



STRATEGIC PLAN
2010 – 2015

Looking forward...

Life Without Barriers (LWB) is a secular, not-for-profit organisation, providing care and support to vulnerable and marginalised people across Australia in over 85 urban, rural and remote locations, and in New Zealand.

The Life Without Barriers 2010-2015 Strategic Plan articulates a bold future and a commitment to client outcomes, achieved through evidence-based practice. It sets a course that will see Life Without Barriers focused on delivering innovative services informed by research, across a wide spectrum of communities, driven by a desire to challenge disadvantage and foster hope and independence.

This Strategic Plan maps the next stage in the evolution of Life Without Barriers, which over the last ten years has grown from humble beginnings into one of the largest not-for-profit organisations in Australia, providing services to individuals, families and communities in the areas of care and protection, disability, mental health, youth justice, immigration and homelessness.

At the heart of this plan is a passion to support and empower our clients. We believe in the rights of people and the importance of relationships. These foundations shape our unique approach to care and underpin the vision and mission of Life Without Barriers.

Contents

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Our Unique Approach | 2 |
| Vision, Mission and Values | 4 |
| 2010 – 2015: The Next Five Years | 5 |
| Key Success Areas | 5 |
| Our Strategies | 6 |

Our Unique Approach

At Life Without Barriers we work to support and care for vulnerable and marginalised people. Our services are based on rights and relationships.

Human rights inform and underpin everything we do at LWB. We operate from the belief that all people have a right to:

- pursue a fulfilling life
- live with liberty and security
- access food, clothing, housing and medical attention
- receive a quality education
- equal protection before the law
- freedom of opinions, expression, religion and belief
- freedom from discrimination
- equal opportunity and access to participate in life's experiences and events
- live with no restrictions on achievement

Our clients have often experienced infringements of their human rights due to their background, abilities, living situations, age or cultural background. Protecting and promoting our clients' human rights forms a key aspect of our work.

The care and support services provided by LWB are based on an innovative model that integrally values relationships. We know that when people are meaningfully connected to those around them, they feel safe to try new things, challenge themselves and realise their potential. Relationships are the basis of our services.

Our models of care are based on practice, wisdom, evidence, research and feedback from our clients, carers and employees. In particular, we work hard to create opportunities for our clients to participate in the design of our programs and services. This means our approach is responsive and flexible, demonstrating our commitment to continued improvement in service delivery.

Our care and support services and programs are underpinned by four principles.

Belief in People

The primary element of our approach is the belief in the potential of all people, no matter how complex their needs. This belief inspires LWB to support, encourage and empower people, families and communities to realise their goals. We celebrate the successes of our clients, as they take each step towards their goals.

Person-centred

Underpinning our care and support services is a holistic, person-centred approach to caring for clients. This approach enables LWB to deliver a broad range of services that provide effective solutions to each client, based on their unique needs. We respond to individual circumstance and engage clients in their support planning to enable positive outcomes to be achieved.

Community-based

Life Without Barriers is focused on building strong, resilient communities where people can realise their full potential. This means our programs are built on a platform of innovation, strong relationships and local resources that connect clients to key services within their community.

Committed to quality improvement

We are committed to developing our practice through research and continuous improvement strategies. This commitment is supported by investing in people and infrastructure to provide a solid foundation for our programs and activities. LWB is transparent in sharing experience and learnings, to contribute to the development of the sector.

Our unique approach has enabled Life Without Barriers to provide services that transcend traditional sector boundaries and reach more children, young people, individuals, families and communities in need. We are responsive, brave, passionate, flexible and innovative at all levels, priding ourselves on reaching more vulnerable people each year.

*We are
centred on
people.*

*Life Without Barriers
is an organisation
dedicated to caring
and we never
give up.*

Vision:

Communities where disadvantage is challenged and people are empowered.

Mission:

We support vulnerable and marginalised people to reach their full potential.

Values:***Relationships first***

We value meaningful, healthy relationships, and it is the difference and the foundation of everything we practice. We engage in meaningful dialogue and communicate openly. We work collaboratively with individuals, families and communities. We listen and reflect, empathise and seek answers.

Quality delivery uncompromised

We are an ethical organisation that looks to provide client focused services. We take an evidence-based approach, we undertake research and we measure our outcomes. We are efficient and effective, delivering value for money through our services. We are flexible, responsive and innovative and we continually look to improve what we are doing and how we do it.

Honesty

We are optimistic to future potential. Our philosophy is to be open, accountable and to set realistic goals and deliver on expectations. We follow through with what we say we will do. We challenge established ways of thinking and we are accountable for our actions. We build hope by increasing opportunities, capabilities and independence. We create safe environments for honest dialogue and we encourage and respect feedback.

Everyone is valuable

We are an organisation dedicated to caring and we never give up. We are centred on people. We have faith in the human spirit, we embrace and value diversity and we are culturally respectful. We value our clients, our people and our stakeholders. Our approach is to see capability and possibility.

2010 – 2015

Over the next five years, Life Without Barriers will:

Build the capacity of our clients to realise their full potential in key outcome areas

We will deliver strong outcomes for our clients, developing services based on research and data. We will work to grow our clients' resilience, independence and self-sufficiency through the provision of services focused on education, employment, health and independence.

Work across a broad range of sectors

We will transcend traditional sector boundaries and work with individuals, families and communities across a broader range of client groups. In doing this, we will be able to share our expertise with the broader community.

Increase our focus on community development

We will work together with vulnerable communities, in order to help them build the skills they need to effect change within their own communities. We will base our work on relationship-building, joining together people and organisations to create new opportunities.

Drive a reconciliation agenda with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities

We will continue to be accountable to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and take responsibility for creating change. We will work together to build an understanding of the issues faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and to advance rights, culture and traditions. We will work towards providing culturally respectful and appropriate services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals, families and communities, as well as a safe place for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to work.

Contribute to the broader agenda around disadvantaged and marginalised people and communities

As a large organisation we will embrace the responsibility that comes with working with and for vulnerable and marginalised people. We will advocate for the people we support with policy-makers and government funders.

Maintain the essence of who we are

Key to our success is retaining the essence of who we are – an organisation committed to our vision, mission and values. As we grow and diversify, our can-do approach will continue to shine through. We will remain bold, brave, agile, passionate and committed to responding to the needs of our clients and communities.

On this foundation, Life Without Barriers will grow from 2010 to 2015.

Our Key Success Areas:

- **Client outcomes**
- **Cultural respect**
- **Challenging systemic disadvantage**
- **People and leadership**
- **Organisational effectiveness**

Our Strategies

1

CLIENT OUTCOMES

Life Without Barriers will build the capacity of the people in our care to empower them to realise their full potential. We will focus on working with our clients to help grow their resilience, independence and self sufficiency through the delivery of better outcomes across a range of life areas.

We will support our clients to build their confidence and skills and actively participate in their community of choice by:

Building our clients' sense of safety and independence through the promotion of positive relationships with friends, families and communities

Supporting our clients to make individual choices to achieve their goals

Improving outcomes for our clients in the areas of education, employment, health and life skills

Ensuring that our practice is informed by evidence

Measuring success

We will know we have succeeded when...

- our clients have increased social contact with their friends, families and communities
- outcome measures have improved for our clients across the areas of education, employment, health and life skills
- our program design and delivery is directly linked to research evidence

Our Strategies

2

CULTURAL RESPECT

Life Without Barriers recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique status as the first Australians. Our commitment to reconciliation will be demonstrated through actions that make a positive difference in the lives of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients, carers, employees and communities with whom we are engaged.

We will support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to reclaim, restore and advance culture and rights by:

Contributing actively to reconciliation

Partnering with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to build their capacity and self-determination

Providing culturally sensitive services that connect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to their culture

Providing a culturally safe and diverse workplace with increased numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in our workforce

Measuring success

We will know we have succeeded when...

- we deliver on our Reconciliation Action Plan
- the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in which we work have increased capacity
- our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients tell us that they feel more connected to culture
- we have increased numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in our workforce

Our Strategies

3

CHALLENGING SYSTEMIC DISADVANTAGE

Life Without Barriers will actively challenge systemic disadvantage for vulnerable and marginalised people. We will embrace the responsibility that comes with working for and with disadvantaged and marginalised people. We will advocate with policy-makers, drive a research agenda and facilitate an innovative evidence-based approach to delivering services. By listening to the valuable insights our clients provide, we will enable them to have a collective and prominent voice as we work with policy-makers across government.

We will work to lessen systemic disadvantage in the community by:

Conducting research that focuses on challenging systemic disadvantage
 Offering capacity-building programs to individuals, families and communities
 Partnering with complementary organisations to achieve better outcomes for disadvantaged groups
 Advocating for disadvantaged groups with funders and policy-makers
 Offering training and development opportunities to build the capacity of the sector

Measuring success

We will know we have succeeded when...

- we have conducted at least five research projects that focus on systemic disadvantage
- we offer at least one capacity-building program in each state and territory
- we have partnerships in place in all states and territories
- we have participated in relevant government enquiries, public policy debates and social commentary
- we have run external training and development sessions in all states and territories

Our Strategies

4

PEOPLE AND LEADERSHIP

Investing in our people will provide a solid foundation for service delivery. As Life Without Barriers grows and diversifies, we will ensure our employees and carers have the skills, experience and resources to best meet the needs of our clients.

We will lead, support and empower our people to do great things by:

Building an engaged employee and carer community through innovative leadership, communication and learning
 Developing our employment brand to attract and retain the best people
 Growing and developing our leadership talent pool
 Making our organisation accessible to people with a disability
 Investing in our foster carers so that they are empowered to improve client outcomes

Measuring success

We will know we have succeeded when...

- we have high rates of staff retention
- we have increased the number of people with a disability in our workforce
- we have promoted internal people to significant leadership roles
- our workforce report high levels of engagement
- we have implemented several carer support and development strategies

Our Strategies

5

ORGANISATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Life Without Barriers unique approach is enabled by systems that support innovation, quality, efficiency and effectiveness.

We will be a strong, agile and innovative organisation by:

Rewarding, recognising and celebrating innovation

Implementing effective governance and compliance frameworks including robust quality and risk management systems

Building and maintaining sophisticated, integrated and sustainable information and communication systems

Developing alternate income streams that will enable innovation in our work

Measuring success

We will know we have succeeded when...

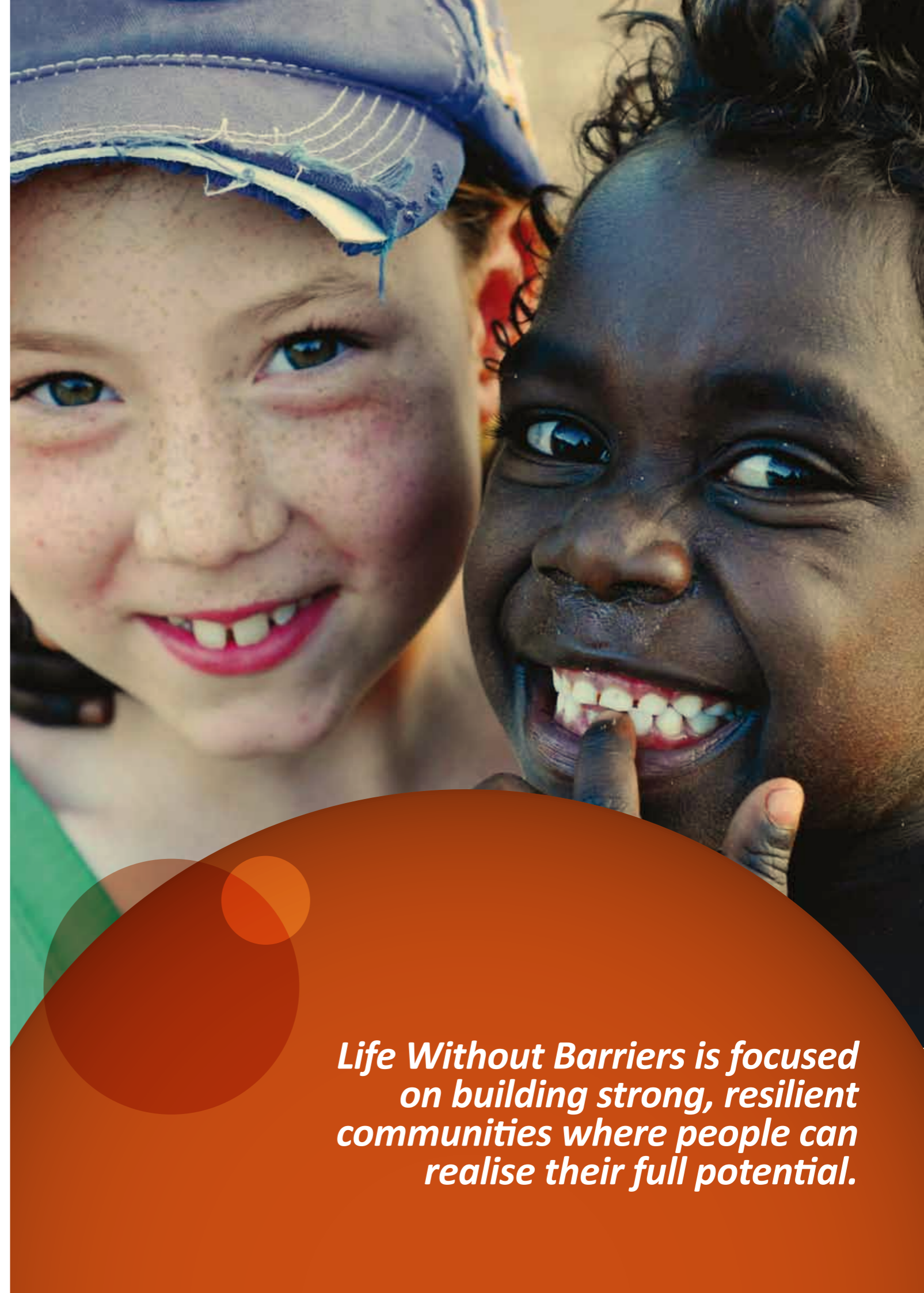
- we have leveraged innovative ideas and practices across the organisation
- we have achieved ISO certification for our Quality Management System
- we have a suite of systems that meet all of our information management needs
- we have increased income from non-government sources



**At the heart
of this plan is a
passion to support
and empower
our clients.**

LWB Timeline

- 1995** Two community leaders from Newcastle who shared a passion for improving the lives of people living with a disability proposed to create a new non-government, secular organisation for people living with a disability. A Board was formed and Life Without Barriers (LWB) commenced operation.
- 1999** Chief Executive Officer Ray Dunn joined the team in 1999. LWB recruited more staff, enhanced and expanded the original disability programs and applied for government funding.
- 2000** Care and protection services, such as foster care, commenced in New South Wales. Demand for these services increased rapidly because of the unique community-based approach of LWB.
- 2001** Care and protection services commenced in South East Queensland.
- 2002** Central and Far North Queensland operations commenced and LWB established itself in South Australia.
- 2005** The LWB model of care expanded into mental health services in South Australia. Services commenced in the Northern Territory and new programs were developed in collaboration with local Aboriginal communities to provide culturally appropriate care.
- 2006** Operations were established in Tasmania and Far West NSW.
- 2007** Life Without Barriers launched services in Western Australia. LWB won the Australian Business Award for Innovation for our unique approach to mental health and Indigenous support services.
- 2008** LWB became the largest non-government provider of disability services in the Northern Territory. The organisation held its first annual reconciliation event and established the Carer Advancement and Training Team.
- 2009** LWB hosted its inaugural carer conference attracting carers from around the country. The organisation commenced providing care to unaccompanied asylum seekers on Christmas Island. Operations were established in Victoria and LWB expanded into New Zealand.
- 2010** Today Life Without Barriers is the largest provider of care and protection services in Australia. The organisation supports over 4000 clients with high and complex needs across Australia and New Zealand and has a workforce of 3000 employees, carers, contractors and volunteers.



Life Without Barriers is focused on building strong, resilient communities where people can realise their full potential.