



2025-2028

**STRATEGIC
PLAN**

OUR STORY

Youturn is a community-based not-for-profit charity providing social, community, and health services across Australia. With more than 35 years of experience, we are a trusted provider supporting individuals and communities through life's toughest moments, helping people of all ages live safe, connected, and meaningful lives.

From our very beginnings, we have listened deeply to the needs in the community, placing people and those who support them, at the centre of everything we do.



OUR JOURNEY

Our organisation began as a grassroots initiative in 1989, when five volunteers came together to support young people experiencing homelessness through the Noosa Accommodation Project. Years later, following a tragic loss in our local Noosa community in 2002, we established a dedicated postvention support model to provide compassionate, coordinated care for those bereaved by suicide.

As the needs of the community grew, so did our organisation. Alongside our homelessness and postvention support, we expanded to offer employment, training and education support, mental health services and family support programs - delivering these programs across the Sunshine Coast before expanding into South-East Queensland and more recently, South Australia. Our postvention program also grew to become a national service, available in all parts of Australia.



Case study

William's story



William* first contacted Youturn's StandBy Support After Suicide in 2022, when his best friend whom he had known for 28 years, died by suicide.

"I have had an incredible response from the whole StandBy team. I did not know such an organisation existed. I literally stumbled across an advertisement on Facebook (and decided to call the 1300 number). Something I would never normally do."

Throughout his support, William was asked if he would like to speak to a Peer Worker with lived experience of suicide bereavement – to which he gratefully accepted.

"Having a lived experience worker has quite simply changed my life and how I now view the world post [my friend's] death... It is a very unique experience, uncovering various emotions and feelings I am having, and understanding mourning and grief. [My Peer Worker] always answers my questions openly and honestly and has guided me through an extremely difficult time by sharing her own story."

Over time, and with support from his StandBy team, William was able to learn to navigate life following his friend's passing. He would look forward to each call with the team, and found booking in the next session gave him a sense of wellbeing and assurance.

"I did not realise how much a lived experience worker could help me process my emotions and unpack the reactions to my loss of [my friend]. I may have even been a touch sceptical at first, before the sessions started. However, now I would highly recommend them to anyone who has gone through the loss of a loved one through suicide... It helps me deal with my life on a daily basis. It helps me understand my life post suicide of a loved one. And, most importantly it gives me connection to those who have experienced what I have. Not many people truly understand unless they have been through a suicide. It has been exceptionally beneficial to me (and continues to be so)."

*Names Changed

FOREWORD

CEO

I first became involved in the not-for-profit sector when I co-founded a conservation fund with the support of my wife. One quote that inspired me came from Wangari Maathai: "The generation that destroys the environment is not the generation that pays the price. That is the problem."

This truth echoes across time and place—not only in climate justice, but also in the shifting family, wellbeing, and financial dynamics unfolding in Australia today. We are witnessing a generational transfer of burden, where loneliness rises, wealth gaps widen, and systems step in only after community supports have failed.

This strategic plan is a response to that reality. It is a first step in acknowledging that we, our communities, and our sector must plant seeds for trees whose shade only future generations will sit under.

As someone shaped by both African and Australian contexts, I know that connection is not a luxury. It is the foundation of resilience. Without support, without community, one cannot cope. At Youturn, we aim to restore that foundation by acting earlier, embedding in place, and strengthening the social fabric that sustains people before crisis disrupts the journey of life.

Our new strategy is both practical and principled. It builds on our momentum of supporting more people, growing revenue, and investing in excellence. And it reflects our core values: Integrity, Inclusion, Respect, Learning, and being future focused through Stewardship.

This is not a CEO's plan, nor a Board's plan. It is a shared one. Its success will depend on how we walk together with courage, care, and purpose.

To go far, we'll go together.



James Blevin
CEO



Board Chair

This strategic plan comes at a time of profound need and equally profound opportunity. Across the country, we are seeing the cumulative toll of the housing crisis, rising mental ill-health, and cost-of-living pressures. At the same time, there is a growing appetite across government, civil society, and local communities for prevention, early intervention, and structural reform.

Youturn's strategy responds with clarity and purpose.

As a Board, we are proud to endorse a plan that places impact at its centre, guided by data, enabled by systems, and sustained by the commitment of our people. This strategy not only deepens our support for those in distress, but also strengthens the protective factors that help prevent that distress from taking root.

Our endorsement is not only strategic, but deeply personal. Each of us on the Board understands the importance of locally led, human-centred solutions and the potential of what can emerge when services and systems are better connected.

That is why we have backed a strategy that is ambitious in scope and rigorous in execution.

On behalf of the Board, I extend our thanks to the leadership team, our staff, and our partners for shaping this strategy and for your continued belief in the possibility of change.

Let's walk this path together—deliberate, bold, and future-focused.

Mitch Evans
Board Chair



OUR STRATEGIC DIRECTION

While our early beginnings began on the Sunshine Coast supporting youth, today we provide support right across Australia, to people of all ages. Most people reach out to us in times of intense crisis, life transition or emotional distress, seeking understanding, compassion and connection. Today, we deliver a broad range of programs, including mental health and suicide postvention services, support for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness, and wrap-around support for families and their children, particularly those at risk of, or experiencing, separation or disconnection.

As we look to the future, we are committed to becoming an organisation of tomorrow – one that evolves, adapts, and remains deeply responsive to the changing needs of the people and communities we serve.

This 2025-2028 Strategic Plan sets out our vision for the future, our mission, the social impact we strive to achieve, and our key priorities for the next three years to make this vision a reality.

Our programs today: a 2025 snapshot

We are innovative, responsive, adaptive – combining human-centred practice with innovation, to ensure our programs and services are shaped by, and meet the needs of the people we support.

We continue to meet the practical and wellbeing needs of families and individuals in our communities, providing support for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness through our community hubs in Tewantin and Toowoomba. We also provide wrap-around support for individuals, families and their children, through programs such as Intensive Family Support, as well as out-of-home living support for young people through Residential Care and Supported Independent Living programs. Youturn also provide school-based initiatives such as The Base program in Nambour.

We are proud to deliver headspace and Youth Enhanced Services across Queensland and South Australia. Our services are integral components of Australia's youth mental health support system, each addressing different levels of care to meet the diverse needs of young people aged 12 to 25.

Our postvention support program, StandBy Support After Suicide, started as a localised response and is now a national service, available in all parts of Australia and for those impacted or bereaved by suicide.

Our journey doesn't end here. We will continue listening to our communities and adapting to the ever-changing needs – working together, to empower people to live safe, connected and meaningful lives.

OUR FOCUS AREAS

Our programs span community and family support, mental health and wellbeing services, and postvention support.

Our work is trauma-informed, culturally responsive, and grounded in the belief that wellbeing is shaped by more than individual effort; it's shaped by systems, relationships, and the conditions we help create together. We work across disciplines, sectors, and systems to support individuals and communities not just to recover, but to thrive.



Case study

Paul's Story



Paul* first visited Youturn at 78 years of age, after being diagnosed with terminal liver cancer, and given a prognosis of six months to live.

Struggling to find stable accommodation, Paul had been predominantly living out of his van when he also experienced a minor stroke. Thankfully, due to his health-conscious lifestyle, he was able to recover quickly, however he knew he needed to find steadier accommodation to focus on his health.

Paul reached out to Youturn for Centre Based Support at Tewantin, seeking affordable accommodation on the Sunshine Coast, ideally near Sunshine Coast University Hospital, where he needed to attend regular medical appointments.

With support from his Youturn Case Officer, Paul explored many options for housing including temporary accommodation through the

Immediate Housing Response and completed an application with the Department of Housing and Public Works.

Paul remained determined and was extremely grateful when the team's ongoing advocacy secured him a referral to The Kawana Hub Accommodation. Operated by Youturn's partners IFYS, this accommodation was right near the hospital, making it perfect for Paul's needs.

Now in stable accommodation, Paul has been able to focus on his health. After seeking a second medical opinion, Paul's prognosis improved, and the initial six-month life expectancy he had been given, is now no longer applicable. Still working towards long-term housing, Paul is extremely grateful for the support provided by Youturn and the impact it's had on his overall wellbeing.

*Names Changed

OUR CURRENT REACH



In addition to these locations, the StandBy program is delivered by Partner Organisations in all states and territories.

THE CHALLENGES

Our communities are facing some big challenges, with many feeling more alone and less connected to one another. At the same time, the cost of living is making it harder for people to make ends meet, and inequalities in our society and system are widening. Many are facing complex life challenges, such as mental health, addiction, domestic violence, loss, and homelessness, which can contribute to feelings of distress and stress. Whilst these challenges can cause distress, we also know that it can be difficult for people to find the support they need or to feel like they have choices and control in their lives. This can leave people feeling disempowered and alone.

“ I can't express how grateful I am to the Intensive Family Support (IFS) team. They helped us find safety when we had nowhere to go, and gave my children the chance to start fresh in school. For the first time in a long while, I feel hopeful about our future. ”

Parent



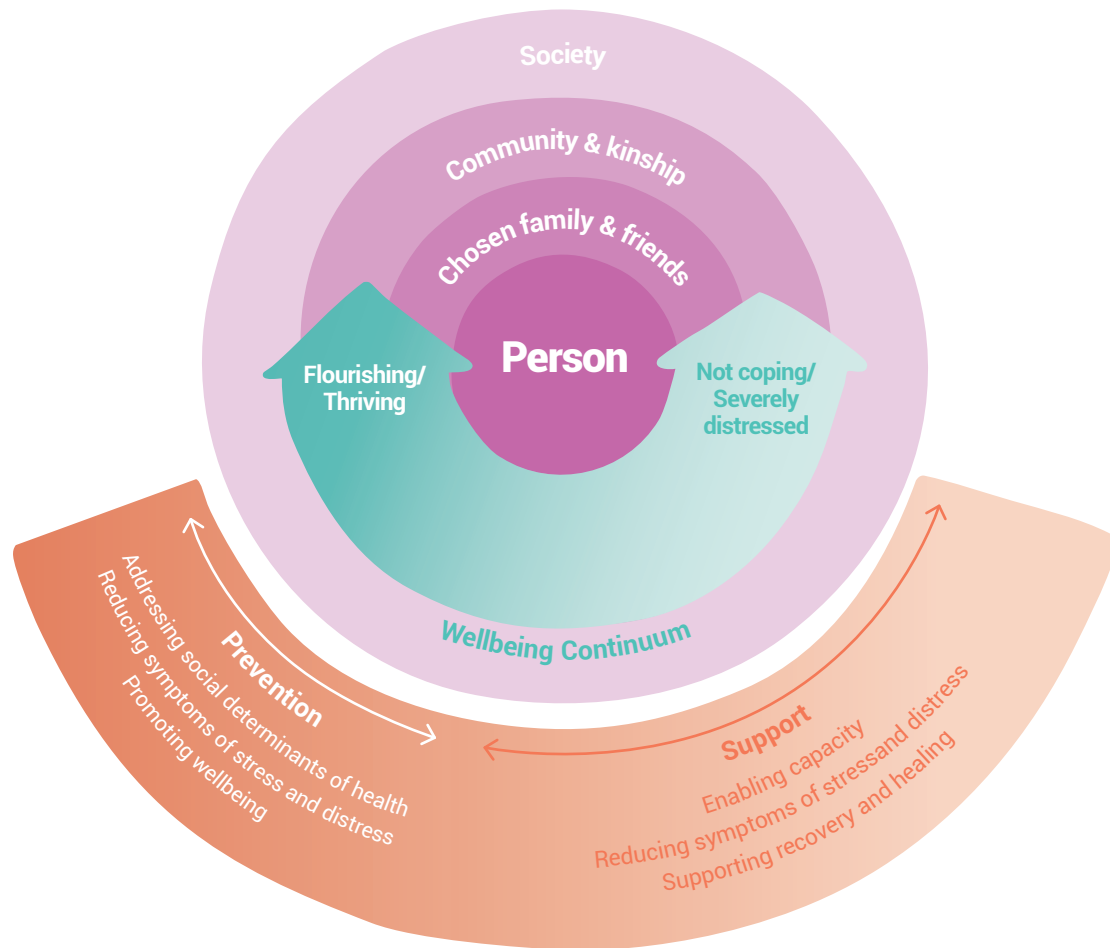
OUR PURPOSE

At Youturn, we understand that the challenges people face are often multifaceted and deeply interconnected — shaped by a broad range of social, economic, cultural, and environmental factors. Many individuals experience multiple, overlapping issues at once, and navigating these can be overwhelming without the right support. That's why our approach is holistic and person-centred. Sustainable wellbeing isn't just about treatment or responding to crises. It's achieved through meaningful relationships, a sense of dignity, safety, and real opportunities to grow and connect.

We are unwavering in our commitment to equity — to amplifying the voices of those who are too often overlooked, and ensuring that the most vulnerable in our communities feel seen, heard, and included. At the heart of everything we do is a belief: that everyone deserves to feel safe, supported, and empowered. And every day, we work to turn that belief into reality.



WELLBEING + SOCIAL CARE ECOSYSTEM



Core concepts that shape our approach

<p>Person-centred care</p> <p>As a core principle of the wellbeing and social care ecosystem, person-centred care means tailoring support to individual needs and contextualising programs to local contexts, whilst always honouring self-determination.</p>	<p>Taking a comprehensive approach across the continuum</p> <p>A comprehensive approach addresses social determinants and prioritises prevention and early intervention, while also providing targeted and individual support.</p>	<p>Life-course & socioecological models</p> <p>These models acknowledge that health is shaped by factors over time, by place and across life stages, and by the social environments people live in. Additionally people do not exist in isolation but within families, communities, kinships and society.</p>
<p>Holistic wellbeing approach</p> <p>Drawing on First Nations' holistic view of wellbeing, we recognise health is shaped by many factors – physical, emotional, social, cultural, spiritual, and environmental. Additionally, a dual approach to wellbeing is applied, which emphasises that health is more than just the absence of illness: people can thrive even while living with health challenges.</p>	<p>Enabling capacity</p> <p>A key aspect of support is empowering people's capacity - capacity being a person's access to resources, assets and supports to create their desired outcomes.</p>	<p>Ecologies of support & connection</p> <p>Ecologies of support are interconnected networks of relationships and resources - the people, places and things that help a person feel safe, cared for and able to thrive. Enabling capacity at all levels of the socioecological framework strengthens and creates 'ecologies of support' around the person.</p>

Figure 1. A systems-based understanding of wellbeing across life and the health and social care ecosystem, drawing on core concepts from best practice and evidence-based literature

OUR APPROACH

Youturn is part of a broader network of services, supports and communities that together make up the wellbeing and social care ecosystem. We're here for those who might be overlooked - people who are in distress, navigating transition, facing adversity, or simply seeking connection and belonging. To make the most meaningful impact, we use an ecosystem framework (Figure 1) to guide where and how we focus our efforts.

Looking ahead, we will continue to deliver support programs and services and expand our focus to working across the life-course: supporting people at every stage to improve their wellbeing and quality of life.

Our approach is grounded in the principles of compassion, connection, and care. Through all

our programs and services, we work alongside individuals, families, and communities – delivering direct and personalised support, building capacity, creating safe spaces, strengthening relationships and connections, and helping people access the support and networks they need.

While direct support remains at the heart of our work, we are also committed to broader systemic change in Australia. We collaborate with others to build stronger, more connected communities, and we advocate for systems and structures that are safer, fairer, and more inclusive. We take a proactive role – intervening early to prevent issues from escalating and standing up for a future where every person has the opportunity to feel safe, supported, and empowered throughout their journey.



VISION, MISSION & VALUES



OUR VISION

Empowering people to live safe, connected and meaningful lives.



PURPOSE

We support people navigating hardship, life changes, or seeking connection.



OUR MISSION

With compassion and equity at our core, we deliver person-centered services and supports across housing, family, mental health and postvention.

INTEGRITY

Doing the right thing, even when no-one's watching.

INCLUSION

Everyone belongs.
Everyone voice matters.

OUR CORE VALUES

RESPECT

Honouring stories, cultures & choices.

STEWARDSHIP

Caring today for a better tomorrow.

LEARNING

Always curious.
Always learning & adapting.

OUR IMPACT

We are deeply committed to directly supporting individuals and communities while collaborating with others to provide person-centred, coordinated care. But lasting change goes beyond meeting immediate needs. It also requires challenging and reshaping the social and political systems that drive disadvantage. Therefore, to achieve our vision for the future, we've identified three pathways to change.



SCAN QR CODE
to read more about
Our Governance

Our social impact aims are to:

Support

Improve outcomes for individuals and families:

By supporting people, creating connections, and helping to build confidence, resilience, and skills that lead to positive change.

Collaborate

Collaborate for sector and service improvement:

By working across sectors and drawing on lived experience to increase efficiency and quality of services and ensure person-centred, coordinated support.

Influence

Influence for system change:

By engaging in advocacy and public dialogue to foster compassionate societal attitudes and promote equitable access to opportunities and services.



Having a safe place where I could make my own decisions and take control of my life made all the difference. The support and encouragement I received not only helped me rebuild my confidence but also showed me that I could achieve so much more than I ever thought possible.



Young person

2026-2028 STRATEGIC PLAN



OUR VISION

Empowering people to live safe, connected and meaningful lives.



PURPOSE

We support people navigating hardship, life changes, or seeking connection.



OUR MISSION

With compassion and equity at our core, we deliver person-centered services and supports across housing, family, mental health and postvention.



OUR VALUES

- Respect
- Learning
- Stewardship
- Inclusion
- Integrity

OUR IMPACT

Support

Improve outcomes for individuals and families

Collaborate

Collaborate for sector and service improvement

Influence

Influence for system change

OUR DRIVERS

Deliver + Innovate

- Deepening impact in place
- StandBy impact at scale

Diversify

- New initiatives, programs, services, and partnerships
- Across the life-course

Drive thought leadership

- National and systems influence
- Knowledge sharing

OUR FOUNDATIONS

People

- Attract
- Develop
- Retain

Systems + Governance

- IT Infrastructure
- Operating model

Data + Quality

- Data management
- Evaluation & continuous improvement

Sustainability

- Financial security
- Accountability

Priority 1 OUR FOUNDATIONS

Strong foundations are essential to deliver quality services and drive growth and diversification, to ensure we can support individuals, families, and communities today and into the future. The four foundational areas we will focus on for the next three years are:

- People
- Systems and Governance
- Data and Quality
- Sustainability

We are a people-first workplace. Our diverse and dedicated workforce is our greatest asset. We invest in employee health, safety, wellbeing and development of our staff, fostering a collaborative culture that is responsive to the evolving needs of our communities. Our governance model supports strategic direction while empowering localised leadership and decision-making.

We maintain high standards and accreditations and embrace the use of data to guide continuous improvement and innovation in service delivery. We are committed to being an organisation of tomorrow – financially secure, agile, and ready to seize emerging opportunities. Our sustainability is underpinned by diverse income streams, strong financial management, and clear accountability for performance.

Our objectives

- 1.1 Attract, develop and retain a high-performing, diversified workforce and leadership team, to ensure the organisation is equipped to meet current and future service delivery needs
- 1.2 Implement user-friendly, shared systems and enable clear, local decision-making to improve responsiveness and efficiency
- 1.3 Build an organisation-wide culture of evidence-based decision-making by improving data quality, boosting staff data literacy, and embedding data into planning and operational processes
- 1.4 Build financial resilience by diversifying revenue streams, strengthening financial management capability, and ensuring clear accountability for both financial and non-financial outcomes

Our measures of success

- Staff engagement and satisfaction
- Achievement of recruitment, talent management and retention strategy targets
- Diversity, equity and inclusion strategy
- Organisational culture and employee wellbeing
- Support and delivery of Youturn's Reconciliation Action Plan
- Process, frameworks and system adoption and utilisation rates, and their impact on quality and efficiency
- Operating result, financial sustainability, management efficiency

Priority 2 **DELIVER & INNOVATE**

Over the next three years, we will build on the strength of our existing programs and operational footprint to deliver even greater impact.

This includes expanding the types of services we offer within current programs and geographical locations - ensuring that more individuals can access the right support, at the right time, in the right way. By tailoring and enhancing our offerings to better meet the evolving needs of the communities we work with, we can improve outcomes and increase our reach.

Our objectives

2.1 Enhance our service offerings within existing operational areas and programs to more effectively address community needs, increase accessibility, and maximise positive social impact.

Our measures of success

- Service and programs delivered to meet community needs
- Client and community satisfaction and Net Promotor Score
- Social impact measures including client and community outcomes, and service quality, cohesion and efficiency measures

Priority 3 **DIVERSIFY**

We are committed to evolving and adapting alongside the changing needs of our communities by embracing innovation and supporting people at every stage of life. As part of a broader social ecosystem, we recognise opportunities to expand our impact - both through direct service delivery and in collaborating with partners.

By taking a life-course approach, we can extend our reach and tailor our services better to serve individuals from early childhood through to older adulthood. This enables us to deliver meaningful support where it matters most – at every key life stage – and strengthen outcomes for individuals, families, and communities.

Our objectives

3.1 Develop and launch new programs or initiatives that expand our reach across the life-course, entering new markets and cohorts in ways aligned with our vision, social impact goals, and community needs.

Our measures of success

- Timely and effective delivery of the Strategic Investment Plan
- Number and quality of new innovations or programs developed
- Social impact measures including client and community outcomes, and service quality, cohesion and efficiency measures

Priority 4

DRIVE THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

Youturn will continue to leverage our expertise and lived experience to influence meaningful societal and systemic change. By combining data-driven insights with open, inclusive dialogue, we will inform service innovation, challenge conventional thinking, and help shape a more responsive and equitable social and mental health system.

As a trusted voice in the sector, we will foster innovation and elevate the voices of those with lived and living experience. Our targeted approach includes forming strategic partnerships, engaging with peak bodies and stakeholders and amplifying our collective advocacy efforts. We will influence policy at national, state, and local levels through formal submissions and government engagement. We will also share knowledge through research, conferences, and media to raise awareness and drive impact.

Our objectives

- 4.1 Engage in dialogue and advocacy, to influence and drive transformative policy and systems change
- 4.2 Strengthen our brand identity and profile

Our measures of success

- Enhanced brand ownership and recognition
- Net Promoter Score (NPS) and other stakeholder survey metrics
- Expanded strategic partnerships
- Social impact measures including changes to policies, practices and societal attitudes

“ My whole life I was experiencing chronic pain, and a copious amount of difficulty with no answers or help in sight. I originally first went to headspace for help with my mental health trying to handle all that, and in doing so, I met Dr Amanda [headspace’s GP].

Through headspace, through Dr Amanda, I now have answers, help and hope. Dr Amanda has saved my life, she’s changed my life. In many, many ways. My quality of life is better because of her. ”

Dominique



OUR GOVERNANCE

Youturn is guided by a strategic and values-driven Board of Directors who provide clear direction, ensure accountability, and uphold our purpose. The Board provides strategic oversight without overreach, empowering our leadership and frontline teams to lead with autonomy, innovation and responsiveness.

Our governance model is built on trust, transparency and technical expertise. It ensures that bold thinking is underpinned by robust safeguards, and that innovation is balanced with risk awareness and ethical decision-making.

Our governance and decision making is supported by a strong performance culture and framework. Through clear roles, responsible stewardship and a shared commitment to social impact, we hold ourselves accountable to those we serve and to the broader communities we stand beside.

Case study

Brad's story

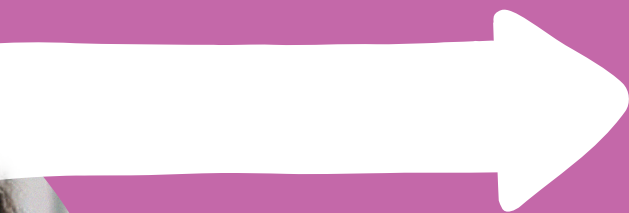


After experiencing persistent bullying at school, and anxiety, Brad* had become disengaged with school. For two years he continued to struggle with attendance and often avoided all forms of participation, before reaching out to our Youth Enhanced Service (YES) team in Darling Downs with support of his family.

Working alongside our YES team for six months, Brad took part in weekly therapeutic interventions to learn to manage his anxiety and anger. Slowly building up his confidence, Brad began to engage with local youth groups.

With assistance from YES, Brad was able to undergo assessment for Autism Spectrum Disorder. YES were able to support Brad and his family through psychoeducation and support throughout the entire process, as well as completing supporting documentation such as a letter of advocacy for his psychiatrist. Brad is now consistently engaging in distance education, and continues to build on the skills he has learned during his time with YES.

*Name changed





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