. We pay our deep respects to Elders past and present and recognize and value the contributions that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples make in our society.



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# CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S FOREWORD

**At East Grampians Health Service (EGHS) we provide an environment and experience that is free from discrimination and deliver equitable, safe and person-centred quality healthcare. With our staff and consumers we build organisational structures and expectations to create a welcoming environment for all.**



We foster a working environment that removes barriers to ensure equity and un-prejudicial opportunities for all. We acknowledge that we all have different points of view, varied backgrounds, strengths and understand that our experiences can be vastly different from each other's.

Change is driven by educated staff having complex and at times difficult conversations with others about diversity and inclusivity. This leads to increased acceptance, elimination of biased opinions, reduced stigma and removal of outdated processes. We strengthen our knowledge and acceptance by being actively involved in community engagement and embracing people with consistent inclusive services.

This Diversity and Inclusivity Framework describes our work to meet the values of our organisation and community needs. We continue to:

- Provide strategy commitments to developing safe and inclusive environments which consider culture, First Nations, ethnicity, gender, physical characteristics, language, religious and safety aspects of our service.
- Support people to feel accepted and that their contributions and opinions are valued.
- Provide equal opportunity and support staff to progress their careers, improve their skills in the workplace and expand their networks.
- Openly demonstrate having a diverse, highly skilled and talented workforce.

Information on our progress is shared with the EGHS Board throughout the year and commitments are made to ensure that Victorian Government initiatives are supported such as ensuring qualified and suitable gender diversity and balance occurs within our workplace, developing aspiring leaders, ensuring acknowledgement of our First Nation peoples, eliminating racism, discrimination and stigma, assisting with trauma and healing support, promoting safety in our community, respecting gender differences and increasing education on culturally and linguistically diverse issues across our organisation.

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**By supporting cultures, listening to and respecting the views and opinions of others and their life choices we acknowledge our differences, supporting all to reach their full potential.**

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A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nick Bush".

**Nick Bush**

*Chief Executive*

East Grampians Health Service

# DEVELOPING THE FRAMEWORK

## The areas of focus for our Diversity and Inclusivity Framework include:

- Cultural Safety
- Persons with disability
- Gender Equality
- Linguistic and Cultural
- LGBTIQ+
- Child Safety

This Diversity and Inclusivity Framework supports us to become an inclusive and diverse health service committed to:

- employing a workforce that better meets community needs;
- ensuring our workplace is safe and inclusive for all persons;
- improving our services and outcomes for the diverse communities we serve; and
- providing transparency in achieving these outcomes.

## INTERSECTIONALITY

Intersectionality refers to the ways in which different aspects of a person's identity can expose them to overlapping forms of discrimination and marginalisation. While this framework describes six distinct areas of focus for EGHS, we acknowledge that people are often disadvantaged by multiple sources of oppression. Intersectionality will be considered in both individual and organisational considerations of inclusivity.

## TERMINOLOGY

The words 'our' and 'we' refer to East Grampians Health Services. When we refer to 'consumers' we are referring to those who have direct and indirect access to any of our services whether a stakeholder, client, patient, staff member or volunteer, visiting or using our services once or on many occasions.

Inclusion/inclusivity is about ensuring our processes enable all people to feel safe, respected, valued, engaged and heard. Inclusive actions build a sense of belonging and an ongoing ability for everyone to feel safe.

## OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES

We are committed to developing safe, fairer and inclusive environments across all diversity factors, including cultural, indigenous, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, physical and intellectual disability, age, socio-economic status and varied religious/spiritual beliefs.

To do this we will:

- employ a workforce that better meets community needs;
- support choices that reflect what individuals value;
- connect and collaborate meaningfully with others;
- support consumers to contribute their unique experiences and abilities to improve policies, programs and services;
- remove attitudinal and behavioural barriers that facilitate bullying, sexual harassment, stigma, and discrimination of any kind;
- be accepting that others may have different values to our own;
- model behaviours that are respectful to everyone;
- understand and recognise strength in our differences;
- interact with compassion;
- reflect on why we belong and how we contribute to helping others belong;
- avoid making assumptions about others;
- adopt a collective responsibility to encourage self-determination and listen to others when they tell us what supports they or their work areas or other changes are needed; and
- measure success through the achievement of the actions outlined in the associated action plans, alongside any targets set by the Victorian Government, Commonwealth Government or other bodies.



# FIRST NATIONS CULTURAL SAFETY

We recognise the strength and resilience of our First Nation peoples as the world's oldest living culture and original custodians of our lands. We are committed to embedding culturally safe and welcoming services and make a strong commitment to do what we can to ensure strong partnerships with First Nations communities.

First Nation peoples may have intersecting identities with other diversity attributes. Our Diversity and Inclusivity Framework's approach aims to complement and support the fundamental principles of self-determination, awareness and cultural safety.



In creating a welcoming environment we display Acknowledgement plaques at all our service entry sites, fly the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags and create culturally safe spaces for First Nations patients, carers, family and staff.

**We ensure cross-cultural awareness training is delivered to our Board Directors and our workforce. We seek First Nations input to address racism, prioritise and promote cultural safety, transfer power and resources to communities through:**

- Aboriginal Health Liaison Officers (AHLOs) participating on our committees and educating staff on First Nations perspectives.
- mentoring and developing a training program to assist managers working with First Nations employees.
- providing cultural awareness training to our staff and volunteers.
- asking about First Nations status when interacting with our health service.
- celebrating First Nations days and events.
- supporting intersecting identities needing additional support to achieve equality
- eliminating disparities between First Nations and other patients through initiatives such as the Aboriginal Health Liaison Officers (AHLOs) service.
- ensuring First Nations patients and families have access to culturally appropriate feedback and complaints processes.
- integrating family violence response and prevention strategies.
- strengthening discharge plans for every First Nations person.



**We maintain a First Nations Cultural Safety Action Plan.**

# PERSONS WITH DISABILITY (ADDITIONAL NEEDS)

We support and value our staff and consumers who have disability and want them to feel valued members of our workforce and as consumers of our services. We understand that for some people with disability that the 'disability' may not always be visual. We want to remove any barriers and stigma by provision of services and facilities that are accessible to all.

We acknowledge that there is some movement away from the use of the term 'disability' as we all have varied abilities. However, as the term 'disability' is commonly understood and still used by peak bodies, it is used in the framework. 'Additional needs' and 'health conditions and impairment' are alternative terms in use in some settings.



## **We support the employment of people with disability through:**

- ensuring non-discriminatory practices are followed and implemented;
- providing mechanical equipment to enable increased participation; and
- removing any other barriers to workforce participation.

## **As an organisation we actively guide changes in health service attitudes and practices to remove bias and judgement by:**

- providing our workforce with information about disabilities to support our workforce, consumers, carers to care for persons with disability; and
- having comprehensive care plans that ask 'What matters to you' and detail the choice, wishes and needs of individual consumers.

## **We design our environment to support people to engage with us by;**

- providing telehealth and home based care;
- consulting directly with persons with disability when designing facilities;
- providing communication support for those who require it;
- offering an overnight stay to support client care during admissions and respite; and
- ensuring clear accessibility between service areas.



**We maintain a Disability Action Plan.**

# GENDER EQUALITY

Gender equality is when all people have the same rights, responsibilities and opportunities regardless of their gender attributes or circumstances.

Achieving equality means making equitable adjustments and taking special measures from time to time. Equity is when resources are distributed according to each person's circumstances and individual needs by preventing and removing barriers in physical, technological and cultural environments.

#### To foster gender equality we:

- offer staff flexible work arrangements and leave options;
- strive for gender-balance at all levels of our workforce;
- facilitate equitable opportunities for female staff to be leaders in their careers through training and coaching;
- do not tolerate bullying, harassment and/or sexual harassment in the workplace; and
- implement the Strengthening Hospital Responses to Family Violence initiatives and offer paid family violence leave.



We maintain a Gender Equality Action Plan and a Workforce Development Plan.





# LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY

We celebrate the diversity of our community, accepting our individual differences. Everyone is valued and respected and feedback received is acknowledged and enacted upon.

## We are an organisation that proactively:

- seeks to include the views of those from all cultures and faiths;
- breaks down barriers compounded by intersectionality;
- supports people to express their identity in ways that are meaningful to them;
- provides services that support those with language barriers to communicate effectively (such as interpreters);
- supports our workforce and consumers to participate in cultural practices;
- recognises the lived experiences of those from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds; and
- assesses our performance against resources such as the Aged Care Diversity Framework.



We maintain a Partnering with Consumers Plan that describes how we intend to partner with consumers from various linguistic and cultural backgrounds.



# LGBTIQA+ INCLUSIVITY

It is unlawful to discriminate against a person because of a protected attribute (such as the person's age, disability, race, gender, gender identity or sexuality). We work in partnership with external stakeholders, consumers and our community to develop strategies to foster inclusive practices.

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It is important to note that a person's sexual orientation can overlap with other life areas exposing them to further unnecessary discrimination and marginalisation.

**We encourage all staff to be active and visible allies (a support person of minority groups) by:**

- promoting the importance of diversity and inclusion initiatives to their peers (such as IDAHOBIT Day, Rainbow Day, Pride Day);
- navigating discriminatory behaviours and uncomfortable conversations respectfully;
- asking for and using preferred pronouns; and
- empowering self-determination by the LGBTIQA+ community.

# CHILD SAFETY

We all have an obligation to do the best we can to keep children and young people safe from harm and abuse. We cannot assume that child abuse does not, and cannot, happen within our community. We must embed child safety in everyday thinking and practice. We must also create the environment where children and young people feel safe to access our services when they need it.



## **We have developed inclusion by engaging and actively supporting children and young people by:**

- updating our First Nations Cultural Safety Plan to include actions specifically for young people;
- providing and promoting a culturally safe environment for children;
- detailing our public commitment to child safety on the EGHS website;
- celebrating significant youth/children's days;
- training our staff on child safety and empowerment of children and young people;
- providing secure web content on EGHS Wi-Fi and electronic media to protect children; and
- working with local organisations to receive input from children and young people.



**We maintain a Child Safe Standards Plan**



## RESOURCES, REFERENCES AND RELATED DOCUMENTS

### EGHS Policies

- Consumer Participation – SOPP 12.04
- Cultural and Spiritual Life – SOPP 60.09
- Embracing Diversity – SOPP 60.18

### EGHS Action Plans

- First Nations Cultural Safety
- Disability
- Gender Equality.
- Workforce Development
- Partnering with Consumers
- Child Safe Standards

### Victorian Legislation

- Carers Recognition Act 2012
- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006
- Disability Act 2006
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010
- Gender Equality Act 2020
- Multicultural Victoria Act 2011
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
- Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001

### Commonwealth

- Age Discrimination Act 2004
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984

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