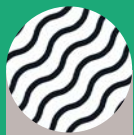


# Strategic Plan

2023-2029

Revised 2024



gateway  
health

People living well



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We acknowledge the traditional custodians of all the lands on which we live, work and play. We pay our respects to Elders, past present and future, for they hold the memory, culture and stories all First Nations peoples. We commit to Reconciliation through truth telling and recognition of loss of land, language and culture; and, to listening and learning as part of a future where all can grow and thrive.

We recognise and celebrate the diversity of our communities and all people we serve, including First Nations peoples; people with disabilities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and gender diverse people; intersex people; people experiencing health inequalities; culturally and linguistically diverse people; older people; children and people from rural and remote areas.

We are a Child Safe organisation and will ensure the safety of children and young people at all times.

## Introduction



The *Gateway Health Strategic Plan 2023-2029* builds on achievements and learning from previous strategic plans, and draws on the knowledge and priorities outlined in the 2019-2029 Service Plan.

The directions outlined are informed by the thoughts, ideas and experience of our staff, consumers, stakeholders and Board.

Over the next five years Gateway Health seeks to grow and develop our organisation and service offerings to:

- Improve health equity;
- Support a great start to life;
- Enable and support healthy ageing;
- Support mental health and wellbeing; and,
- Address the health impacts of climate change.

This strategic plan seeks to commits us to providing the best possible experience and outcomes for consumers, communities and our staff.

We will do this in line with our values and through innovation, partnerships for connection and collaboration, and encompassing our approach to prevention and health promotion - contributing to healthy social and economic environments that enable people to live well.

Further impacts of climate change on health, wellbeing and the economy are predicted. Policy changes at federal and state level have and will continue to impact our traditional service offerings.

Cost of living issues, rates of anxiety and depression, chronic illness, suicide, family violence, risky substance use and an ageing community and workforce profile continue to impact, and is resulting in increased demand in all services. There is opportunity and risk with artificial intelligence (AI) in a rapidly changing space.

We need to continually improve our services and diversify our offerings to ensure we are sustainable and able to meet the needs of those at highest risk of poor health outcomes.

We will build on our strong foundations and continue working with consumers, staff and partners to positively impact the health outcomes of rural and regional communities.

**Trent Dean, Chief Executive Officer**  
**Ruth Davenport, Board Chair**

## Vision

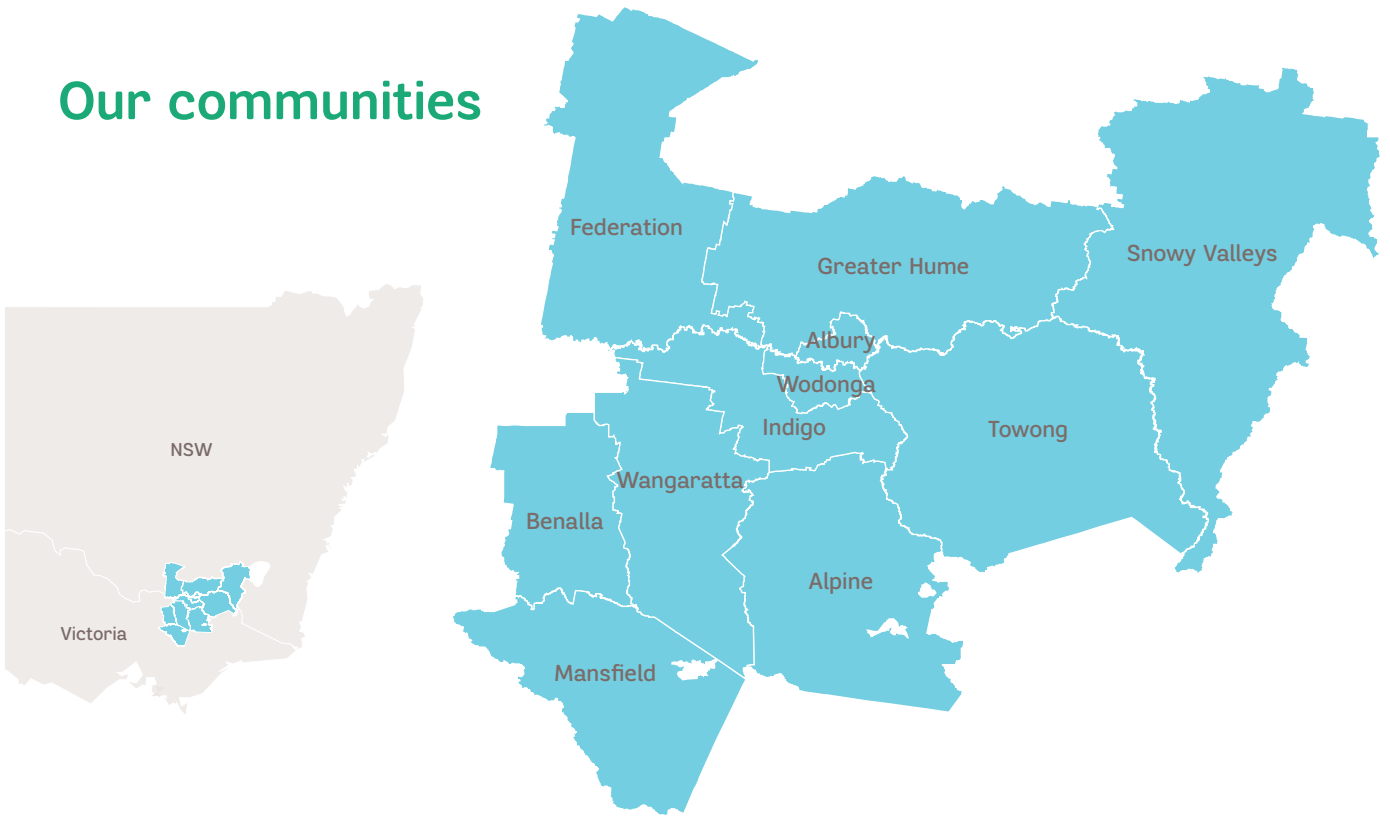
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## Purpose

To provide care and services that connect the community, improve wellbeing, and strengthen health equity.



# Our communities



While the region's population is mainly concentrated in the regional cities of Albury, Wodonga and Wangaratta, many people live in smaller townships and in the hills and valleys of the surrounding areas, north and south of the Murray River.

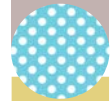
Over the past 10 years, significant parts of the region have been impacted by drought, pandemic, and multiple natural disasters. These events have led to many changes in traditional economic and physical environments and opportunities.

Across local government areas in Gateway Health's catchment, populations are generally

predicted to increase by small to very small numbers with a larger proportion of older people. The cities of Wodonga and Albury are projected to grow the most.

Population groups within Gateway Health's footprint are diverse and widespread. Priority populations include First Nations peoples, rural people, migrant and refugee people, people with disabilities, LGBTIQ+ people, older people, young people, neurodiverse people, carers, people who have physical and mental illnesses and those that are at risk of illness. Many population groups have different levels of need, barriers to access, and lack of integrated service options.





## Our approach

The strategic plan development used a strengths-based approach and deep engagement with senior staff, building on significant and broad staff, consumer and community consultation.

Extensive and ongoing data and information gathering, analysis of community demographics and projected demand; identifying changes in the external environment and the related issues and opportunities has informed our future direction, and enables us to be both pro-active and responsive.

## Our direction

Success in each of our priority areas will be informed and shaped by the ever-changing environment in which we operate – hence our plan is structured over three planning horizons.

Our way of working is relationship based, and builds on our deep connection to the communities we serve. We pride ourselves on our capability to adapt, to be flexible and to find innovative ways to make it easier for people and communities to access the help and services they need.

# Priority 1

## Improve health equity



Gateway Health will work closely with partners to improve access to healthcare for people and communities wherever we provide services, particularly for those that currently face the greatest health challenges. Our partnerships, services and work are place-based — delivered where, when and how they are needed, improving connection to services and across communities. We help to address power imbalances between providers and people and, as required, are supported by technology as a tool to improve effectiveness and reach.

Gateway Health seeks to strengthen community connection and engagement across all services and programs. This is important in improving individual health and wellbeing, and the overall resilience of the diverse communities in the region. Individuals and communities are informed, are able to access the help they need and feel confident to do so.

### What does success look like?



- Established place-based approaches address the unique and diverse needs and challenges of rural and regional communities
- Gateway Health is trusted by those seeking help
- Gateway Health is advancing the health and wellbeing of north east Victorian and southern NSW communities
- Gateway Health and its research partners demonstrate social impact



## Priority 2

### A great start to life



The importance of the early years for children's development and continued success over their lifetime is key to a great start to life. Inequity can stand in the way of parents providing their children with the support they know their children need. Across the region, family disadvantage is higher than the Victorian average with a greater number of children growing up in low-income, welfare-dependent families. In the Murray region, statistics of bullying and children in out of home care are also higher, and a number of local government areas have a greater disease burden and health risk.

Gateway Health will work with its partners to bring together and coordinate a continuum of support to address the health and non-medical factors that young children and families face from pre-conception, through to pregnancy and the early years. Non-medical issues can often include food insecurity, legal challenges, and housing instability, all of which can impact a child's physical and emotional health and development, and family wellbeing. Early help from pre-pregnancy ensures those with additional life challenges such as new arrivals, those facing insecure food and accommodation, and those that feel anxious or unsafe have access to the support they need.

#### What does success look like?



- Children and their families are supported to have a positive trajectory in life from preconception, pregnancy and the early years
- More opportunities for parents to socialise, make connections and learn from each other, share their journey and normalise their daily challenges and joys of raising their children



# Priority 3

## Healthy ageing

The 2021 census reported almost half the overall population growth across the region occurred in the 65 and over age group. All local government areas experienced significant growth in this age cohort and the trend is set to continue. Loneliness and social isolation in the region are likely to be further exacerbated with more than 22,000 people living alone, an increase of 12 per cent over the five-year census period.

Gateway Health is invested in keeping people in our region healthy and in their community as they age. This includes having partnerships and affordable services in place that support emotional and social wellbeing, connection and activity, and enable health and other wellbeing risk factors to be identified and addressed early. Gateway Health will ensure digital literacy supports choice, participation and accessible services for people as they age.

Increased intergenerational approaches will ensure the ageing population and diverse communities continue to feel valued and engaged, and their knowledge, experience, and support, are able to transcend generations.



### What does success look like?



- Innovative services and programs keep people well at home and in their community throughout our footprint in North East Victoria and southern NSW
- Celebrating the value, knowledge and wisdom of older people in all population groups





## Priority 4

### Improved mental health and wellbeing

The recommendations from the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System speak specifically to the need to improve the mental health and wellbeing of people in rural and regional Victoria. The system reforms are extensive and systemic and include improved access to treatment, care, and services, through to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of specific groups and places.

Gateway Health's approach is consistent with the Commonwealth's 2030 Vision for mental health and suicide prevention which is focused on local community solutions, connected and easy to navigate services. Ongoing investment in prevention of illness, prevention of harm and early intervention is key to making a lasting impact. Connecting services will require greater integration between alcohol and other drugs (AOD), mental health and family violence; and, embedding the knowledge, insights and experience of those with lived and living experience into service design and delivery.

#### What does success look like?



- Build capability within communities to strengthen mental health protective factors across the lifespan
- Partnerships that create collaborative and integrated AOD, mental health and family violence responses in communities
- Accessible and inclusive community based mental health services are accessible for priority populations throughout our footprint in North East Victoria and southern NSW



## Priority 5

### Climate adaptation and health



Over recent years, communities in the region have been devastated by unprecedented climate and health events including fires, floods, drought, infestations, landslips, heatwaves and COVID-19. These events have tested the resilience of our staff and communities, and reinforced the need for ongoing support to address the impacts and often compounding emotional trauma.

Gateway Health is committed to building strong relationships with local governments, actively contributing to broader community discussions, partnerships, planning and action on climate change; and supporting preparedness for emerging health threats and impacts. Our leadership in trauma-informed local disaster recovery response, and development of streamlined referral networks strengthens community resilience and preparedness between disasters, and helps address the trauma that accumulates with each event.

Gateway Health is committed to supporting our staff to help us reduce our environmental impact, including innovation in how and where our services are delivered, how we use our facilities and supporting activation of green spaces for better health outcomes.

#### What does success look like?



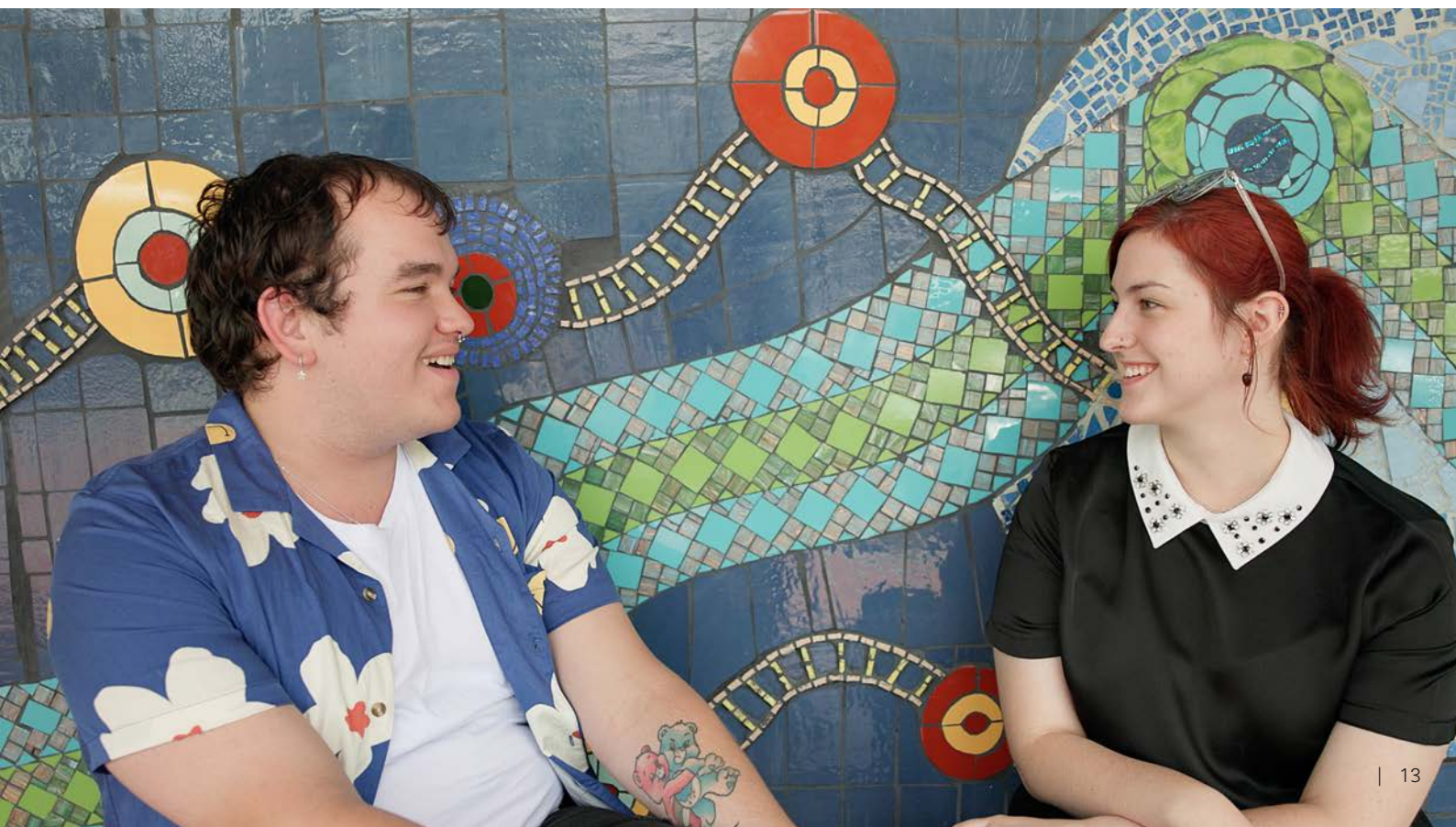
- Help communities to prepare, respond and recover from climate-related events
- Be a trusted leader in addressing the impacts of climate change on health and wellbeing
- Build an environmentally sustainable Gateway Health



## Measuring success by 2029

We will know we are successful in reaching our aspirations by the end of the plan in 2029 by measuring the following.

- Our enhanced profile within communities and sectors as a leader in community health, a trusted provider and brand
- Provision of sustainable programs and services in each priority areas, throughout our footprint in North East Victoria and southern NSW
- Effectiveness of services and programs from the perspective of all consumer groups, carers and families
- Effectiveness of collaboration and partnerships across each strategic priority



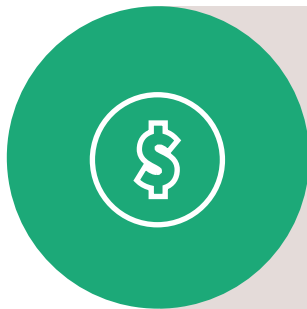
## Strategic enablers

Gateway Health will continue to invest in its people and the organisation to build the capability and governance required to deliver the strategic priorities and ensure financial, environmental and social sustainability.



### Digital and data transformation

- A digitally enabled, simplified client journey
- Digitised and effective systems to support service delivery and governance



### Strong financial management to support growth and sustainability

- Productivity improvement initiatives delivered, including advocacy to reflect the cost of doing business
- Innovation in diversifying income, including marketing, communication and brand awareness



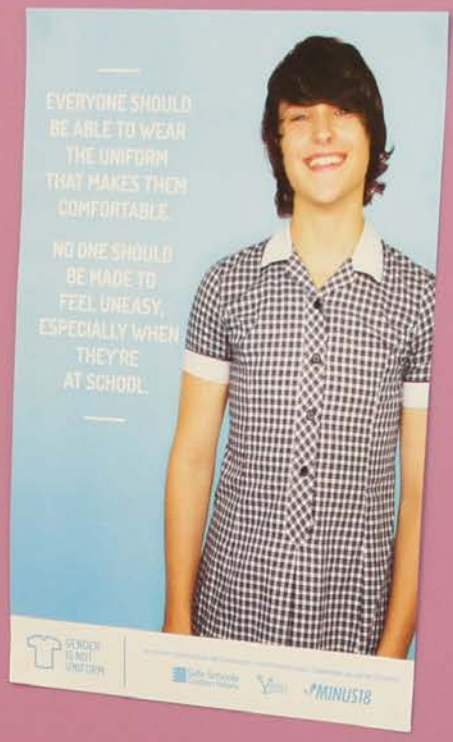
### Exceptional consumer experience and engagement

- Streamlined access and engagement processes, including consumer voices in co-design
- Innovation that improves integration and connection of services



### Grow our workforce

- Embed the lived and living experience workforce
- Initiatives that strengthen our wellbeing culture and safe work environment
- Investment in leadership and development to ensure capability to deliver the strategic plan



# gateway health

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