



# Strategic Plan

## 2017-2022

# OUR VISION

## OUR VISION

Every **woman** has the **right** to affordable and effective **health care**.

## OUR MISSION

Leichhardt Women's Community Health Centre is a **leader** and **innovator** in the delivery of evidence informed **health services**. We partner with other organisations to meet the needs of **women** who are at **risk** of poorer health or do not access the mainstream health system.

## OUR VALUES

- » Collaboration
- » Accessibility
- » Safety
- » Empowerment

*Underpinned by NSW Health's CORE values: Collaboration, Openness, Respect, Empowerment*

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# MANAGER'S MESSAGE

*Leichhardt Women's Community Health Centre is committed to improving the health, safety and wellbeing of women. LWCHC is an independent, not for profit, non-government organisation run by and for women.*

In developing the 2017-22 Strategic Plan, the Board of Management and staff of Leichhardt Women's Community Health Centre had as our foremost goal the need to position the service to ensure its sustainability in an increasingly challenging and changing environment. We have examined the environment, listened to stakeholders, analysed performance data and looked at how to streamline service delivery to effectively meet the very specific needs of the women relying on women's health services. We have recognised the demands on our services and resources, and assessed and embraced the changes around us.

During the next five years we aim to strengthen Leichhardt Women's Community Health Centre to be able to withstand a changing funding environment in which the goals and preferred service models are different in some respects to past models of service delivery and service emphasis. This plan was developed during a time of significant change to funding for many of our partner organisations which impacted many of our clients. The altered environment and subsequent loss of expertise and sector capacity showed the importance of services having robust management and service systems, strong partnerships, funding diversity and a flexible approach to change.

To strengthen the organisation's viability we aim to enhance our administrative systems, embed outcomes focussed evaluations and modify our service mix so that it is consistent with funding bodies' requirements. We will emphasise partnerships as a way to enrich and extend services and make the most of technological advances that modernise service delivery. Some of these elements will mean a shift in thinking and the way we do things. Education has been a large element of our program, but in recent years there have been changes to the way health information is disseminated, including the emergence of social media platforms and new marginalised communities which deserve attention. Another shift in emphasis has been that our funders have emphasised evidence-based medical primary health care, which will mean we will be seeking ways to incorporate this direction, and to ensure there is a close alignment between the data we collect, our performance

information and the requirements of communities and funders. These are just two components of our established program that invite an invigorated approach in delivering health care and health messaging to women, particularly those at risk of poorer health outcomes.

This strategic plan represents a step change in policy direction and approaches. We are a mature organisation, with a long standing reputation for excellence and innovation, which places us in a strong position to be a leader in our field of work and expertise. Over 4,000 women and girls a year have relied on LWCHC to provide a safe place to access multi-disciplinary primary health care, counselling and education in its own right and as a gateway to the broader health system. This plan aims to ensure the service's viability and to build our sustainability for many years to come.

**Roxanne McMurray**  
*Manager*

## Help us in our goals to improve the health of women and girls

Donations \$2 and above are tax deductible. For details on how you can donate and other ways you can assist the centre's work, visit our website [www.lwchc.org.au/supportus](http://www.lwchc.org.au/supportus) or contact the manager Roxanne McMurray on:

Phone: 02 9560 3011

Email: [manager@lwchc.org.au](mailto:manager@lwchc.org.au)

# ABOUT US

*Leichhardt Women's Community Health Centre is the primary health centre providing integrated health care, counselling and health education services across 126 square kilometres of Sydney's inner city, inner west and south western suburbs, and a speciality state-wide counselling service.*

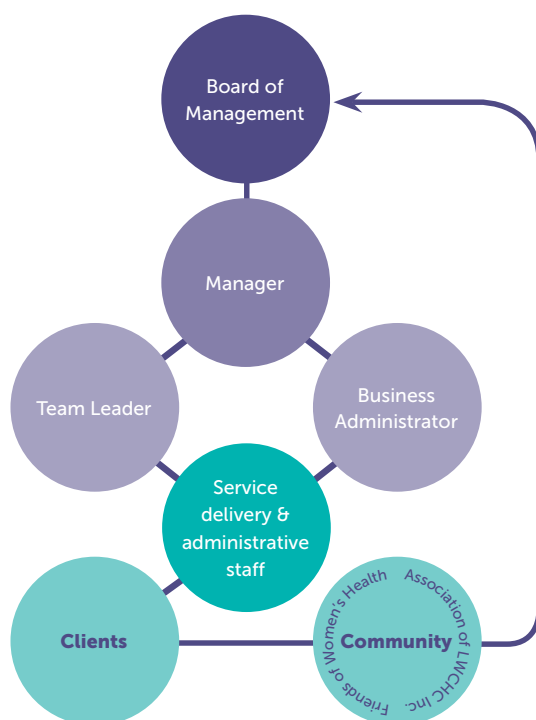
Our focus is the provision of trauma informed, affordable services that are sensitive to the needs of women with complex health issues or recovering from violence. We concentrate on improving the health of women experiencing disadvantage and at risk of poorer health outcomes by utilising a partnership approach and the social determinants of health which assists women achieve health and wellbeing and fully participate in their community. We also advocate through SOS Women's Services for improvements to systems which affect women and girls experiencing disadvantage and requiring specialist trauma informed services.

The centre is an Incorporated Association with an elected skills-based Board of Management, employing 17 staff (9 FTE, 2017) from a range of professional health disciplines, operating five clinics across our geographical area and fostering partnerships to enrich and extend our service delivery and reach into the community.

## Integrated Services

- General Practitioner and women's health nurse clinics
- Allied health care – women's health physiotherapy and massage therapy
- Complementary therapies – acupuncture and naturopathy
- Counselling – relationships, domestic and family violence, drug and alcohol and survivors of childhood sexual abuse
- Health education
- NSW Women Partners of Bisexual Men Service – counselling and support for women living in NSW whose male partners are same sex attracted
- Referrals and collaboration with health services, community organisations and private practitioners.

## Organisational structure



## Our Clients are women:

- currently experiencing financial disadvantage
- escaping domestic violence and recovering from its health effects
- survivors of childhood sexual abuse, neglect and trauma
- with complex health needs who are experiencing impediments in accessing mainstream services or desiring a women's health setting, eg. women having treatment for cancer and women with chronic health issues benefitting from integrated, specialist women's health care
- from diverse cultural backgrounds seeking culturally supportive and women-only health care settings.

# OUR MODEL OF HEALTH CARE

*Our model of accessible and integrated health care utilises the World Health Organisation's Framework for Integrated People-Centred Health Services (2016), Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion (1986), World Health Report – Primary Health Care Now More than Ever (2008) and is underpinned by the Social Determinants of Health (1998).*

Our health care model utilises the social determinants of health and facilitates an optimal environment for women's health to improve. We believe in the strength of creating a culture where:

- Safety and trust are nurtured for women to openly communicate about their circumstances
- Accessibility is paramount including physical access, financial affordability and cultural safety
- Information and choices are provided so women can make their own, informed health care decisions, and
- Women are our partners in managing their own health care

Utilising the World Health Organisation's Integrated People-Centred Health Services Framework<sup>1</sup>, our model of care relies on:

- Effective therapeutic relationships
- Comprehensive, continuous and client-centred care that addresses the determinants of ill health
- Recognising health priorities across women's life stages
- Utilising partnerships to provide seamless referral pathways according to women's personalised needs

**The determinants of health** are defined as the range of behavioural, biological, socio-economic and environmental factors that influence the health status of individuals or populations.<sup>2</sup> We respect the context of our clients' lives and recognise that how a woman lives out her daily life will influence her health and wellbeing. For example the quality of her housing, relationships and social supports, education and literacy levels, access to transport, employment and level of income will be important factors in determining and improving her health.

**Primary care** brings promotion and prevention, cure and care together in a safe, effective and socially productive way at the interface between the population and the health system. In short, what needs to be done to achieve this is "to put people first": to give balanced consideration to health and wellbeing as well as to the values and capacities of the population and the health workers.<sup>3</sup>

**Health promotion** is the process of enabling people to increase control over, and to improve, their health. To reach a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, an individual or group must be able to identify and to realize aspirations, to satisfy needs, and to change or cope with the environment. Health is, therefore, seen as a resource for everyday life, not the objective of living. Health is a positive concept emphasizing social and personal resources, as well as physical capacities. Therefore, health promotion is not just the responsibility of the health sector, but goes beyond healthy life-styles to well-being.<sup>4</sup>

#### **Prerequisites for Health**

The fundamental conditions and resources for health are:

- peace
- shelter
- education
- food
- income
- a stable eco-system
- sustainable resources
- social justice and equity

Improvement in health requires a secure foundation in these basic prerequisites.<sup>5</sup>

1. WHO, Framework on integrated, people-centred health services, 2016  
[http://apps.who.int/ebwha/pdf\\_files/WHA69/A69\\_39-en.pdf?ua=1&ua=1](http://apps.who.int/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA69/A69_39-en.pdf?ua=1&ua=1)

2. WHO, Health promotion glossary, 1986 and 1998  
<http://www.who.int/healthpromotion/about/HPG/en/>

3. WHO, Framework on Integrated People-Centred Primary Health Services, 2016  
[http://apps.who.int/ebwha/pdf\\_files/WHA69/A69\\_39-en.pdf?ua=1](http://apps.who.int/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA69/A69_39-en.pdf?ua=1)  
<http://www.who.int/servicedeliverysafety/areas/people-centred-care/fullframe.pdf?ua=1>

4. WHO, Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion, 1986  
<http://www.who.int/healthpromotion/conferences/previous/ottawa/en/>

5. Ibid

# POLICY CONTEXT

*LWCHC's values and objectives work alongside international, national, state and local community plans and policies.*

**Two significant policy frameworks are the NSW Framework for Women's Health<sup>6</sup> and the National Women's Health Policy<sup>7</sup>.** The *NSW Framework for Women's Health* focusses on health strategies to help women to meet their physical, social and economic potential by increasing opportunities for them to be healthy at every stage in their lives and preventing avoidable detrimental health outcomes such as chronic disease. At LWCHC, this places women at the centre of decision making for their own health and acknowledges that women's health is impacted by many factors. While the Framework is for all women there are priority groups identified in the Framework. Working collaboratively across the government and community-based services is recognised as the way forward.

**The National Women's Health Policy 2010** goals are to:

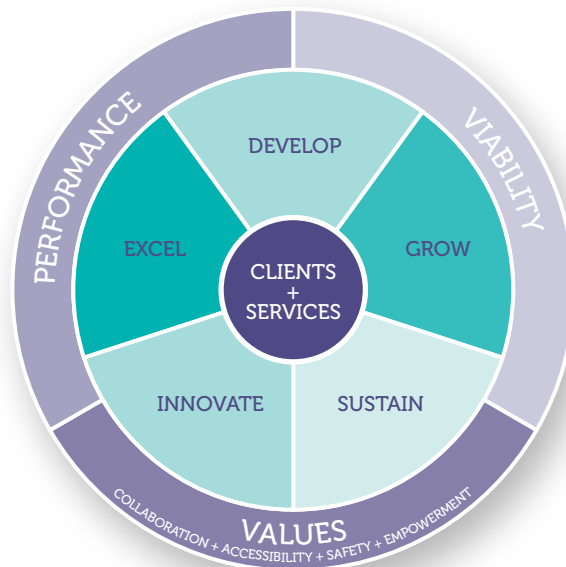
1. Highlight the significance of gender as a key determinant of women's health and wellbeing.
2. Acknowledge that women's health needs differ according to their life stage.
3. Prioritise the needs of women with the highest risk of poor health.
4. Ensure the health system is responsive to all women, with a clear focus on illness prevention and health promotion.
5. Support effective and collaborative research, data collection, monitoring, evaluation and knowledge transfer to advance the evidence base on women's health.

At LWCHC, this places women at the centre of decision making for their own health and acknowledges that women's health is impacted by many factors.

6. NSW Health, *NSW Health Framework for Women's Health*  
<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/women/Publications/womens-health-framework-2013.pdf>

7. Department of Health and Aging, *National Women's Health Policy, 2010*  
[https://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/3BC776B3C331D5EECA257BF0001A8D46/\\$File/NWHP\\_access\\_final.pdf](https://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/3BC776B3C331D5EECA257BF0001A8D46/$File/NWHP_access_final.pdf)

# OUR STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	INDICATORS
<b>GROW</b>	
<p>1. Extend the service footprint and range of services to women requiring women's health services and a trauma-informed women-only environment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify innovative opportunities and new partnerships which focus on developing new or enhanced services for women with high needs or requiring specialised services.</li> <li>Strengthen and embed current relationships and pathways for a comprehensive range of women including women escaping domestic violence, women recovering from child abuse and women with disability and special needs.</li> </ul>
<b>DEVELOP</b>	
<p>2. Lead in the identification of health outcomes and evidence based practice and develop close links with researchers and universities. We will identify why women-only services are effective in meeting women's needs and the delivery models which best meet women's health priorities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partnerships with universities are formalised to conduct developmental evaluation of delivery models and inform health care approaches into the future.</li> <li>The women's health sector is further strengthened by LWCHC sharing resources and new knowledge.</li> <li>Access for women requiring specialist women's health responses and trauma informed services is improved through advocacy.</li> </ul>
<b>INNOVATE</b>	
<p>3. Develop the capacity of the organisation to meet the changing needs for women's health services for the right community at the right time in the right places. This will include positioning the workforce to meet the needs identified by the community and government's strategic priorities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A diverse range of services and individuals are engaged to assist in identifying new locations and modes of operating.</li> <li>New ways of partnering with both Aboriginal and emerging marginalised communities are identified to provide the most culturally competent services.</li> <li>Advances in technology are incorporated into service systems to improve administrative efficiency and women's access to health diagnoses, treatment and information.</li> </ul>
<b>EXCEL</b>	
<p>4. Provide multi-disciplinary, evidence informed, high quality health care services tailored to meet the needs of women to achieve healthy, fulfilling lives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Robust governance and administrative functions provide a strong backbone to achieve the organisation's strategic directions.</li> <li>Professional staff across a range of disciplines are employed, retained and developed to form the dynamic, multi-disciplinary team.</li> <li>The organisational model encourages innovative and best practice approaches to women's health care.</li> </ul>
<b>SUSTAIN</b>	
<p>5. Create a financially sustainable model which utilises partnerships to support positive women's health outcomes and future growth of services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A sustainable business model incorporates diverse funding sources through partnerships with government and business.</li> <li>Collaborations with partners enhance seamless, flexible service delivery to reach women from marginalised groups and requiring specialist health care.</li> </ul>



## Leichhardt Women's COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE

55 Thornley St, Leichhardt NSW 2040

PO Box 240, Leichhardt NSW 2040

Phone: 02 9560 3011 | Fax: 02 9569 5098

Email: [info@lwchc.org.au](mailto:info@lwchc.org.au)

[lwchc.org.au](http://lwchc.org.au) | [f /lwchc](https://www.facebook.com/lwchc) | [@lwchc](https://www.instagram.com/lwchc)

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