



## Strategic Plan 2021-2023



# Acknowledgement of Country

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In the spirit of reconciliation, Mercy Connect acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of this country, and their connection to land, water and community. We pay our respect to them, their cultures and customs, and to Elders past, present and emerging.



# Message from the Chair **Matthew Clancy**

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Mercy Connect operates as a ministry of the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of Australia and Papua New Guinea. The Mercy ethos of caring underpins all we do at Mercy Connect as we strive to ensure that every person living with a disability has equity in our society.

Mercy Connect has a long history of service of supporting those with disability, including mental illness and other co-morbidities. A diverse range of services are offered within the broader Albury and Central Western regions to meet existing, and emerging, needs.

Mercy Connect has evolved its services in line with the ongoing rollout of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) across Australia. We continue to welcome the challenges that this innovative funding model presents, and recognise its contribution to the improvement of participants' lives through choice and control. We stand ready with, and supportive of, our participants as we support people in need to live fulfilled lives, by embracing new ways of operating as a registered NDIS provider.

Mercy Connect currently operates in a dynamic, evolving environment that is largely funded by consumer-led model. A rapidly changing regulatory environment is an everyday experience for service providers. Shifting participant wants and needs has implications for service planning and personnel recruitment and development. As well, technical advancements and digital developments will call for greater investment in these products.

Demographic and social changes are part of our everyday world. These influences must be monitored carefully in the times ahead and planning and service delivery models altered continuously and incrementally as changes are indicated.

A strong Mercy mission – driven culture, supported by an innovative, vibrant, workforce, is operative at Mercy Connect. We are confident that this will enable us to meet these stated

contemporary influences in a way that will be compassionate and supportive towards those we seek to serve.

Care of our environment is enshrined in our daily operations. Both participants and staff share our commitment to the environment and several programs have been developed to emphasis and support this commitment. The years ahead will require enhanced efforts and the development of additional programs in response to identified needs.

This Strategic Plan presents the way forward from 2021 to 2023 for Mercy Connect as developed and supported by the Board of Directors. I would like to thank the Mercy Connect Board and staff for their support in developing, and progressing, this plan.

Together we grow.



**Matthew Clancy**  
Chair

# Our Purpose

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Mercy Connect supports people in need to live fulfilled lives.

# Our Mission

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Through the Mercy tradition to recognise the rights of adults, children and older people with a disability and to assist each person to achieve their life's ambitions in a connected and meaningful way.

# Our Vision

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Mercy Connect, through our actions, will become the preferred service provider to people with a disability. We will create and deliver innovative services and supports that empower participants to reach their full potential.

# Our Values

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## Compassion

Supporting and listening with kindness and understanding.



## Hospitality

Welcoming each other with openness and a smile.



## Respect

Accepting and treating each other with integrity.



## Innovation

Seeing opportunities and creating new solutions.



## Teamwork

Working together with a shared view of success.



## Accountability

Choosing courage and taking ownership of our actions.



# Our Strategic Priorities

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As a Christian organisation, in the Catholic tradition, and underpinned and driven by the Mercy ethos, Mercy Connect will develop and drive its organisation in 2021 – 2023 through the following Strategic Priority Areas:

- Capability
- Innovation
- Growth

## As a Registered NDIS Provider

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Mercy Connect will support the needs of all its participants as a registered NDIS Provider. There are many obligations to this role and how Mercy Connect will need to conduct their business and meet predetermined performance measures to achieve and retain the status of a Registered Provider.



# Strategic Priorities 2021-2023

*"You should remember that not to advance is to go back".*

Catherine McAuley

## Innovation



Recruit school leavers, TAFE and University graduates



Suitable assessment and transition accommodation



Participant / family / guardian experience pathway modelling and mapping



Research opportunities with Universities



Innovative disability housing models



Service capabilities to meet participants / families / guardians needs and wants



Future provision care and support services



Finalise organisation restructure



Enhance governance of properties and assets



Improve staff engagement and satisfaction



Increased capital investment in Information and Communication Technology



Introduce leadership development for all staff



Refine and develop policies and procedures



Disability Royal Commission - Response and transparency



Invest in training and capability building



Develop governance frameworks



Increased collaboration with church and Mercy Ministries



NFP organisations future acquisition and or partnership



Additional services for participants / families / guardians wants and needs



Explore market areas

## Capability

## Growth

# Innovation

| Strategic Focus  | Strategic Initiatives  |
|--|--|
| 1. Innovative disability housing models.                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of greenfield disability housing developments which meets the needs of participants.</li> <li>• Research innovative housing models throughout Australia / Internationally.</li> <li>• Develop master site plan for St John's Campus, Thurgoona NSW.</li> </ul>  |
| 2. Suitable assessment and transition accommodation.                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of assessment and transition accommodation which meets the needs of participants.</li> <li>• Research innovative assessment and transition housing models throughout Australia / Internationally.</li> <li>• Seek alternate funding sources to support operation of assessment and transition accommodation.</li> </ul> |
| 3. Recruit school leavers and Vocational Training / Tertiary School graduates. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of dedicated Recruitment Plan.</li> <li>• Continued Work Placement Student Program.</li> <li>• Continued partnership for ongoing University student placements.</li> </ul>  |
| 4. Research opportunities with universities.                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish Memorandum of Understandings with key Tertiary providers and seek research activities to partner on.</li> <li>• Collaborate with Universities on current research projects and initiatives.</li> </ul>  |
| 5. Participant / family / guardian experience pathway modelling and mapping.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop disability-focused Social Impact Framework.</li> <li>• Create a Virtual Reality Module that promotes empathy and a greater understanding of people living with disability.</li> <li>• Research the experiences of Mercy Connect participants.</li> </ul>  |

# Capability

| Strategic Focus   | Strategic Initiatives   |
|---|---|
| 1. Increase capital investment in Information Communication Technology (ICT). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a Digital Strategy.</li> <li>• Increase in-house ICT expertise.</li> <li>• Redesign Mercy Connect website.</li> <li>• Purchase fit-for-purpose ICT equipment.</li> </ul>   |
| 2. Finalise reorganisation of internal staff and management structure.        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop new staff rostering model and organisational structures.</li> <li>• Review all Mercy Connect staff Position Descriptions.</li> <li>• Revise Performance Review process.</li> </ul>   |
| 3. Enhance governance of our properties and assets.                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review property management and maintenance schedules, and associated protocols.</li> <li>• Develop procurement procedures and processes.</li> <li>• Increase in-house property and asset expertise.</li> <li>• Review of property maintenance application.</li> </ul>  |
| 4. Refine and develop policies and procedures.                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Map and document of all internal processes and systems.</li> <li>• Develop an annual Internal Audit Plan.</li> <li>• Introduce Quality Portal to document accreditation evidence.</li> <li>• Revision of Policy and Procedure Framework.</li> </ul>  |
| 5. Introduce leadership development for all staff.                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer leadership programs to all current / emerging leaders within the organisation.</li> <li>• Update Learning and Development Framework.</li> <li>• Develop succession plans for key roles.</li> </ul>   |
| 6. Future provision of care and support services.                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of Outreach / Day Program service delivery.</li> <li>• Increase engagement with Participant Satisfaction surveys.</li> <li>• Promoting and fundraising for donations for Mercy Connect.</li> <li>• Review financial sustainability of all care and support services.</li> <li>• Increase capital investment into internal systems and applications to support reporting and decision making.</li> <li>• Investigate grant funding opportunities and seek further income diversification.</li> </ul> |



## Capability cont.

| Strategic Focus  | Strategic Initiatives  |
|--|--|
| 7. Improve staff engagement and satisfaction.                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a Formation Activities Program.</li> <li>• Promotion of Mercy tradition and Mercy Values and drive Mercy culture.</li> <li>• Incorporation of Mercy Story (Values and Tradition) in all staff appointment processes, staff orientation sessions and relevant ongoing training.</li> <li>• Introduce specific Values / Mission focused questions in Staff Engagement Survey, and report on results.</li> <li>• Encourage participation in annual Staff Satisfaction survey.</li> <li>• Increased positive media stories for Mercy Connect reflecting the Mercy Values and Tradition.</li> <li>• Address succession planning to ensure sustainability.</li> <li>• Increased training and development programs for staff, including skills measurement.</li> <li>• Increase and improve internal communications to staff.</li> <li>• Promotion of Whistle-blower Program.</li> <li>• Promote recognition of outstanding staff achievements.</li> </ul> |
| 8. Develop governance frameworks.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refinement of procurement procedures and processes.</li> <li>• Introduction of Business Innovation Governance (BIG) Committee.</li> </ul>   |
| 9. Disability Royal Commission – Response and transparency.                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dedicated Response Team formed to collate required information.</li> <li>• Proactive engagement with participants, families / guardians and staff on Royal Commission updates and developments.</li> <li>• Appointment of external counsel to assist Mercy Connect with enquiries and preparation of responses.</li> </ul>  |
| 10. Service capabilities to participant's / families and guardian needs and wants. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innovative opportunities and programs to meet individual needs, including Allied Health services, including Speech Pathology and Occupational Therapy.</li> <li>• Specialised services continue to be available for participants and other people in need.</li> </ul>   |
| 11. Invest in Board training and capacity-building.                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop Board-focused governance training.</li> <li>• Support Board-focused formation activities.</li> </ul>  |

# Growth

| Strategic Focus  | Strategic Initiatives  |
|--|--|
| 1. Implement and develop regional opportunities.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore market areas within Murrumbidgee, North East Victoria and Central West regions.</li> <li>• Establish connections with key stakeholders within growth market areas.</li> </ul>   |
| 2. Actively collaborate with church and Mercy ministries for future planning and opportunities.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased engagement with various Catholic Diocese in areas Mercy Connect operates.</li> <li>• Development of Marketing and Communication Plan that includes Mercy identity and brand with other Social Service ministries and agencies.</li> </ul>                                 |
| 3. Consider the needs and wants of participants, and the opportunity to provide additional services including: Education and employment services, Social enterprise programs, Allied health and mental health service offerings. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of programs that meet the needs and wants of participants.</li> <li>• Expand and diversify existing services offered in order to support the choice and demand of participants.</li> <li>• Increased participant health support through innovative measures.</li> </ul> |
| 4. Growth through acquisition and / or partnerships with other Not-For Profit organisations.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actively explore opportunities to acquire and / or partner with other values-aligned Not-For-Profit organisations.</li> </ul>   |





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