



ac.care

opportunities for life ... for country people
est. 1986

STRATEGIC PLAN | PUBLISHED MARCH 2021



ac.care pays respect to the past, present and future Traditional Custodians and Elders of this nation and acknowledges the continuation of cultural, spiritual and educational practices, along with connection to country, of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

OUR MISSION



Our mission is for all country people to have a safe home, enough money to live on and strong, positive relationships.

WHO ARE WE?

ac.care (Anglican Community Care Inc.) is a non-government organisation (NGO) with charitable status, created by country people for country people.

The organisation started in 1986 when the need was identified by the Mount Gambier Anglican Parish for a local teenage foster care service.

ac.care has since grown to provide diverse services across a large part of eastern regional South Australia with a broad program mix, but continued focus on early intervention and prevention services.

Our mission is for all country people to have a safe home, enough money to live on and strong, positive relationships.

As part of this mission, we seek to build resilience and opportunities with country people. Our constitution provides a clear mandate for

us to "work with country people to reduce homelessness, poverty, isolation and support families and children to be safe and strong".

Our core activities include recruitment and support of foster carers, residential care for vulnerable young people and support for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. We also deliver Aboriginal services, programs focused on family relationships, counselling, early childhood development, emergency relief and financial inclusion, along with community adult education.

Today we provide services to the South Australian country communities of the Limestone Coast, Murraylands, Riverland, Adelaide Hills and Fleurieu Peninsula.

ac.care's impact across eastern regional South Australia is broad, with our diverse program delivery tailored to providing local solutions in partnership with clients, the community and our team of more than 250 employees and over 300 volunteers, including our valued foster carers.



AC.CARE SERVICES DIRECTORY

ABORIGINAL SERVICES

- HIPPY – Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters empowering parents to be their child's first teacher before starting school
- Opening Doors flexible individual support service for Aboriginal young people, promoting positive emotional wellbeing
- STAY Service To Aboriginal Youth aged 10-19

COMMUNITY AND LEARNING

- ACE Adult Community Education
- ac.care Berri
- ac.care Murraylands Centre
- Millicent Community Centre
- Mount Gambier Community Centre
- Personal Success Coaching

FINANCIAL INCLUSION

- Emergency Relief – financial help and food in a crisis
- Financial Counselling
- Low Income Support program
- Millicent Services SA agency
- Millicent Services Australia agency

HOMELESSNESS

- Limestone Coast Homelessness Service
- Murraylands Homelessness Service
- Riverland Homelessness Service
- Reconnect early intervention program for young people aged 12 to 18 at risk of homelessness
- TED Tenancy Education program

OUT OF HOME CARE

- Foster carer recruitment, assessment and training

- Occasional, respite, long-term and short-term foster care
- Staffed 24/7 residential therapeutic strength based care homes

FAMILIES, CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- 123 Magic and Emotion Coaching
- Blast Off for children aged 5-12 affected by separation of their parents
- Changing Tracks Men's Behaviour program
- Children in Focus Information Sessions
- Children's Contact Service, providing a safe, neutral place for changeovers and supervised contact
- Communities for Children Murraylands
- Drumbeat music wellbeing program
- Family Advocacy and Support Services
- Family Dispute Resolution for parenting and property matters

- Family and Relationship Counselling
- Family Preservation and Reunification
- Minya Porlar Crèche Murray Bridge
- Mount Gambier Family Relationship Centre
- Parenting programs:
 - Circle of Security
 - Tuning In To Kids and Tuning In To Teens
 - Parent Child Mother Goose
 - Bringing Up Great Kids
 - Parenting After Separation (Post Separation Cooperative Parenting)
- Seasons for Growth change, loss and grief program for young people
- Specialised Community Referral Service
- Specialised Family Violence Service
- Storm Birds extension to Seasons for Growth
- Youth Resilience Scholarship
- Intensive Family Support

THE AC.CARE WAY



At ac.care, we strive to be recognised as an employer of choice that offers a fantastic work culture and workplace environment to attract and retain the best people for our important work. Incorporating the mission and values, 'The ac.care Way' provides a framework to lead our behaviour and set expectations for each other.

AS EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS, WE STRIVE TO:



SHOW COMPASSION

- Consider how our actions and words impact others and are sensitive to others' feelings
- Demonstrate professionalism to support a culture of integrity and commitment to child safety
- Assist to navigate others by understanding their current situation and how they want it to change
- Stop, listen and never walk past a problem
- Always be kind



BE ADAPTABLE

- Leverage diverse views and perspectives to improve services
- Include the voice of people who use our services in all decision making
- Adapt to changing circumstances in a constructive, positive and flexible way
- Challenge the status quo and keep a continuous improvement mindset
- Continually seek opportunities to learn and develop



BUILD RELATIONSHIPS

- Demonstrate inclusive practices and champion diversity
- Exchange smiles and encourage laughter and a sense of connection
- Champion and support others to be great
- Demonstrate confidence to ask questions, face challenges and accept feedback
- Be prepared to express our views and have difficult conversations in a respectful way



EMBRACE EXCELLENCE

- Step out of our comfort zone and attempt new approaches to pursue excellence
- Share information ethically, consistently and transparently
- Collate data that strengthens the evidence base for interventions to meet service user and community needs
- Continually improve services to remain ahead of the expectations of people who use our services
- Make ourselves aware of and follow relevant legislation requirements, policies and procedures
- Protect our own health and safety and the health and safety of others

OUR GOALS



ac.care has a rolling strategy, meaning we are continuously reflecting on the quality and relevance of our priorities. Our goals are ambitious and multi-year in scope, requiring us to be a learning organisation. We seek to evolve through our experiences and the good practices of others, transferring knowledge quickly and efficiently. We are investing heavily in our outcome measurement and organisational capabilities. Importantly, we are also prepared to take risks to drive innovation, providing a safe environment and acceptance when plans need to change. ac.care is uniquely placed to work with country people and communities. Our programs make a genuine and significant difference in people's lives as we draw on our many years of experience in tackling vulnerability and disadvantage.

THE CHANGE WE WANT TO SEE IN OUR COMMUNITIES

Through this strategy we want to ensure:

1. Vulnerable children and young people are provided nurturing environments that promote their best interests and maximise their potential and connections
2. More adults and children benefit from safe, nurturing and positive family functioning, strong relationships and connection to their communities
3. Fewer people experience financial hardship because they have been supported to strengthen their individual capacities and connect to resources that meet their needs
4. Fewer people face barriers to obtain and sustain safe housing, particularly those with complex needs who are at most risk of being without shelter or support
5. More Aboriginal people feel valued and connected to culture, country and community, experiencing greater education and employment opportunities



OUR GOALS



HOW WE WILL CONTINUE TO IMPROVE AS AN ORGANISATION

To help achieve our goals in the community, ac.care will:

1. Significantly improve the quality and impact of our programs through an outcomes measurement approach, embedded across all service areas
2. Strengthen our reputation as an employer of choice through a human resources strategy that equips and supports staff and volunteers, underpinned by systems and business processes that align with ac.care's culture and priorities
3. Complete a transition process to a sustainable business model that delivers on our mission, while ensuring consideration of environmental, social and financial outcomes

In addition to these goals, ac.care business plans will always include continuous improvement initiatives that respond to emerging issues and focus on new service approaches and enhancing the quality, compliance and security of our systems and business processes.

Each goal is explained in detail in this document so that our staff, clients, supporters, partners and other people and organisations we work with will understand the focus of our work.

Having this clarity will also enable us to make decisions about what we will do and how we will do it, so that we can develop our operational plans and community outcomes accordingly.



GOAL 1 SUPPORT CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Vulnerable children and young people are provided nurturing environments that promote their best interests and maximise their potential and connections.

WHY?

Some families need assistance and, in some cases, statutory child protection services are required where children and young people need to be protected from physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect or domestic violence. Thousands of South Australian children and young people are currently in out-of-home care.

TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL, WE WILL

- Coordinate an increasing number of foster care placements with families who can provide nurturing environments to meet the broad needs of young people, including appropriate cultural settings
- Strengthen our network of carers through broad support and training opportunities
- Support relative or kinship care arrangements, where the caregiver is a family member or a person with a pre-existing relationship to the child
- Provide a therapeutic, strength-based model in residential care houses, managed by appropriately trained ac.care staff
- Support vulnerable youth in independent living situations (e.g. private rental, boarding arrangements).

AS A RESULT

- Children and young people in our care will be safe, healthy and socially connected
- Children and young people will make progress in overcoming the effects of trauma, abuse and neglect



GOAL 2 STRONG AND ENGAGED FAMILIES

More adults and children benefit from safe, nurturing and positive family functioning, strong relationships and connection to their communities.

WHY?

Relationship problems cause significant distress for families and put children at risk. ac.care supports families and relationships of all variations and at any stage - helping new parents adjust, providing counselling and workshops to help sustain and improve relationships with children, partners and extended family and assisting parents and children with positive connections after separation.

TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL, WE WILL

- Run activities and workshops promoting the role of positive parenting for adults and their children
- Enable children of separated parents to have safe contact with the parent that they do not live with in circumstances where the families are unable to manage their own contact arrangements
- Provide family relationship, mediation and reunification services, along with other specialist services for families and children
- Provide non-judgmental, confidential counselling to individuals, couples and families.

AS A RESULT

- Families will experience an improvement to their health and well-being, along with better development of young children
- Children will have the opportunity of re-establishing or maintaining a meaningful relationship with both parents, and other significant people in their lives
- More families will understand how to resolve disputes without going to a family law court
- Fewer families will be renotified to DCP
- Many children will be prevented from coming into care or be safely reunited with their families.



GOAL 3 ALLEVIATE FINANCIAL HARDSHIP

Fewer people experience financial hardship because they will have been supported to strengthen their individual capacities and connect to resources that meet their needs.

WHY?

Emergency relief can act as a safety net for people experiencing financial distress or hardship and who have limited means or resources to help them alleviate their financial crisis. Early intervention with a wraparound approach can lead to better outcomes and future self-sufficiency for individuals and families.

People accessing emergency relief typically have a low or no income, making them vulnerable to financial shock, such as high utility bills. Others need support as a result of unforeseen or life changing events, such as illness or family violence. Emergency relief organisations can be the first point of contact for an individual with complex needs, allowing for referral to more intensive support, such as financial counselling, mental health or alcohol and other drugs support.

TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL, WE WILL

- Provide financial assistance and food items to people who are experiencing financial difficulties
- Assist with independent financial counselling services, offering information and support and referral to non-financial services to individuals and families.

AS A RESULT

- Vulnerable individuals and families will overcome an immediate financial crisis
- Fewer clients will be at risk of losing utility connections
- More clients will maintain housing security
- More clients will have their debt waived
- More clients will set and achieve financial goals.



GOAL 4 REDUCE HOMELESSNESS

Fewer people face barriers to obtain and sustain safe housing, particularly those with complex needs who are at most risk of being without shelter or support.

WHY?

We continue to see concerning levels of young people and families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Intervening early with these groups has been proven to stabilise and improve their housing situation, level of engagement with family, education, training, employment and their local community.

TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL, WE WILL

- Provide gateway services into a broader homelessness and mainstream support sector that is client focused, based on a "housing first" approach with no exits into homelessness
- Provide multi-functional spaces and approaches for a range of ac.care services (such as community hubs, learning opportunities and outreach services).

AS A RESULT

- People at risk of or experiencing homelessness will maintain or improve connections with their communities
- People at risk of or experiencing homelessness will maintain or improve their education, training or employment participation
- Fewer people will become homeless
- More homeless people will exit into long-term, stable housing
- People will spend less time homeless
- People's health and wellbeing will improve.



GOAL 5 REDUCE BARRIERS FOR ABORIGINAL PEOPLE

More Aboriginal people feel valued and connected to culture, country and community, experiencing greater education and employment opportunities.

WHY?

Compelling evidence demonstrates disproportionate negative outcomes faced by Aboriginal people compared to non-Aboriginal people in areas such as infant mortality, life expectancy, health, mental health, standard of living, incidence of family violence, education and employment, family and community wellbeing, as well as being grossly over-represented in the child protection and criminal justice systems.

TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL, WE WILL

- Provide home-based, early learning and parenting programs for families with young children
- Deliver services that focus on life skills and provide support and opportunities for Aboriginal young people
- Provide crèche services focused on educational outcomes and school readiness for children with additional needs
- Offer employment opportunities for Aboriginal community members.

AS A RESULT

- Parents will participate more in their children's learning, resulting in higher achievement at school
- Young people will have increased opportunities to develop life skills, set goals and connect with their cultural identity and sense of self
- More Aboriginal young people will be engaged in educational and vocational activities, including volunteering
- More community members will have the skills and confidence required to enter or return to the workforce
- More Aboriginal community members will secure employment.



GOAL 1 OUTCOME MEASUREMENT

We will significantly improve the quality and impact of our programs through an outcomes measurements approach, embedded across all service areas.

WHY?

All of our work is designed to bring about meaningful and lasting change for people. By monitoring, evaluating and learning from that work and the work of others, we can improve its quality and impact. Adopting an outcomes-focused approach will engage and refocus ac.care to ensure the work we are doing is creating meaningful impacts for people in need.

TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL, WE WILL

- Implement, across all programs, an ac.care outcomes measurement approach, establishing a common approach to monitoring, evaluating and learning
- Establish clear client feedback and complaint systems and business processes
- Conduct reviews of the designs of all programs
- Improve the design of our programs by using information from our own and others' practices, research and evaluations.

AS A RESULT

- People who use our services will be confident that the service they receive improves their lives
- ac.care will clearly demonstrate that it meets its purpose, mission and goals
- ac.care will develop stronger solutions to complex issues and achieve better outcomes
- Our strategic decisions, including how we prioritise our programs, will be based on evidence
- ac.care will be able to support its sustainable business model by demonstrating its value to funders.



GOAL 2 EMPLOYER OF CHOICE

We will strengthen our reputation as an employer of choice through a human resources strategy that equips and supports staff and volunteers, underpinned by systems and business processes that align with ac.care culture and priorities.

WHY?

At ac.care, we strive to be recognised as an employer of choice that offers a fantastic work culture and workplace environment that attracts and retains the best people. The features of our environment as an employer of choice favour the well-being of our employees, volunteers and clients.

TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL, WE WILL

- Listen to our employees to enhance their experience at ac.care and recognise and reward their achievements
- Develop a diverse workforce with the mix of skills, experience and knowledge needed to achieve the goals in this plan
- Embrace our commitment to reconciliation and develop a representative staff/client mix by implementing our Aboriginal employment plan
- Implement a workforce planning process that enables us to identify, monitor and respond to changing capability and capacity requirements.

AS A RESULT

- We will attract the right employees for the right job at the right time
- We will have employees that enjoy working for ac.care and recommend ac.care as an employer of choice to family and friends
- ac.care people will benefit from a learning culture
- Regular two-way conversations will improve performance and development
- Career aspirations and succession planning will be supported where they align to service outcomes
- Effective and safe workplaces and practices will enhance the wellbeing of our employees
- A strong and reliable team will ensure the best possible services are delivered to clients within the resources available
- We will achieve a more representative staff/client mix.



GOAL 3 SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS MODEL

We will complete a transition process to a sustainable business model that delivers on our mission, while ensuring consideration of environmental, social and financial outcomes.

WHY?

ac.care requires a diversified business model that drives innovation, provides diversified multi-year revenue streams and opens our services to the broader community. We operate in an increasingly competitive funding and fundraising environment. Therefore, we must both maintain and grow our existing sources of income and implement new and innovative ways of generating funds. At the same time, we must also develop more cost effective ways of delivering our work while reducing our environmental footprint.

TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL, WE WILL

- Invest in information and communications technologies and business processes that streamline and improve our effectiveness
- Embed a project management approach, underpinned by a mature planning, monitoring and evaluation cycle
- Launch a long-term infrastructure plan to ensure ac.care has the assets and resources it requires to deliver on its mission
- Identify, pilot and implement new ways of generating income, particularly unrestricted income
- Identify and recommend low carbon, energy efficient, sustainable water and waste management recommendations for ac.care sites
- Form collaborative relationships, particularly with academic institutions and other development organisations.

AS A RESULT

- We will base our strategic decisions, including how we prioritise our programs, on research, analysis and learning
- ac.care will have a cohesive model for infrastructure planning and delivery which integrates decisions on current facilities use with longer term organisation planning
- The ac.care carbon accounting report will continue to show improvements to our carbon emission rate per full-time equivalent staff over the lifecycle of the infrastructure plan
- Our income from non-government sources and the community will have grown each year and a greater percentage of that income will be unrestricted.

MEASURING OUR ACHIEVEMENT

Our goals seek to tackle complex issues, some of which are inter-generational. They are ambitious and long-term. The Social Ventures Australia (SVA) Managing to Outcomes framework has been identified as the approach ac.care will adopt to drive our outcomes focus.

TO MONITOR AND REPORT ON OUR PROGRESS, WE WILL:

- Develop program logics for all ac.care service areas
- Evaluate and assess the 'measures' which best fit for ac.care
- Establish specific indicators of progress
- Collect relevant quantitative and qualitative data
- Use data to assess our progress and make decisions
- Use the findings of those assessments to make appropriate changes to our work.

At an operational level, our plans will specify outputs and key performance indicators that directly align with results in this plan.

Monitoring and reporting at both the strategic and operational levels will enable the ac.care board, management and staff to remain focused on achieving the goals and ensure the effectiveness of our work.

Each year the ac.care Strategic Planning Committee of the board will update an environmental scan and undertake political, economic, social and technological (PEST) analysis to test the relevance of strategy priorities.

HOW DO WE GET THE BEST VALUE FROM OUR RESOURCES?

ac.care has talented, hardworking teams. However, we also recognise that every strategy and business plan faces unanticipated events and competing priorities. To stay focused on creating value, the

organisation must be prepared to make trade-offs.

Our management team approach to project management using a 'triple constraint' lens, assessing our resource decisions against 'cost', 'scope' and 'time' can all impact on the 'quality' of outcomes.

When new opportunities or risks emerge, we have to consider how our response will affect our existing plans.

An increase to the 'scope' of our strategy will inevitably change the 'cost' and/or 'time' for everything else.

Ultimately, to achieve this strategy and get the best value from our resources, we have to maintain robust monitoring of our key projects and constantly revisit the assumptions and constraints for our priorities.



COMMUNITY SUPPORT



YOU CAN HELP INCREASE OUR IMPACT

Many of our services are funded by government, however we also deliver other initiatives from our own fundraising to provide further support for our clients.

Fundraising helps us meet service gaps, increase our impact and make a greater difference in the lives of country people.

Your donation could assist with our:

- Support services for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, such as providing free meals and other basic necessities or special programs in our community centres.
- Homeless Youth Resilience Scholarship grants to support young people.
- Work with young people to help them avoid homelessness.
- Financial counselling in rural communities, which can help people avoid a crisis.
- Aboriginal creche activities in Murray Bridge.
- Other initiatives to help meet gaps in services

identified by our staff and clients.

Some of these projects have been started from the generous donations of the community and your support can help ensure they continue.

HOW TO DONATE

- You can make a one-off or ongoing tax deductible donation by visiting accare.org.au/donate.
- Call (08) 8724 5400 from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday to donate by phone for credit card or electronic funds transfer.
- Nominate ac.care for a bequest in your will so that your legacy supports our work with vulnerable country people.
- Donate by making a cheque payable to "Anglican Community Care Incorporated" and sending to ac.care, PO Box 1842, Mount Gambier, SA, 5290. Please include your name and address so we can send a tax receipt and thank you.

SCAN THE QR CODE TO LEARN MORE OR DONATE ONLINE
(www.accare.org.au/donate)



1300 ACCARE (1300 222 273)

LIMESTONE COAST

Mount Gambier - Head Office
Ph: (08) 8724 5400
70 - 72 White Avenue, PO Box 1842, Mount Gambier, SA 5290

Mount Gambier Community Centre
Ph: (08) 7725 3000
22 - 24 Ferrers Street, Mount Gambier, SA 5290

Mount Gambier Family Relationship Centre
Ph: 1800 880 913 or (08) 8721 3500
1 Helen Street (cnr Helen Street and Bay Road), Mount Gambier, SA 5290

Millicent Community Centre
Ph: (08) 8735 5700
57-59 George Street, PO Box 378, Millicent SA, 5280

MURRAY MALLEE & ADELAIDE HILLS

ac.care Murraylands Centre
Ph: (08) 8531 4900
29 Bridge Street, Murray Bridge
PO Box 2090, Murray Bridge, SA 5253

RIVERLAND

ac.care Berri
Ph: (08) 8580 5300
5 Kealley Street, PO Box 1345, Berri, SA 5343



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