



Hope Street
Youth and Family
Services
Strategic Plan
2022-2027



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The Board of Directors of Hope Street Youth and Family Services is proud to present the organisation's Strategic Plan for 2022-2027.

The plan renews the Board's commitment to ensuring that Hope Street remains a youth focused, secular, place-based provider of high quality housing and homelessness services. Key to this iteration of the strategic plan is the desire to take advantage of current commitments being made at the state and territory level to expand social housing, by exploring the possibility of becoming a registered housing provider and developing a social housing model that can work for young people. The strategic plan emphasises, however, that growth should not come at the cost of reduced service provision. The organisation remains committed to its focus on workforce retention and development, which continues to be a significant challenge.

Andrew Nette
Chair
Hope Street Youth and Family Services

Strategic Plan Summary, Priority and Goals

Hope Street Youth and Family Services Limited is a leading specialist youth homelessness service in Victoria. Based in the northern and western regions of Melbourne, the organisation's reach stretches to neighbouring non-metropolitan areas where there are no specialist youth homelessness services.

As one of the longest established agencies, with over 40 years' experience in delivering responsive services to young people in local communities, Hope Street provides both strategically targeted and holistic programs for young people including young families, such as:

- 24/7 crisis accommodation with specialist support
- Foyer-like program of supported transitional accommodation
- Independent housing, short-term supported emergency accommodation
- Outreach support programs operating after hours including 7 days a week
- Youth reconciliation (with themselves, their families/carers, and their partners) involving counselling and support for young people and families
- Advocacy, resource and referral services
- Dual diagnosis capacity building
- Supported youth-focused private rental program
- Supported independent family accommodation.

Addressing the structural causes of youth homelessness, the organisation contributes to advocacy and research which seeks improvements to the homelessness service system at a regional and state level. The organisation's approach also extends to the creation of innovative and unique social development models involving new partnerships with government, community, corporate and philanthropic sectors.

PRIORITY 1: YOUNG PEOPLE AND YOUNG FAMILIES

- Address youth homelessness at its source through early intervention programs
- Support better outcomes for young people through partnerships
- Document Hope Street's unique service delivery approach

PRIORITY 2: LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNITY

- Promote Hope Street to engage a range of potential supporters
- Advocate on key government policy issues related to youth homelessness
- Become a recognised practice leader in youth homelessness

PRIORITY 3: RESOURCES (HR AND FINANCE)

- Optimise HR and financial processes
- Embed a workforce strategy to attract and retain skilled, experienced and diverse staff
- Diversify income streams to reduce reliance on a single source of funding
- Utilise social return on investment reporting for internal and external activity

PRIORITY 4: ORGANISATIONAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

- Become a youth-specific social housing provider if feasible
- Grow partnerships to deliver place-based services
- Strengthen governance to support Hope Street's strategic focus and compliance requirements
- Continue to strengthen partnerships with universities



Who we are

VISION

A society in which all young people and young families have a safe place to call home.

PURPOSE

To influence change to end youth homelessness and empower young people and young families to achieve their full potential.

PHILOSOPHY

Resolving homelessness is the responsibility of federal, state and local governments, the community, families and individuals. Hope Street works to achieve full recognition of young people's rights to safe, secure, affordable housing and equitable access to resources, decision making and life options.

AIM

To assist young people and young families at risk of or experiencing homelessness by providing them with resources, support, compassion, and opportunities to reach their full potential.

UNIQUE VALUE PROPOSITION

Hope Street is a leader delivering specialist place-based, youth-centric services that are informed by young people and young families lived experiences and voices. We provide 24/7 immediate to long term culturally safe spaces with inclusive and wholistic supports for young people and their children. We are committed to our values of fairness, collaboration, social justice, integrity, diversity and hope.

OBJECTIVES

To meet the organisation's aim, Hope Street will:

- Provide specialist youth-focused services to our clients
- Explore new opportunities for extending housing options for young people and families by diversifying funding streams and forging cross-sector partnership arrangements
- Seek to create communities that are safe and respectful of young people
- Collaborate with communities to respond to the issues and causes of youth homelessness in their local area
- Provide data and research to address youth homelessness at its source and implement social change.

VALUES

Fairness:

We treat people with impartiality and dignity.

Collaboration:

We work with young people, young families, local communities and our partners – believing that together we achieve more.

Social Justice:

We believe that all people have the right to be equal citizens in society and we will strive to achieve this within our purpose.

Integrity:

We are true to ourselves and each other in all of our interactions.

Diversity:

We create inclusive cultures that celebrate differences and similarities.

Hope:

We draw on our strengths to build a better future.

STANDARDS

Evidence-based practices, strengths-based approaches, holistic client-centred responses, ethical and professional practice, safety, consistent and responsive service provision, with tangible and sustainable outcomes to meet the needs of young people and their children. Through its professional team, Hope Street aims for continuous quality improvement and to be accountable to young people, young families, the community, partners and supporters.

PARTICIPATION

Hope Street facilitates young people and other stakeholders to be involved in the decision-making processes of our organisation, including policy development, program planning, delivery of services and evaluation.

Strategic Planning Approach

The Strategic Plan 2022-2027 was developed by the Board of Directors, CEO and Executive Leadership Team through a series of workshops and analysis of documentation, including staff surveys. On 6 June 2022 the Board and Executive Leadership Team came together to confirm Hope Street's current state, point of difference and operating environment in order to establish goals and strategies in each priority area:

1. Young People and Young Families
2. Leadership and Community
3. Resources (HR and Finance)
4. Organisational Growth and Development

The following processes and documents were considered in the development of the Strategic Plan:

- Board discussions (October 2021 to June 2022)
- Staff discussions - individual and in groups (ongoing)
- Board/CEO/ELT planning day workshop, including insightful ELT presentations highlighting achievements of the 2016 to 2021 Strategic Plan priorities (June 2022)
- Past strategic planning documents
- Our Aims, Objectives, Vision, Purpose, Philosophy, Values (February 2020)
- Board SWOT (27 October 2021)
- Corporate Committee and Millennial Advisory Group SWOT (12 November 2021)
- Voice Staff Engagement Survey Report (November 2021)
- COVID-19 Pulse Survey (November 2021)
- Extensive consultation with young people through the independent evaluation of the First Response Youth Service, including face-to-face interviews, client survey and comprehensive analysis. This information was also utilised for the strategic plan. (July to November 2021)
- Program evaluations (September to October 2021)
- 2021-2022 Employee Exit Entry Statistics Comparison Report.



Operating Environment

Hope Street’s strategic plan was developed at a time of unprecedented societal upheaval with the COVID-19 pandemic impacting on all aspects of its business including service delivery, staffing and partnerships and organisational development. Changes to service delivery during the pandemic, sector-wide workforce shortages and retention challenges, Victorian State budget pressures, and the impact of increasing cost of living and interest rates provide a unique backdrop to this strategic plan.

Hope Street will be able to harness the opportunities delivered through state government reforms currently informed by: the Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into Homelessness (2020) Recommendations, the Homes Victoria 10 Year Social and Affordable Housing Strategy (2021) and the Royal Commission into Mental Health (2019). The change to a Labor government federally in June 2022 saw the announcement in the October federal budget, of the National Housing Accord, with a commitment to deliver an additional 10,000 affordable homes over five years from 2024. Action to improve financing for new social and affordable housing projects is also included. Combined with the return of a Labor government in Victoria in November 2022, the political landscape holds potential for Hope Street to contribute to future strategies, inquiries and royal commissions that will lead to further social service reform and opportunities for Hope Street to grow.

The Specialist Homelessness Sector remains highly competitive particularly as it is driven by significant social housing growth. Competition from other homelessness organisations will continue to be a challenge as Hope Street sets itself apart in an environment where much larger Community Service and Non-Government organisations dominate the housing and homelessness landscape, with their overriding objectives of company growth.

Adapting to a post COVID environment, responding to emerging opportunities and ongoing threats will continue to influence Hope Street’s drive to ‘punch above its weight’ as an innovative and leading specialist youth homelessness organisation.



Priority 1 Young People and Young Families

GOAL	STRATEGIES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	TIMELINE
1.1 Address youth homelessness at its source through early intervention programs	Establish effective early intervention programs building on learnings from: a. Current program models such as Melton First Response, Hope to Home, Foyer like models b. New models developed in Australia. For example: Community of Schools and Services (COSS) c. Models operational overseas.	Two additional early intervention programs established.	Year 3
	Embed ongoing review and evaluation to monitor success and undertake continuous improvement of early intervention programs.	Biennial review reports completed. Reports provided to Board, CEO and Executive Leadership Team.	Years 2-4
1.2 Support better outcomes for young people through partnerships	Review the effectiveness of current partnerships with other service providers.	Review completed. MOUs or Spirit of Agreements signed with key partnerships. Partnerships Map completed.	Years 1-2 Years 1-2 Year 1
	Develop new strategic partnerships in response to service gaps and opportunities for enhanced outcomes for all stakeholders, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.	6 new partnerships developed.	Years 1-2
	Evaluate the impact of partnerships on improving outcomes for clients.	Evaluation of partnerships integrated in biennial evaluations completed.	Years 1-2
	1.3 Document Hope Street’s unique service delivery approach	Document Hope Street’s practice framework in consultation with young people and staff, building on Hope Street’s unique service model.	Framework documented. Pilot implemented and evaluated.

RISK APPETITE STATEMENTS
We are keen to invest in innovative early intervention programs to prevent youth homelessness but not at the expense of delivering our existing programs, quality of our services or our financial sustainability.
We are keen to identify new and build on existing partnerships to assist us in achieving our goals but not at the expense of those partnerships aligning to our purpose and values, our ability to maintain our own identity and voice, and our relationship with key stakeholders.
We are keen to modify our service model, infrastructure and resources to respond to the changing needs of our clients and community expectations but not at the expense of the alignment to our purpose and our ability to deliver core services to a consistently high standard.

Priority 2

Leadership and Community

GOAL	STRATEGIES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	TIMELINE
2.1 Promote Hope Street to engage a range of potential supporters	Establish a Communications Officer role.	Develop position description and appoint to the position.	Years 1-2
	Develop a strategic communications plan to communicate, engage and mobilise key stakeholders.	Plan operationalised .	Years 1-2
2.2 Advocate on key government policy issues related to youth homelessness	Establish a Policy and Advocacy Officer role.	Develop position description and appoint to the position.	Years 1-2
	Recruit government relations expertise via the board or through pro bono support. Government relations expertise sourced.	Government relations expertise sourced .	Years 1-2
	Develop a strategic advocacy plan to promote Hope Street outcomes and influence government policy and funding.	Strategic advocacy plan approved by Board. Plan operationalised.	Years 1-2 Year 2
2.3 Strengthen our reputation as a recognised practice leader in youth homelessness	Present subject matter expertise in various forums and communities of practice.	4 presentations.	Years 2-4
	Establish a professional development program to share Hope Street’s unique knowledge and experience, including its practice framework.	Training program operationalised .	Years 3-4
	Establish a leadership program to support young people to develop skills and contribute leadership, training and advocacy.	Leadership program established.	Years 2-4

RISK APPETITE STATEMENTS
We are keen to invest in research, people and processes that will elevate our status as a thought and practice leader in the youth homelessness sector but not at the expense of delivery of our services or our financial sustainability.
We are keen to establish new relationships and build a greater public profile in order to promote our advocacy messaging and engage new supporters but not at the expense of maintaining trusted relationships with clients, staff and other key stakeholders.

Priority 3

Resources (HR and Finance)

GOAL	STRATEGIES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	TIMELINE
3.1 Optimise HR and financial processes to improve efficiencies	Implement HR payroll system.	System fully operational.	Year 1
		Reduced time to hire by 50%. Manual processes reduced by 30-50%.	Years 1-2 Years 1-2
	Review existing financial processes and improve payroll, rostering and core financial systems.	Review completed . New systems implemented .	Years 1-2 Year 2
3.2 Embed a workforce capacity strategy to attract and retain skilled, experienced and diverse staff	Develop a workforce capacity strategy that considers recruitment and retention activities informed by a clear employee value proposition.	Workforce capacity strategy approved and operationalised . Increased staff retention of 75% of new staff per year.	Years 1 Years 2-5
3.3 Diversify income streams to reduce reliance on DFFH funding	Develop an income diversification strategy including revenue from social housing, corporates, donations and training program.	25% of total income derived from non-DFFH sources.	Year 5
		Additional \$1 million recurring revenue.	Year 5
		Fundraising income \$500,000.	Year 5
3.4 Utilise social return on investment reporting for internal and external activity	Implement a process to enable regular social return on investment (SROI) reporting.	Annual reporting process for triennial SROIs implemented.	Years 2 - 3
	Utilise return on social impact reporting in decision making, reporting and advocacy.	Social return on investment metrics utilised across the business.	Years 2 - 3

RISK APPETITE STATEMENTS
We are keen to invest in systems and processes that will ensure that we recruit, retain and support the right people with the right skills and attributes to meet our goals but not at the expense of our financial sustainability.
We are keen to invest in systems and technology to create efficiencies and enable us to optimise HR and financial processes but not at the expense of meeting day to day business operational and compliance requirements, or our financial sustainability.
We are keen to assess the viability of alternative income streams but not at the expense of delivering our core services, distracting resources from critical tasks, or our financial sustainability.
We are keen to develop systems and processes to capture and report on our social return in investment but not at the expense of comprehensive, whole of business reporting that supports decision makers’ understanding of the the complexity of our organisation.

Priority 4
Organisational Growth and Development

GOAL	STRATEGIES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	TIMELINE
4.1 Become a youth-specific social housing provider if feasible	Complete feasibility report and develop a strategy for achieving housing provider status.	Strategy completed.	Year 1
	Undertake registration requirements to become a housing provider.	Registration achieved .	Year 2
	Develop an operational plan that includes partnerships, risk management, HR, communication and budget.	MOU developed with preferred partner. Operational plan completed.	Years 2-3
4.2 Grow partnerships to deliver place-based services	Establish the First Response Youth Service and Hope to Home programs in the city of Whittlesea.	Programs established and fully operational.	Years 2-3
	Establish First Response Youth Service in identified geographical areas.	Shovel ready. Capital and operational funding granted for new project.	Year 5
	Scope opportunities for new services in areas of emerging need.	Scoping completed.	Year 2
4.3 Strengthen governance to support Hope Street’s strategic focus and compliance requirements	Undertake a Board skills assessment matrix to ensure the skills and experience meet the needs of the organisation.	Board skills matrix completed.	Year 1 then every biennial
	Recruit and retain Board members to ensure an optimal mix of skills and experience.	Board skills reflective of matrix.	Years 1-5
	Develop a diversity strategy to ensure the Board reflects the communities in which Hope Street provides services.	Diversity Strategy developed. Diversity Strategy implemented.	Years 1-2 Years 2-5
4.4 Continue to strengthen partnerships with universities	Continue the partnership with Victoria University for the piloting of the Community of Schools and Services (COSS) program via the NWZ30 project.	Stage 1: Pre-Pilot work completed. Attain funding for Pilot operational in Melton.	Year 1 Year 2-3
	Explore opportunities for research and evaluations.	3 conducted and launched.	Years 2-5
	Establish a student placement program.	Student Placement Program operational with minimum of 3 students per annum.	Years 2-5

RISK APPETITE STATEMENTS
We are keen to undertake a feasibility study to fully understand the investment requirements and impact of being a youth-specific social housing provider but not at the expense of our budget allocation and distraction from core business tasks.
We are keen to establish new relationships to grow our place-based services but not at the expense of using data to inform where services are offered and our capacity to operationalise new services.
We are keen to undertake a review of our governance systems and structures to give us confidence that they are fit for purpose, contemporary and aligned to good practice but not at the expense of redirecting management from key accountabilities and quality of service provision.
We are keen to build on our collaboration with universities for the development of innovative program models and improved service delivery but not at the expense of redirecting our focus and commitment to providing quality services from existing programs.

Monitoring and reviewing the Strategic Plan

ACTION	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
Regular monitoring of strategic plan including reviewing reports on progress	Quarterly	Board
Formal reports on progress are to be presented in writing to the Board	Prior to relevant Board meeting	CEO and relevant committee/ working groups
Reviewing the strategic plan to ensure it remains current and relevant.	Annually	Board in consultation with CEO and Executive Leadership Team
Reporting to stakeholders on progress in addressing the strategic plan in annual report	Annually	Board in consultation with CEO

- Appendix 1
Documentation to support the implementation of the Strategic Plan will include:

- Business Plan
 - Workforce Capacity Strategy
 - ICT Strategic Plan
 - ICT Action Plan
 - Reconciliation Action Plan
 - Corporate Committee and Millennial Advisory Group Plan
 - Financial Plan
 - Quality Improvement Plan



Hope Street is proud to be an all-inclusive organisation.

Hope Street acknowledges the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nation as the traditional custodians of the land and waterways. We pay our respects to their elders, past, present and emerging and that sovereignty has never been ceded.

Commitment to Child Safety

Hope Street has zero tolerance of child abuse, neglect and harm, all aspects of online safety risks including grooming. All allegations and safety concerns are taken very seriously and investigated robustly. Paramount is keeping children and young people safe and connected to family and community with a greater focus on cultural safety for Aboriginal children and young people.



Hope Street acknowledges the support of the Victorian Government.

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Hope Street Youth and Family Services

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