

Diversity and Inclusivity Strategy 2023 - 2026

Acknowledgment of Traditional Custodians

The Melbourne Clinic acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which our hospital stands, the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation, and we pay our respects to all Elders past and present.

We acknowledge the Stolen Generations and the historical and ongoing impact of colonisation on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. We also recognise the resilience, strength, and pride of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Aboriginal peoples' and Torres Strait Islanders living culture is the oldest continuing culture in the world and we recognise their continuing connections to land, water and airways. We pay our respects to the Aboriginal People in our local community today.



At The Melbourne Clinic you are free to be you

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Introduction

The Melbourne Clinic we are committed to providing a culturally safe environment, dedicated to building an inclusive culture, recognise that people are our most important asset and that a diverse culture is reflective of the community we provide services to.

We understand that cultural safety is ever evolving and requires us to reflect on our culture, attitudes, and beliefs to build clear, valuable, open, and respectful communication pathways. Through two-way learning processes The Melbourne Clinic delivers services that are inclusive and adaptive to the changing landscape.

We value the stories and shared experiences of our patients, staff, and community. Cultural safe service delivery is crucial to enhance personal empowerment and promote more effective and meaningful pathways to self-determination.

Diversity drives The Melbourne Clinic's ability to attract, retain, motivate, and develop the best talent, create an engaged workforce, deliver the highest quality services to our customers and to continue to grow our business. A diverse workforce and an inclusive culture enables us to strive to have all people respected and valued, not just for their abilities, but also for their unique qualities and perspectives.

The Melbourne Clinic (TMC) has developed this Diversity and Inclusivity Strategy to guide the continuing development of our diverse and inclusive culture. We support all our staff, patients and visitors and respect their individual differences.

TMC Human Resource management is guided by Healthscope policies, which are referenced to state legislation, EBA's and Fair Work Act. Inclusion promotes diversity of thought, new ideas, and a range of perspectives which allow us to continually improve the care and service that we deliver.

It is inclusion that allows every one of our people to reach their full potential in our workplace.

Our Message to Staff

The Melbourne Clinic is dedicated to providing a diverse and inclusive environment for all patients, staff, contractors and visitors. Staff at TMC have access to equal opportunities for growth and development and to contribute fully, sharing their individual experiences in a supportive non-judgemental environment.

It is our shared responsibility to treat each other with courtesy and respect and to report any behaviour that breaches the Healthscope Code of Conduct to your manager.

TMC Management strongly advocate for open and confidential communication and will provide support if you experience or witness behaviour that is discriminatory on the basis of:

- Gender Identity
- Sexual orientation
- Culture
- Age
- Disability or Impairment
- Caring Responsibilities

It's up to each of us to show respect for each other, to help build a sense of safety and belonging, and to support those who are at risk of harassment or discrimination.

Who it Benefits

At The Melbourne Clinic we want to work together to understand, respect, and care for one another. We celebrate diversity and inclusivity to develop a community of care and a safe environment for our staff, consumers, and community members.

The Minority Stress Theory (Meyer 2003; Meyer 2008) posits that minoritized peoples (ethnic minorities, LGBTIQ+, Indigenous peoples etc.) experience poorer mental health which is attributed to the greater threat to their health, material, and cultural wellbeing over non-minoritized Australians. We know that fear of rejection, employment discrimination, fear of physical violence, and exposure to prejudice are all ongoing stressors that impact minoritized people. We are committed to the ongoing need to reduce such stressors by providing a workplace, and hospital, that is inclusive and diverse.

To enable us to make sustainable changes, this Diversity & Inclusion Strategy focuses on individuals and communities that experience poorer mental health and wellbeing outcomes due to systemic discrimination. This includes:

- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Asexual + (LGBTIQ+) people
- Culturally and linguistically diverse people
- Religious Diversity
- People of ethnically diverse backgrounds
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples
- People with disabilities
- Older & younger people

We acknowledge that these communities are not all one-size-fits all and that uniqueness exists within. We also understand that people have an overlapping, intersectional experiences in life with unique challenges and experiences.

This list is not exhaustive and other diversity markers are also important to us. We believe that all staff and patients can positively benefit from this strategy.

Our Key Focus Areas

LGBTIQA+

TMC acknowledge that our staff, consumers, and community members may identify as LGBTIQA+ but may feel they are unable to identify due to previous experiences or fear of discrimination and prejudice.

To facilitate a culture welcoming of gender diversity and acceptance of diverse sexual orientation TMC is committed to the implementation of required changes for title, sex, gender, and pronouns in all policies and forms. Policies, forms, and procedures are also required to be supportive of staff who identify as LGBTIQA+.

We aim to maintain LGBTIQA+ specific training for all staff. Education is reviewed with consumer input on a 12 monthly basis and is provided by staff with lived experience and/or training in the area.

There is an over representation of members of the LGBTIQA+ community with poor mental health and wellbeing outcomes. Due to this TMC will:

- Ensure that our intake and assessment processes are respectful of gender diversity and sexual orientation
- We employ a Diversity & Inclusivity Consumer Consultant to advocate for staff, patients, and our community
- Improve and provide a welcoming and safe environment, including access to gender neutral toilets
- Identify psychiatrists who provide expertise in mental health issues arising specifically in the LGBTIQA+ community
- Provide specialised support groups within our existing programs
- Identify the needs of, and provide training to, clinical staff so they can provide appropriate therapeutic interventions

Aboriginal peoples' and/or Torres Strait Islanders

As part of TMC's strategy for Cultural Diversity & Inclusion we identify the importance of our First Nations people.

TMC work within the aims of the Healthscope Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) and provide services that are culturally sensitive and appropriate. In line with Healthscope's RAP, TMC has implemented an Indigenous Australians Engagement Plan. This plan provides TMC with a structured approach to build on our cultural understanding and undergo a process of two-way learning that has allowed for a deeper, more meaningful understanding of First Nations People and how we can create an inclusive space.

We understand that health is inclusive of social, emotional, physical and cultural wellbeing and aim to provide services that encompass this with a holistic approach.

TMC are committed to:

- Asking all consumers if they identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- Ensuring that consumers who identify have any cultural needs filled during their stay
- Provide training to staff that is culturally safe and aware, and ensuring that staff are culturally competent
- Forming partnerships with local communities
- Engaging with the workforce and consumers to plan, design, and evaluate patient care

Culture & Religion

TMC values the range of knowledge, experience, and understanding people from all cultural backgrounds bring to our service which promotes a rich and extensive appreciation of language, religion, culture, and custom.

We also acknowledge the wide variety of experience, communication styles, and individual needs that the diversity of these consumers bring to our service and the importance of considering this when engaging with them.

At TMC our aim is to provide services that are sensitive to the following by providing:

- Staff who are trained in cultural competency
- Consumers who identify cultural and/or religious needs have those filled during their stay
- Flexible work arrangements
- Extensive and individualised menu options

Disability & Impairment

TMC is committed to providing a workplace that is accessible to individuals who have disabilities or impairment. We are committed to working with those who may require modifications during their stay to aid in their disability.

TMC provides:

- Wheelchair access
- Accessible bathrooms and patient bedrooms
- Information on light and noise in the hospital to aid's patient's levels of comfort
- Signage that meet Australia Regulations AS1428.1-2001 & BCA D3.6
- Structured return-to-work plans following injuries and illnesses
- Partnership with Converge International: Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Age

TMC recognises the breadth of expertise, skills, and experience that both mature age and youth bring to our performance and productivity.

We aim to retain our mature age employees and recognise the knowledge that they bring to the workplace and the important role they play in passing on this knowledge to support improved performance and succession planning in the hospital. We promote flexible work arrangements, mentorship, and support a detailed handover of systemic and operational knowledge.

We aim to support youth in progressing their careers through a commitment to our status as a teaching hospital for student and graduate nurses. We provide supervision, graduate programs, and mentoring.



How & Why Change Will Occur

Issue	Participants	Activities	Short Term Changes	Medium Term Changes	Long Term Changes
<p>People who experience discrimination often have poorer health and wellbeing outcomes</p>	<p>This strategy looks at improving inclusion for staff, consumers and community members at The Melbourne Clinic, particularly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LGBTI+ • Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples • Culturally and religiously diverse people • People with disability and/or impairment 	Improving recruitment and retention policies and practices.	Leaders have the skills and knowledge to provide an equitable service	Leaders engage in workforce planning and development which includes the acquisition of minoritized staff.	Diverse workforce & inclusive workplace culture.
		Establish a best practice committee for cultural safety	Committee members to gain knowledge in understanding the impacts of cultural safety.	Committee members support and share knowledge in two-way learning structure with patients, staff, and other consumers.	Provision of an equitable service that promotes and empowers its consumers.
		Ensuring policies, procedures, systems, and documents/forms support a diverse and inclusive culture, practice and service.	Ongoing review of all policies to ensure diversity and inclusion is at forefront of service provision and staff engagement.	Implement required changes to title, sex, gender, and pronouns in policies and forms.	Provision of safe and inclusive workplace, with policies and procedures to promote equity.
		Provide a welcoming and safe environment responsive to individual needs of our staff, consumers, and community members.	Provide opportunities for staff, consumers, and community members to identify individual cultural needs. Review environment and identify opportunities for improvement, including need for gender neutral toilets.	Increase number of consumers from diverse backgrounds. Consumers feel valued and respected. Identify and increase accessibility for bathrooms and bedrooms.	Service design and delivery meet the needs of diverse consumer communities.
		Promote the recognition of equity to support equality in our services.	Ensure TMC's risk management systems identify and manage any risks to staff, consumers, and community members from diverse backgrounds.	Less structural and institutional discrimination in the workplace.	Inclusive culture embedded across the organisation.
		Increase workforce development and the accessibility of information.	Increase in staff knowledge and awareness of inclusion. Identify and include a Diversity Consumer Consultant/Champion for staff and client	Implement and continue capacity building for all staff and provide extension training in identified areas of high need. Contribute to student learning on orientation.	Culturally safe and accessible services for staff, consumers, and community members.
		Lived experience central to all levels and organisation decision making	Empowering Consumer Consultants through strong collaboration and self-determination. An increase of engagement from people of diverse backgrounds.	Collaborate in community partnerships to engage with lived experience staff members in the development of service.	Culture of safe and inclusive services that are designed and maintained in collaboration with lived experience staff.

Measuring Diversity & Inclusion

At The Melbourne Clinic we want to demonstrate the impact we make upon our staff, patients, and community. Measuring inclusion and embedding robust evaluation frameworks into practice is essential for informing and establishing targets, strategic decisions, benchmarks, and progress.

The following metrics related to staff and consumer experience of inclusion are analysed and reported annually. This information allows The Melbourne Clinic to identify strengths and measure where our efforts require a targeted approach:

- Consumer Demographic Data
- Staff and Consumer Engagement Surveys
- Ext Interview Data
- Staff and Consumer Feedback

The Melbourne Clinic's **Diversity & Inclusivity Strategy** will be reviewed and updated in 2026, however yearly review will inform a wider The Melbourne Clinic **Quality & Safety Plan**.

The Executive and Quality teams will monitor TMC's progress in achieving the aims of this strategy through the Quality, WHS and Infection Control committee and Cultural Safety Committee. All goals and objectives of this plan will also be captured in the Safety and Quality Plan system eQuams.



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