



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

CDRP STRATEGIC PLAN

2016-2020



**Centre for Disability
Research and Policy**

Introduction

The Centre for Disability Research and Policy at the University of Sydney presents its five year Strategic Plan for 2016-2020. The Centre over its first two year period 'built its reputation and is now recognised in the public domain, both national and internationally, for its research and policy expertise in disability' (Review Committee Report, 2015).

In the current five year period, the Centre aims for enhanced and sustained success as a world leader in disability research and policy. This is an exciting period as the National Disability Insurance Scheme rolls out across Australia.

This plan was developed following discussions with Centre stream leaders, associates, affiliates and the Management Committee and key stakeholders and colleagues within the university and in the disability sector.

Vision

People with disabilities living a full life in Australia and internationally

Focus

Full social and economic participation of people with disabilities and good health and well-being over the life course

Our Contribution

We will achieve this by playing a leading role in research innovation, knowledge exchange and translation in the field of disability.

We provide an inter-disciplinary focus working in collaborative teams.

We are building practitioner capacity through our teaching and capacity in disability research with higher degree research students, post-doctoral fellows and early career researchers.

We bring academic rigour. Our strength is scientific method.

We develop and trial models and we conduct proper evaluations of these models.

We develop robust recommendations to advance policy and practice.

Value statement

The Centre exemplifies the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* — the purpose of which is: to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity.

We adhere to the principle: "Nothing about us without us".

Research streams

The Centre continues to operate through six streams of activity:

- Disability and inequity
- Disability services
- Disability and developments
- Disability and mental health
- National Disability Insurance Scheme
- Children, families and disability
- Indigeneity and Disability (added April 2016)

<http://sydney.edu.au/health-sciences/cdrp/work-streams.shtml>

Strategic outcomes for 2016-2020

CDRP as a world leader in disability research and policy

We will build on and sustain the Centre's current leading position on disability research in universities worldwide.

We will extend and sustain the Centre's position as a preferred unit for policy development, consultation and evaluation in the areas of the six work streams: disability and inequity; disability services; disability and development; disability and mental health; disability and childhood and, National Disability Insurance Scheme.

We will expand the six work streams to include academic leaders from across the university and beyond, and other expert collaborators, extending the Centre's contribution and supporting the interests of mid and early career researchers.

We will direct the Centre's efforts to translational research, and stakeholder and industry-relevant research.

Research and scholarship approach

Translational Research

We will conduct and disseminate research so that it is useful and used. One key purpose of disability research and scholarship is to make a difference in the lives of people with disability. This goes beyond demonstration to translation so that the findings are usable by people with disabilities, families, policy makers, industry stakeholders, disability service providers, practitioners and scholars.

As part of the translation process we will create accessible practical products that these groups can use in everyday implementation. These products could include manuals, videos, websites, training materials, training workshops, open access peer reviewed publications (good research, validated and accessible to all), social media and briefing papers.

Stakeholder and industry relevant research

We will create and sustain partnerships with stakeholders and industry to generate research ideas and proposals, attract funding, successfully complete research projects and translate the findings for implementation.

A second key purpose of disability research and scholarship is to foster innovation and advances in societal responses to disability. This requires active and engaged collaboration between researchers and people with disabilities and their representative organisations, with families and carers, service providers and their peak organisations and with practitioners.

As part of our partnership with stakeholders and industry we will actively pursue collaborations to develop and sustain multi-faceted programs of industry-relevant research.

Policy relevant research

We will create policy relevant research and scholarship and actively disseminate this through multiple open-access channels. Our aim is to bring evidence to inform policy making in the best

interests of people with disabilities, their families and carers, and society more broadly. This means our research questions and scholarship will speak to and provide answers that address policy concerns, both in policy generation and policy evaluation. We consider policy concerns at all levels: government, international and national organisations and peak bodies, and local area planning and programming.

To actively influence the policy process, we will create policy briefs grounded in evidence that can be directly translated into policy decision making. We will engage in policy dialogue publically and with policy stakeholders.

ACTIONS

1. Identify and implement multiple methods of policy dissemination

- In policy dialogue with key policy makers
- In text based hard copy for website and stakeholder dissemination and on line forums such as Australian Policy Online, Power to Persuade, Croakey and e-repositories
- In seminar and conference formats

2. Identify and implement metrics to assess policy impact

- Develop guidelines for identifying purpose of policy dissemination and means to record take up and impact
 - Points identified included metrics for readership of items on Australian Policy Online; policy publications on CDRP website; quantification of product use (e.g. Transition to Retirement); awareness, engagement, implementation and generalisation – rigorous mapping of existing health services to identify gaps and thereby provide evidence for management and planning

Contribution to the University of Sydney as a leading organisation in disability inclusive policies, practices, and the environment

Building capacity about disability across the university

In support of the University's Disability Action Plan, we will work with others in the university to ensure people with disabilities have the opportunity to realise their full potential and capabilities at this university¹, and that this is embedded within the University's policies, practices and the environment.

We will contribute to how disability is understood within a higher education context to ensure supportive, effective and efficient university-wide teaching practices in relation to students with disabilities and as a preferred employer of people with disabilities.

ACTIONS

1. Working with people with disabilities, examine conceptualisations of preferred employing organisations for people with disabilities including criteria, guidelines, and standards

- Possible research projects for masters coursework and masters by research students

2. Working with students with disabilities, examine conceptualisations of preferred university for students with disabilities including criteria, guidelines, and standards

- Possible research projects for masters coursework and masters by research students

3. Devise innovative ways to bring disability to people's consciousness within the university in support of the Disability Action Plan

- 'Reverse' high profile mentoring by having students with disabilities mentor high profile individuals spending time with them in the university environment

¹ The University of Sydney Disability Action Plan 2013-2018. Available at <https://intranet.sydney.edu.au/content/dam/intranet/documents/employment/support/University-of-Sydney-Disability-Action-Plan-2013-18.pdf>

Sustainability of Centre for Disability Research and Policy

ACTIONS

We will continue to bring on mid-career researchers as co-stream leaders to foster re-generation and success in leadership positions. We will develop new Work Streams engaging with colleagues across the university as Stream Leaders.

We will expand our efforts in building capacity internally with students, particularly those in the Master of Health Science (Developmental Disability) and those undertaking higher degrees by research.

We will further our activities with early and mid-career researchers to ensure a sustainable workforce with deep expertise in and commitment to disability research.

We will build the resources of the Centre through all possible sources of ethically acceptable funding.

We will develop and argue for research and funding that are in proportion to the problem.

We will implement additional ways to attract higher degree students to disability research. CDRP higher degree by research students and associates will conduct twice yearly seminars on research opportunities with CDRP for potential higher degree research students