



St Francis
SOCIAL SERVICES



STRATEGIC PLAN 2017-2019

“
*Start by doing what is necessary,
then what is possible, and suddenly
you are doing the impossible.*”

St Francis of Assisi



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STRATEGIC PLAN

I am delighted to be introducing the 2017-19 Strategic Plan for St Francis Social Services, an organisation that since 1978 has drawn on the rich Franciscan tradition to assist those from the periphery of society.

This plan establishes a framework for the next stage of St Francis Social Services' development. It strengthens our commitment to support programs that make a positive impact on the lives of the most marginalised and disadvantaged and will maximise our ability to continue to make a lasting, positive difference by focusing our resources and expertise in key areas.

St Francis Social Services' 2017-19 Strategic Plan has been developed in consultation with the people of St Francis Social Services, the Board, the Executive Team and all the staff. We utilised a bottom-up approach with the purpose of aligning all our projects under St Francis Social Services and ensuring a common commitment to our shared purpose, vision and values.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all who contributed to this plan and, in advance, for the expertise, enthusiasm and commitment you bring that will enable our organisation to continually learn and grow. I would also like to acknowledge our clients, volunteers and supporters, without whom, this work would not be possible.

I look forward to working with you as we endeavour to achieve the ambitious goals in our Strategic Plan on our journey towards achieving full recognition of the dignity, equality, human rights and humanity of all people.



Lyn Harrison
CEO
St Francis Social Services

VISION, PURPOSE AND VALUES

VISION: Our vision is for a society in which there is full recognition of the dignity, equality, human rights and humanity of all people.

PURPOSE: To uphold the intrinsic dignity of each person by providing support and advocacy to empower the most disadvantaged and marginalised within our community.

This includes:

- Our belief in the uniqueness of every person.
- Our assisting those who are the most disadvantaged and marginalised within our community.
- Our service focus supports:
 - Individuals and families seeking asylum
 - Disadvantaged young people and their families

It is our mandate to support and advocate for those seeking our assistance and care.

We strive to maintain, nurture and enhance the growth, development and quality of their lives.

We journey with our clients and believe in their intrinsic strengths and resilience.

- VALUES:**
- Welcome
 - Respect
 - Connect
 - Empower

We do this by fostering a community that is consistently supportive, progressive and creative.



OUR STAKEHOLDERS

The causes of disadvantage and marginalisation are many and complex, but by focusing on the following client groups, while implementing this plan, we believe we will make real and significant progress towards achieving St Francis Social Services' goals to empower the most disadvantaged and marginalised within our community.

- Disadvantaged youth and their families
- People seeking asylum
- Aboriginal children, young people and families

Being essentially client focused, we aim to nurture our staff and care for them by providing inclusive, consultative, safe work practices and opportunities for professional development.

The key stakeholders in this strategic plan are the Staff, Clients and Members of the Board.

OUR STAKEHOLDERS

STAKEHOLDER	MUTUAL EXPECTATIONS
Staff	<p>We are committed with passion to the purpose of St Francis Social Services. While essentially client focused, we want to nurture and care for our staff by providing opportunities for professional development and inclusive, consultative, safe work practices.</p> <p>We value the diverse skills sets and professionalism of our team and good communication across the organisation.</p>
Clients	<p>We are committed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing a welcoming, compassionate response and understanding where clients feel welcome and safe • inclusive and respectful dealings where clients are heard • confidentiality • providing a compassionate listening ear • professional expertise which assists our clients to the best of our ability
Board	<p>We are committed to providing excellence in leadership, governance and risk management. Our Board is voluntary and is proactively committed to active engagement and commitment to the work of SFSS.</p>
Donors & Funders	<p>We are committed to ethical responsibility, transparency, accountability, providing measurable outcomes, accurate reporting, consistent contact and respect for donor privacy.</p>
Volunteers	<p>We value the generosity and commitment of our volunteers. We are committed to leading practice in volunteer management by creating an environment where volunteers are valued, respected, appreciated, receive appropriate levels of training and are supervised and supported to fulfil their role.</p>
Partners	<p>We are committed to providing a high level of communication and information exchange, collaboration, consultation, recognition, transparency, feedback and engagement. We are a committed, reliable and accountable partner.</p>

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1: EMBED SFSS PURPOSE AND VALUES



Why:

The most unifying feature of St Francis Social Services is the commitment of the staff to the Franciscan tradition of working to assist those on the periphery of society.

We are a small organisation with limited capacity, our resources are most often stretched, with our staff working to ensure the needs of our clients are met, even when this means performing duties above and beyond their role.

In order to honour this passion and commitment, the organisation must articulate and practice the Franciscan tradition in contemporary ways.

To achieve this strategic priority, we will:

1. Establish a Purpose and Culture Committee of staff members from across the organisation to embed our vision, purpose and values across the organisation and enhance integration of services.
2. Develop a Reconciliation Action Plan to strengthen our values and purpose across all communities.
3. Embed values and purpose throughout communication strategies.
4. Embed values and purpose in program design and evaluation.

As a result:

St Francis Social Services will develop an organisation that offers the opportunity for staff members to achieve satisfaction from practicing a meaningful profession that is closely aligned with their own values. Team members will understand that their work is consistently valued for upholding the dignity of every human by being ethical, responsible and committed to the most disadvantaged and marginalised.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2: ENHANCE ORGANISATIONAL AND WORKFORCE CAPABILITY



Why:

St Francis Social Services is a small charity organisation achieving big things. Our small team of 22 employees, has grown exponentially in service reach over the last 35 years. We now work directly with over 1800 clients per year.

This plan recognises the opportunities for developing appropriate structures, systems and policies, especially in regard to Professional Development, Human Resources and Information Technology. It will harness opportunities to share expertise through circles of practice and combined professional development.

To achieve this strategic priority, we will:

1. Develop appropriate Human Resource practices for staff and volunteers.
 - a. Develop University partnerships to strengthen capacity and resources
 - b. Review supervision and PD (self-care, wellbeing, induction) practices to ensure equity and effectiveness that is aligned with the needs of the organisation
 - c. Develop a formal orientation, supervision and evaluation framework for volunteers
2. Design and implement an organisation-wide risk management framework.
3. Develop an outcomes based reporting and evaluation framework.
4. Develop trauma-informed and child-safe organisation-wide practices including client participation.
5. Embed evidenced based practice to inform our service delivery.

As a result:

The ability of St Francis Social Services to respond effectively and quickly to emerging needs will be strengthened, as will our ability to meet the needs of all clients. As the organisation grows we will be better placed to attract, retain and develop our team.

The organisation will also be better placed to measure risk and uphold the safety of our clients and staff. Our accountability reporting mechanisms will help us provide evidence of the efficacy of our programs and the positive outcomes being achieved.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3: EXPAND SERVICE DELIVERY IN BOTH EXISTING AND NEW PROGRAM AREAS



Why:

The pressures placed on those in need are increasing. As a result, the demands on the services provided by St Francis Social Services are unprecedented. Our services are needed now, more than ever:

- Youth unemployment remains at a high level. There are more young people experiencing mental health issues than any time previously and they are not accessing the support they need.
- Policies regarding people seeking asylum are constantly changing, with support frequently being denied. The impacts on the mental health of those we support are devastating.
- Aboriginal families are calling for assistance, from organisations such as ours, to utilise our expertise to help children remain in school by providing support programs as children transition from primary into high school.

To achieve this strategic priority, we will:

1. Review services and practices to maximise sustainability and efficacy.
2. Identify strategic partnerships to support existing and new programs.
3. Align Centre 360 services to the FaCS Targeted Early Intervention reform.
4. Seek opportunities for growth in three targeted areas:
 - Youth Employment
 - Aboriginal children, young people and families
 - Social enterprise for refugees and people seeking asylum

As a result:

St Francis Social Services will be better placed to respond to the immediate and emerging needs of our clients. By reviewing service delivery and practice, we will identify areas where the needs of clients can be met more fully through the most effective utilisation of expertise and integration of service delivery.

Strategic partnerships will strengthen our ability to support existing and new programs both through enhancing our ability to achieve funding for service provision as well as ensuring the expertise of our staff is fully utilised.

The alignment of Centre 360 services to the FaCS Targeted Early Intervention reform will see us increase our ability to provide services to younger clients in need. This will both ensure we are well placed to achieve sustainable government funding for this service and enable us to provide interventions that will minimise the devastating effects of mental health issues for young people.

The three targeted growth opportunities are the areas where our team have identified major gaps in service delivery and where the need is greatest. Each area provides the maximum opportunity to make a positive impact by utilising the existing skills and expertise of our staff and matching them with the needs of our targeted clients.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4: SUPPORT FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY



Why:

St Francis Social Services enjoys the support of a small number of major supporters who make a substantial difference to our ability to provide effective services for those in most need. We are greatly appreciative of this assistance, but also recognise the necessity to diversify our revenue and funding streams to ensure sustainability. This is particularly important as the House of Welcome project receives no Federal Government funding and needs to remain independent in its ability to assist people seeking asylum.

While there is an existing grant funding application process in place, there is an increasing number of charities in Australia who are competing for the same philanthropic funding. Granting can prove cyclical and is no longer a viable standalone strategy for sustainable funding. Charities must have a fully diversified funding strategy in order to achieve sustainability.

To achieve this strategic priority, we will:

1. Diversify our revenue and funding streams.
2. Strengthen our brand through advocacy and marketing strategies.
3. Establish two Board Sub Committees:
 - a. Governance, Finance & Risk Management
 - b. Fundraising

As a result:

By strengthening our brand through advocacy and marketing strategies, St Francis Social Services will strengthen our capacity to attract funding as a greater number of potential supporters will become aware of the need for and efficacy of our work. A stronger brand will attract a larger pool of corporate donors who will see the positive benefit of aligning their own brand with ours. Branding and marketing strategies will also assist in streamlining the donation process making our service more accessible to donors.

The Fundraising Board Sub Committee and our marketing and communication strategies will work together to enhance our ability to communicate the value of our service to donors. They will encourage personal interaction with major donors, leaving the organisation better placed to develop strategic relationships with supporters.

By establishing a Governance, Finance & Risk Management Board Sub Committee, St Francis Social Services will strengthen our ability to manage risk and provide evidence of good governance so that we can demonstrate to our supporters how seriously we take our responsibility to them, especially our ability to utilise the funds they provide to achieve the maximum benefit for our clients.



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