



NEAMI NATIONAL

Strategic Directions

2020 – 2023

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Cover image: Alex, Guest at UMHCC SA.

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A message from the Neami Group

Our strategic plan has been developed in close collaboration with our staff, national leadership team, board, consumers with lived or living experience of mental health challenges, partners and key stakeholders from across Australia. We set out with the objective of taking a fresh approach and applying ‘blue sky thinking’, so that we would be able to refocus our attention and resources where required, to ensure we remain impactful and sustainable.

We invited consumers, staff, our board and stakeholders to contribute to our thinking early through 21 workshops, 50 interviews and a staff survey. This deep and broad engagement was complemented by comprehensive market research, helping us understand how our sector is evolving and responding to trends, challenges and opportunities, and how we and our peers are positioned to respond to meeting these same trends, challenges and opportunities.

As compelling strategic themes started to emerge, we tested our thinking with the market, our board and our leadership team, helping us to refine our priorities for the coming years. Late in 2022 we reviewed the plan to ensure its ongoing alignment with our work and that it reflected the growth and breadth of what Neami now delivers.

We would like to acknowledge the significant time, energy and valuable insights provided to us by the hundreds of people involved in the process of developing this strategy.

Thank you.



Tony Nippard
Neami Group Chair



Tom Dalton
Neami Group CEO

About Neami National



Neami National was established in 1988 to address the growing housing needs of people leaving hospital after identifying the gaps in service provision for those experiencing mental health challenges. The organisation aimed to work with consumers to fill those gaps and supported people to link back in with their community.

Since our inception in the northern suburbs of Melbourne, Neami has become a valued partner in Australia's regions. We have grown our expertise and capacity to deliver community-based mental health services across the country and developed new services in response to local, state and national needs.

Neami has demonstrated time and again an ability to step into new communities and roll out new services in a timely and efficient manner. The consumers of our services rate us highly, and our values-led approach is respected across the sector.

At the time of writing this plan, Neami has more than 1,000 staff supporting more than 32,000 people in communities across Australia. We have confidence that the future will be bright as we continue our story through the work we do to improve the mental health and wellbeing of individuals and communities.

Our strategic plan for 2020-2023

Our vision is full citizenship for all people living with mental health challenges in Australia.

Our purpose is to assist people experiencing the impacts of mental health challenges to achieve the outcomes they value.

To fulfill our purpose, our strategic intent is:

- **To build on our strength** in evidence based and lived experience informed services. This means further enhancing our consumer experiences of us and co-designing broader and deeper services.
- **To take a more active outward looking view.** This means working more with others, being a leading voice in changing the system and becoming a more sustainable and resilient national organisation.

Our purpose

- **Support** all people with lived or living experience of mental health challenges:

Our Collaborative Relational Practice approach ensures people with lived or living experience of mental health challenges are supported to achieve the outcomes they value.

- **Own the issue of** the impacts of mental health challenges:

The range of experiences and backgrounds that lead people to our services are complex and diverse, and often involves context that is more than their physical and mental health. In order to effectively assist consumers, our service aims and responses are broad, flexible and inclusive.

- **Our geography** is across Australia:

We are a nation-wide organisation, delivering local, place-based services and eHealth pathways. We design and develop our services to meet local needs and leverage local opportunities.

- **To achieve** outcomes of personal value:

We believe wellbeing and quality of life are possible for all people in different ways. We work collaboratively with people who access our services to support outcomes that they value.

Strategic drivers

Delivering the highest quality support for consumers with lived and living experience so they can achieve outcomes they value is at the heart of Neami. To help us do that we will focus on further developing our approach for three critical strategic drivers to ensure we build the foundations for a strong and sustainable future.

Workforce

Neami's commitment to people with lived and living experience of mental health challenges is personified by its outstanding and dedicated workforce, and our increased focus on lived experience and peer workforce will only further enhance the support we provide. But we must also acknowledge and address the challenges of ongoing workforce shortages across the community service and care-giving sectors, particularly in regional and remote communities. Neami will develop innovative approaches to attract, retain and develop the highest quality mental health workforce so that consumers continue to have access to the exceptional care they need.

Diversity and Inclusion

All Australians should have access to the highest standard of appropriate care and support for their mental health challenges. Neami is unwavering in its mission to continue to embed the diverse voices and experiences of consumers and carers with lived and living experience into our work through genuine, considered and respectful participation. That means services must provide suitable support for people that reflects a diversity of experience, location, culture, language, age, gender and expectations. We will develop a new Diversity and Inclusion Framework to drive Neami's future whole-of-organisation approach to achieve safe, culturally competent and responsive service environments and workplaces. It will also ensure equity of access and opportunities for all and dismantle any barriers created by discrimination and intolerance.

Strategic drivers

eHealth Pathways

Fundamental to delivering high-quality services is meeting people where they are in their mental health journey. For some that means face-to-face support. But for others accessing services through digital platforms is essential, as they may not live close to service locations or prefer the ease and anonymity of online support. The development of Neami's eHealth Pathway strategy will provide flexibility and choice for consumers, who will be able to access support when they need it, how they need it and where they need it. The eHealth Pathway strategy will complement our existing services and have the needs of consumers at its heart, and will influence our thinking in the design of all our services into the future.

Our strategy

The following pages describe our strategy for 2020-2023. There are 11 priority areas that fall under four themes.

STRATEGIC THEME ONE

Great Consumer Experiences

We are a values-based socially oriented organisation supporting individual and community wellbeing. As the community's needs grow and change, so do we because we are grounded and flexible and believe that inclusivity, partnership and collaboration go beyond convention and rhetoric. We listen to the expertise, knowledge and experience of consumers about what they need and want, and work with them as valued partners in the design, delivery and evaluation of our services.





Priority areas



■ New and Enhanced Services

We listen to consumers. We are curious and work with them to improve current services and co-design new services. We understand the consumer journey and collaborate with them in design, delivery and evaluation of our services. We know consumers develop control over their own lives and resources to positively disengage from our services, but we continue to support them where we can, to meet their needs. Service excellence will be at the heart of everything we do, specifically focusing on quality, safety, clinical governance and ethical care and practice.

■ Awareness and Appeal

We are a provider of choice by taking practical and systematic steps to improve our public profile so consumers understand who we are, what we do and how we can contribute to their lives. We prioritise a relationship of trust, inclusivity and empowerment with consumers and carers with lived and living experience.

■ Impact Assessment and Evidence

We demonstrate to consumers, funders, partner agencies and our workforce that our services act as pathways for safety and opportunity, healing, quality of life, growth and wellbeing. We focus on our strategy, the evidence-base and embedding data collection, analysis and reporting to illustrate the value of what we do.

STRATEGIC THEME TWO

Building Collective Knowledge and Partnerships

We work with others to improve the lives of people impacted by mental health challenges and/or adversity nationally. This means broadening the scope of our partnerships to include those that will enhance our knowledge, expertise and collective impact, as well as strengthening our connections with existing partners.

We know that to deliver our purpose and increase impact for consumers and carers, we cannot do it alone. We work across traditional sectors, beyond our current locations and in deep collaboration with like-minded and values aligned organisations to deliver on our purpose.





Priority areas



■ Purposeful Partnerships Outside Our Sector

We actively seek out and engage with providers and stakeholders outside the psychosocial and mental health care systems to deliver on our purpose.

■ Stronger and More Purposeful Partnerships Inside Our Sector

Existing and new partnerships within our traditional domains are continually strengthened and deepened to better deploy scarce resources and support proactive engagement and the development of solution-based proposals with funders. We actively share knowledge and experience to contribute to more effective service provision, system reform and better outcomes. Our collaborations privilege lived experience and provide evidence for more effective service provision, system design and change.

■ Expanded and Improved Funder Partnerships

We engage with funders as partners and use the knowledge developed through expanded partnerships to improve our relationships with existing funders to improve service and collaborate to meaningfully impact the system. We also draw on collective knowledge and expertise to conceive and deliver proactive proposals to funders that better meet the needs of consumers and deliver on our purpose.

STRATEGIC THEME THREE

Sustainable and Resilient

Our team is optimistic, enthusiastic and engaged. These traits help us to build a great workforce, a great place to work, be more financially resilient and more operationally effective.

Our staff are overwhelmingly positive about both the workplace and belief in our work. Neami and its staff hold high ambitions for growth – the work we do is valued and accessible. Our people are our strategic resource that is under significant pressure even without growth. Financial resilience, along with an effective workforce that is performing within efficient operations, are vital for sustaining the optimism of staff and delivering services of value.





Priority areas




A Great Workforce, A Great Place to Work

We listen to what is important for staff about what best supports their capacity, resilience and good practice in the workplace. We listen to what is important to consumers in terms of staff practices that are supportive and enabling. We ensure our workplaces honour the diversity of lived and living experience and respect the value of evidence-based practice, continuous learning and reflective practice.



Fit for Purpose, Flexible Organisation

We adapt to deliver our purpose and implement new structures to support flexibility, greater mobility and personal choice for staff and consumers. We acknowledge this may require changes to our operational systems that may have worked in the past, but our aim is to continually evolve so we can deliver the highest quality services and support.



Explore Earned Revenue

Revenue from outside traditional funding sources supports research and implementation of a reform agenda to meet the current and emerging expectations of consumers.

STRATEGIC THEME FOUR

Influencing System Reform


We know there are many components to a system that enable consumers to access the right kind of support at the right time. Our reform agenda supports consumers to voice their needs and aspirations and we strongly advocate for system reform that delivers on these.

Our system reform activity is informed by deep connections in service delivery, solid data/evidence and strong partnerships.





Priority areas



■ Data-Led Service and Policy Development

We purposefully improve our own systems and services and collaborate and work with others to combine data to build better insights and richer evidence of what works and use this to inform policy and influence stakeholders. Sharing context-rich data with funders and policy makers assists the development of holistic policy responses to address the sources of adversity and distress, as well as their impacts.

■ Proactive Government Engagement and Advocacy

We work to embed lived experience perspective and choice within policy and funding decisions. Through our collaborations, partnerships and approach to evidence, we advocate for change that empowers consumers, raises awareness of their needs, and inform the solutions that can address them.

Neami Head Office

4-8 Water Road, Preston VIC 3072

Phone 03 8691 5300

Fax 03 8678 1106

www.neaminational.org.au



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We acknowledge Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities as the Traditional Custodians of the land we work on and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging. We recognise that their sovereignty was never ceded.



We are committed to cultivating inclusive environments for staff, consumers and carers and celebrate, value and include people of all backgrounds, genders, sexualities, cultures, bodies and abilities.