

Strategic Plan

2026 - 30





Acknowledgement of Country

Bendigo Health acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land, the Dja Dja Wurrung People and pays respect to their Ancestors, Elders, past, present and future. As a health service, we acknowledge Djaara have been healing with Country for thousands of years. We recognise and respect their culture and the contribution of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples across the region and express our commitment to walking together on this continued healing journey.

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Our Message

This plan outlines key initiatives and goals to guide us toward delivering a more accessible, compassionate health service for all in the Loddon Mallee region.



Dr. Ewa Piejko
Chair



Eileen Hannagan
Chief Executive

As we look to the future, we are proud to be part of an organisation dedicated to improving health services across Bendigo and the wider Loddon Mallee region.

High quality healthcare is vital to the wellbeing of individuals and families, and we are committed to improving those outcomes. We recognise the barriers our communities face in accessing timely, comprehensive care.

While many of these challenges are longstanding, we believe in a renewed approach, one that embraces innovation, strengthens partnerships, and harnesses the expertise of our people.

Our goal is clear: to ensure everyone in our community receives the right care, at the right time, as close to home as possible. We are committed to delivering healthcare that is safe, accessible, and seamlessly connected across our region.

This strategic plan has been shaped by extensive consultation with our communities, dedicated workforce, and partners. Their insights ensure our priorities reflect the needs of those we serve.

At the heart of this plan are Bendigo Health's core values – Passion, Accountability, Caring, and Trustworthiness. Together, they form a PACT – a mutual commitment between the health service, our staff, and the community.

These values guide our decisions, shape our initiatives, and influence the care we deliver each day.

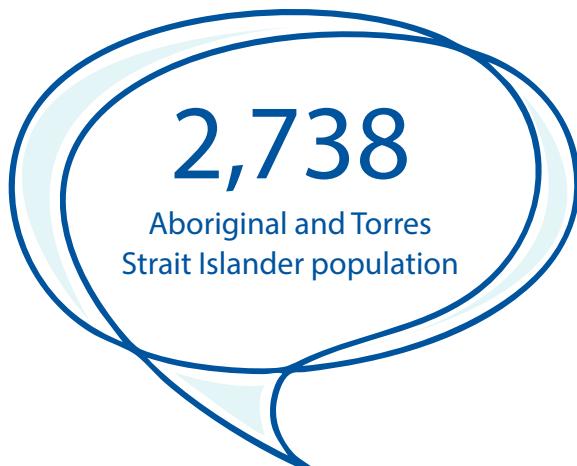
Our five year vision is to be a trusted regional healthcare service recognised for exceptional care, a great workplace, and deep community connection.

Our long term ambition is to be a leading regional tertiary healthcare service, delivering both specialist and generalist care, underpinned by academic excellence, clinical research, and innovation.

We are excited about the journey ahead and grateful for the support of those who will walk it with us.

Together, we will make a lasting difference to the health and wellbeing of our communities.

Our Greater Bendigo Community



Bendigo Shires

The City of Greater Bendigo is bounded by the Shire of Campaspe in the north, Strathbogie Shire and Mitchell Shire in the east, Mount Alexander Shire in the south, and Loddon Shire in the west.



Land Use

65% Primary Production
19% Parkland
6% Residential



120km Long
Bendigo Creek flows from Crusoe Reservoir through Bendigo to the Loddon River.

Our Story

Bendigo Health delivers a comprehensive range of health and community services to residents across the Loddon Mallee region of central and north-western Victoria.

Our facilities are located in Bendigo, Castlemaine, Echuca, Kyneton, Mildura, Maryborough, and Swan Hill.

As a major regional healthcare provider, we operate a broad spectrum of services, including acute, subacute, and mental health care; residential aged care; helicopter patient transport; and an extensive range of community and continuing care programs. These include carer and social support services, Allied Health and Nursing, and Aged Care Assessment.

Bendigo Health employs approximately 3,130 full-time equivalent staff, with a total workforce of around 5,500 dedicated individuals committed to delivering high-quality, safe, and consistent care.

The Aboriginal name for Bendigo is Yaram Yaram. Yaram Yaram is on Dja Dja Wurrung Country. The name Dja Dja Wurrung is said to mean, "Yes, Yes tongue/speak," referring to the collective language group.

Bendigo was named after a local shepherd who was nicknamed after the world-famous bare-knuckled boxer, William 'Bendigo' Thompson from England.

Aboriginal



Djaara (Dja Dja Wurrung People) are the First Peoples of Djandak (Dja Dja Wurrung Country), which covers much of Central Victoria. Djaara comprise many clan groups, who have cared for Djandak for millennia.



The arrival of Europeans disrupted Djaara's traditional way of life. Many Djaara were displaced, forbidden to practice Culture, and prevented from caring for Country. Meanwhile, mining, agriculture and development profoundly altered Country.



The journey of Dja Dja Wurrung People is one of resilience, strength, and self-determination. Today, Djaara are represented by DJAARA, which works to improve the health and wellbeing of Dja Dja Wurrung People, Culture and Country.

Gold Rush



European settlement in Bendigo began in 1837 with the establishment of sheep stations and farms. The discovery of gold in 1851 transformed the quiet settlement into a thriving hub, as thousands flocked to the diggings.



Early alluvial finds soon gave way to deep quartz mining, driving prosperity. By the 1860s, the township supported flour and woollen mills, tanneries, foundries, and eucalyptus oil works.



Thousands of Chinese miners enriched the region's economy and culture. In 1853, the Bendigo Gold District General Hospital opened in a tent at Short and Rowan Streets, treating its first patient, a man with a gunshot wound. The Bendigo Benevolent Asylum (Anne Caudle Centre) followed in 1857.

Post War



In the post-war period, Bendigo experienced significant population growth, nearly doubling between 1947 and 1996, with urban expansion into suburbs such as Flora Hill, Kensington, Kangaroo Flat, and Epsom.



To meet rising healthcare demands, Bendigo Hospital underwent major expansions, including the construction of the East Wing in 1958 and a substantial redevelopment in the 1960s that added an ICU, pathology laboratory, and expanded outpatient departments.



These developments culminated in the 2017 opening of a new \$1 billion state-of-the-art facility designed to meet future healthcare needs.

Current Day



Bendigo's rapid growth reinforces its status as one of Victoria's fastest growing regional centres, with annual growth of 1.7% pushing the population towards 130,000. Migration, housing affordability, and employment opportunities are attracting new residents, enriching cultural diversity, over 15% are overseas born, including strong Indian, Asian, and Karen communities.



Languages such as Malayalam, Punjabi, Hindi, and Mandarin are widely spoken, alongside increasing numbers from Myanmar, China, and Thailand. Overseas students, including those studying health and dental sciences, further contribute to the city's vibrancy.



First nations culture continues to thrive in contemporary Bendigo, a community committed to truth telling and reconciliation.

Our Health

The Bendigo region has a higher-than-average proportion of residents aged over 65, placing greater demand on healthcare services and aged-care support. Significant socioeconomic disparities are evident, particularly in remote communities where unemployment and lower income levels are more prevalent.

These factors contribute to poorer health outcomes and reduced access to timely care. Rates of arthritis, asthma, obesity, and heart disease are significantly higher than the Victorian average, creating complex and often chronic health challenges. Addressing these issues requires targeted, accessible, and co-ordinated healthcare services tailored to the diverse needs of the region.

Priority Groups

Our region includes Victoria's largest Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, diverse multicultural and refugee communities, seasonal workers, and LGBTIQA+ people, groups experiencing distinct health inequities and unique care needs.



A photograph of a man with grey hair, wearing a dark blue and red plaid shirt and dark blue jeans, walking a small, light-colored dog on a red leash. They are on a paved path in a park with green grass and trees in the background.

Key Health Conditions Across the Region*

Condition	Greater Bendigo	Victoria
Arthritis	11.7%	8%
Asthma	10.6%	8.4%
Cancer	3.5%	2.8%
Dementia	0.8%	0.7%
Diabetes	5%	4.7%
Heart Disease	4.7%	3.7%
Kidney Disease	1.1%	0.9%
Lung Condition	2.1%	1.5%
Mental Health	12.6%	12.6%
Obesity	29.7%	20.9%

* Source:

<https://www.abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2021/2>

<https://bendigohealth.org.au/Assets/Files/LMPHU%20Community%20Profile-v4.pdf>

Our Health Network

The Loddon Mallee is Victoria's largest region, covering over 25% of the state, encompassing diverse landscapes, vibrant communities, and a wide range of social, cultural, and economic profiles.

On 1 July 2025, Bendigo Health became an official partner in the Loddon Mallee Local Health Service Network, an important step toward stronger healthcare collaboration across the region.

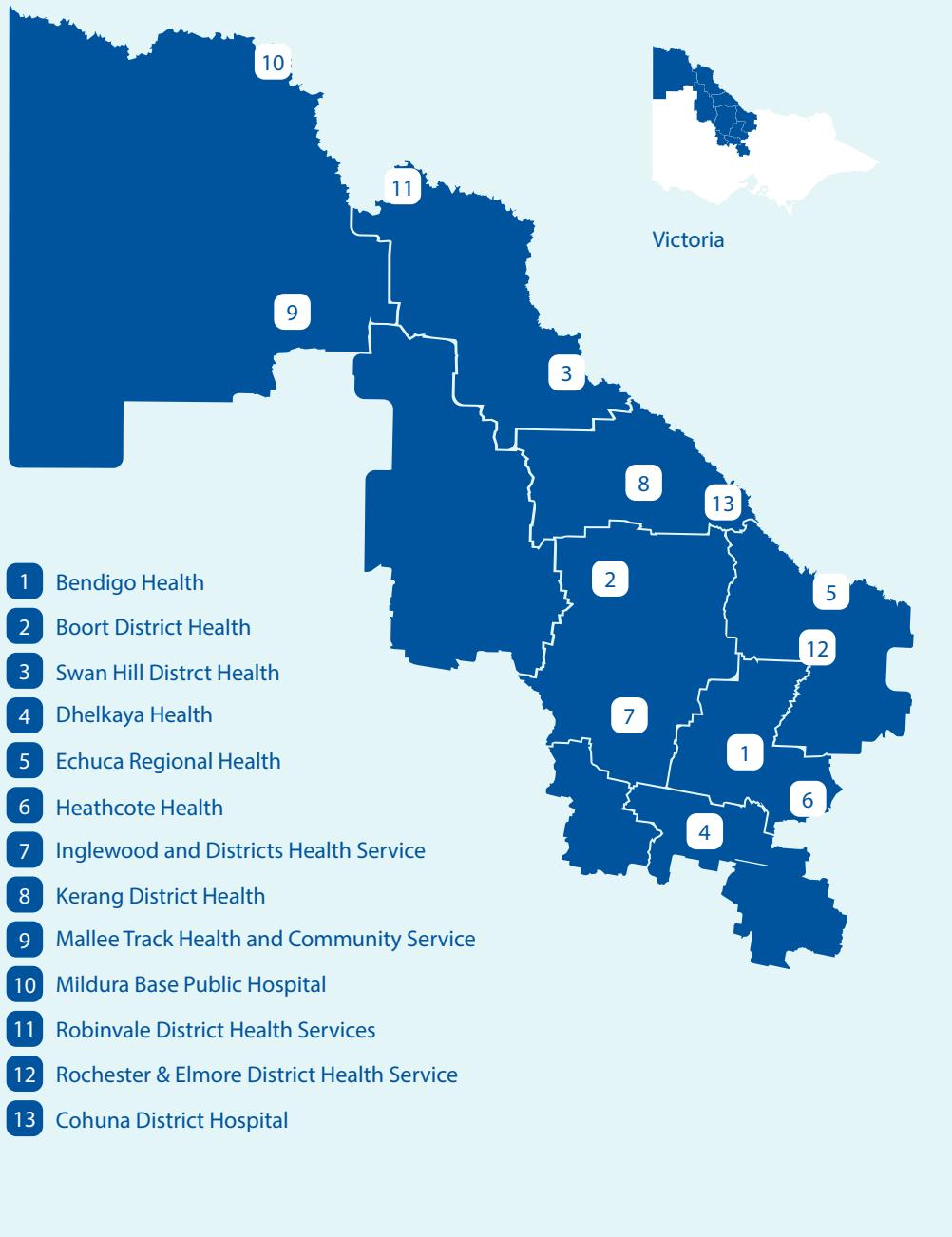
The Network spans a vast and diverse area, from the urban Macedon Ranges in the south to the rural Mallee in the northwest, reflecting how patients naturally move through the health system along key routes such as the Murray River and into Bendigo.

It serves a growing population, around 334,000 people in Victoria and 22,500 in southern New South Wales,

projected to reach 369,000 and 27,000 respectively by 2036. This growth demands long term planning, efficient resource sharing, and coordinated service delivery.

The Network strengthens existing partnerships, including with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations such as the Mallee District Aboriginal Service in Mildura, Swan Hill, and Kerang.

By working together, partners can plan workforce needs, enhance digital health, and deliver more connected, effective care for healthier communities across the region.



Objectives of the Loddon Mallee Local Health Service Network

Access, Equity and Flow

Access, Equity and Flow

We will deliver care that is high-quality, connected, and easy to navigate across the entire health system.

Workforce

We aim to build and support a skilled, diverse workforce through strong recruitment, training, and collaboration.

Safety and Quality

Together, we will deliver consistently safe, high-quality care through shared standards and joint governance.

Shared Services

We will streamline systems and share resources to reduce duplication and improve patient care.

Our Planning

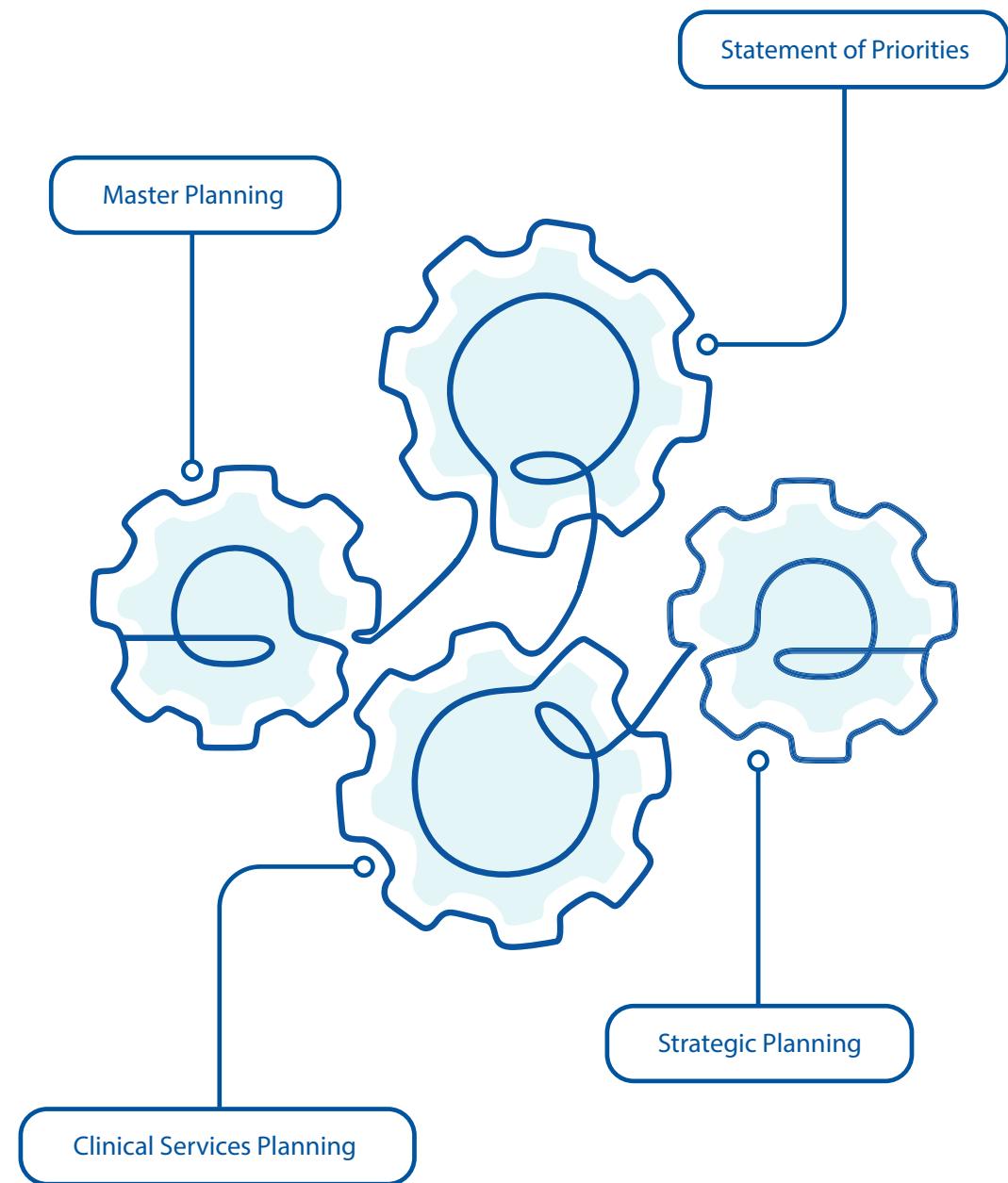
The strategic planning process shapes the future of our organisation by guiding how we use our resources to achieve short, medium and long term goals.

It begins with defining our purpose, vision, and values, and identifying the key areas where we will focus our efforts. From there, we set clear strategic priorities, initiatives, and a roadmap with timelines to ensure the right resources are in place. Progress will be continuously monitored to stay on course.

This five year plan reflects Bendigo Health's commitment to delivering outstanding care and meeting the evolving healthcare needs of our community.

It is developed in alignment with our Clinical Services Plan, Master Plan and annual Statement of Priorities.

The plan considers our operating environment and government policy frameworks outlining how we will deliver equitable, accessible, safe, and sustainable healthcare; contribute to system wide goals and Victorian Government priorities; and work in partnership across Greater Bendigo and the Loddon Mallee.



Bendigo Health Planning

Clinical Services Planning

Master Planning

Loddon Mallee Local Health Service Network Plan

Partnering with Primary and Community Care Services



Frameworks

Health 2040

Advancing Health, Access, and Care presents a clear and forward-looking vision for the health and wellbeing of Victorians, as well as for the future of the Victorian healthcare system.

Statement of Priorities

Our Statement of Priorities is an annual accountability agreement between Victorian public healthcare services and the Minister for Health; detailing key performance expectations, targets (eg. emergency and elective surgery) and funding allocations for the year.

Targeting Zero

Avoidable Harm focuses on eliminating preventable harm within the healthcare system.

Victorian Mental Health reforms

Australian Government Aged Care reforms

Delivery of culturally appropriate services

Increasing participation in universal and early-intervention services – especially by First Nations peoples

Loddon Mallee Local Health Service Network Plan

Loddon Mallee Local Health Service Network Statement of Expectations

Our Consultation

External Consultation

- Bendigo Advertiser
- Bendigo Business Community (Be.Bendigo)
- Bendigo Chinese Association
- Bendigo Community
- Bendigo Community Health Services
- Bendigo and District Aboriginal Co-Operative
- Bendigo Education Sector
- Bendigo General Practitioners
- Bendigo Health Donors
- Bendigo Members of Parliament
- Bendigo Primary Care Centre
- Bendigo Seniors Groups
- Bendigo TAFE
- City of Greater Bendigo
- Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation
- La Trobe University
- Loddon Mallee Local Health Service Network Services
- Community Health Services
- Monash School of Rural Health
- Multicultural Communities
- Murray Primary Health Network
- St. John of God Hospital

What our community said...

What our staff said...



Our Strategic Plan

Purpose

To deliver high-quality healthcare that meets the needs of our community today, while preparing for the next generation.

The Strategic Plan will be operationalised through Bendigo Health's annual operational plans, which will translate the strategic priorities, objectives, and initiatives into clear actions, deliverables, and timelines for each year. Progress will be measured through defined performance indicators, regular reporting, and ongoing monitoring to ensure accountability at every level of the organisation. In addition, the Board will maintain direct oversight by setting specific measures for each Strategic Objective and reviewing progress against them every six months.

Vision

5-Year

To be a trusted regional healthcare service recognised for delivering exceptional care, being a great place to work, and being deeply connected to our community.

10-Year

To be a leading regional tertiary health service - delivering both specialist and generalist care, underpinned by academic excellence, clinical research, and innovation - driving improved health outcomes in partnership across the Loddon Mallee.

Values

Passionate

We are passionate about doing our best - for our patients, our colleagues, and our community.

Accountable

We take ownership of our actions and outcomes, always striving for integrity and improvement.

Caring

We care deeply for our community - and our community cares for us. Compassion is at the heart of everything we do.

Trustworthy

We are open, honest, and respectful in all that we do - earning the trust placed in us every day.

Strategic Priorities

Access	Care	Improvement	Cultural Safety	Partnerships
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide timely, equitable access to healthcare across the Loddon Mallee region. Receive the right care at the right time, as close to home as possible. Ensure sustainable funding and resource allocation to maintain and expand access. Support and empower our workforce to deliver accessible care. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver high-quality, safe, and consistent care. Ensure every individual receives the best possible treatment in a supportive and compassionate environment, enabled by a capable and well supported workforce. Prioritise the patient experience. Support care delivery through environmentally responsible and sustainable practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build a culture of continuous improvement by fostering staff-led innovation and improvement. Develop workforce expertise for current and future needs. Continue evolving from a generalist health service to one that specialises in a broad range of subspecialties. Integrate data driven insights into our decision making embracing new and emerging technologies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Everyone is welcome here. Ensure our services are inclusive of all cultural groups, responsive and grounded in respect for the unique identities of individuals. Create culturally safe environments and services where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people feel respected, valued, empowered and where self-determination thrives. Ensure our staff feel safe, respected and supported to deliver culturally safe care and services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be an integral partner of the Loddon Mallee Local Health Service Network. Foster partnerships with other organisations that advance and strengthen our role as a leading healthcare service. Develop partnerships that create opportunities for staff development, training, wellbeing and workforce sustainability.

Our Road to 2035

Years 1– 5: Building the Foundation

The 5 - year vision lays the groundwork for Bendigo Health's development to a regional tertiary healthcare service.

Key objectives:

- Enhancing the Quality of Healthcare Services
- Expanding and Updating Care for Our Region
- Redeveloping Health and Aged Care Infrastructure
- Expanding and Integrating Mental Health Services
- Establish a Regional Research Hub
- Skilled Workforce
- Digital Enablement
- Embedding Financial and Environmental Sustainability
- Embedding Cultural Safety and Inclusion

Years 6–10: Becoming a Tertiary Healthcare Service

The 10 - year vision provides the destination - the establishment of a regional tertiary healthcare service with capabilities in research, teaching and specialised services for the Loddon Mallee Region.

Key objectives:

- Expand our specialised services, especially in cardiac and neurosurgery
- Building stronger academic and teaching partnerships
- Increasing our capacity for clinical research and innovation
- Achieving official status as a tertiary hospital serving the Loddon Mallee region



Regional Research Hub

We will establish a Regional Research Hub that brings together clinician-researchers and academic partners to drive innovation, advance evidence-based practice, support workforce development and improve healthcare outcomes across the region.

Digital Enablement

We will strengthen our digital capability through upgraded EPR and data systems, the integration of AI, and the expansion of our Access Command Centre, enhancing insights, coordination, decision-making, and responsiveness across acute, subacute, and community care.

Skilled Workforce

We will partner with schools, universities, and TAFE to expand training and strengthen workforce pathways, enhancing recruitment, retention, and career growth through aligned education, onboarding, postgraduate programs, micro-credentials, and interprofessional learning.

Pictured: Calder Highway at Kiamal silos and railway station



Embedding Cultural Safety and Inclusion

We will foster cultural safety, respect, and inclusion by creating safe environments and services that ensure equitable care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, as well as for all cultural groups and diverse identities across our community.

Expanding and Updating Care for Our Region

With our regional partners, we will align services through the Loddon Mallee Local Health Service Network Plan, expand mobile care, improve imaging, and enhance mental, aged, community, and virtual healthcare access.

Enhancing the Quality of Healthcare Services

We will expand clinical services, subspecialties, training, and regional access to reduce reliance on out-of-region care, while delivering person-centred, timely, and coordinated services that improve outcomes and strengthen the health system across our region.

Expanding and Integrating Mental Health Services

We will expand mental health and AOD hubs, strengthen regional integration, enable earlier intervention, enhance care continuity, and improve outcomes, resilience, and wellbeing for Loddon Mallee individuals and families.

Embedding Financial and Environmental Sustainability

We will embed financial and environmental sustainability, strengthening financial controls and systems, reducing waste, cutting emissions, adopting greener practices, and ensuring responsible, efficient, and sustainable care aligned with community expectations.

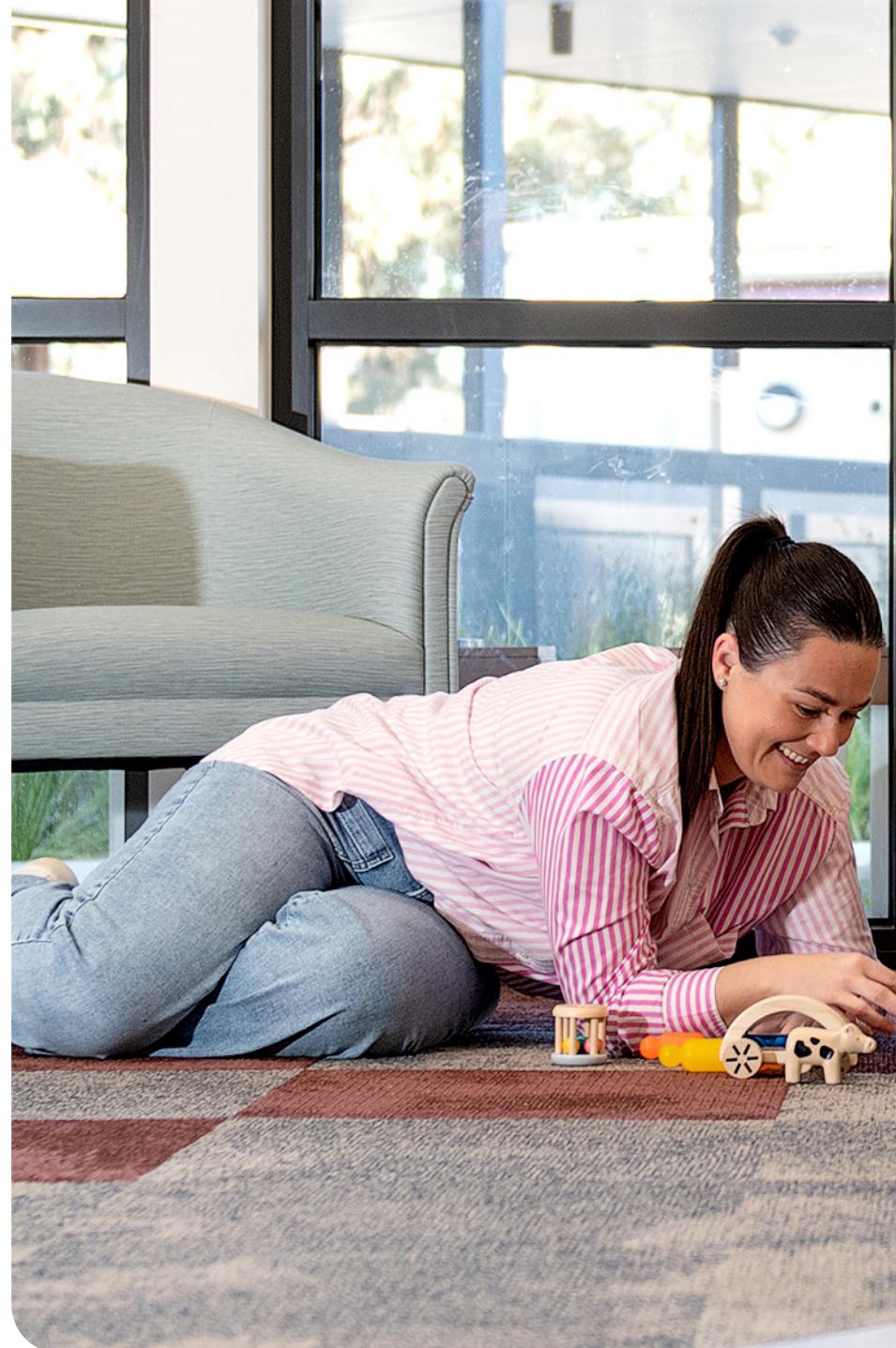
Redeveloping Health and Aged Care Infrastructure

We will masterplan priority infrastructure, while also integrating youth and child mental health services, expanding virtual care, aged care, and staff housing, to ensure facilities meet future demand, evolving models of care, and workforce needs.

Our Services

Over the life of this Strategic Plan, we will focus on delivering six core services: Hospital Clinical Services, Residential Aged Care, Community and Continuing Care, Research, Public Health, and Shared Services.

Together, these services will drive our vision to be a trusted regional healthcare provider, recognised for exceptional care, as a great place to work, and deeply connected to our community, as we continue our journey toward becoming a leading regional tertiary hospital.





Hospital Clinical Services

Bendigo Health plays a vital role as the major referral centre for the Loddon Mallee region, ensuring people at every stage of life receive timely, high-quality, and patient-centred care close to home.

In 2024–25, we cared for thousands of patients across multiple disciplines: 59,754 admissions, 17,863 operations, and 1,706 births.

Our cancer team delivered more than 9,000 treatments, the Children's Ward supported 1,640 admissions for those aged 16 and under, and our Emergency Department remained

one of the busiest in Victoria, with 60,760 presentations and 19,954 ambulance arrivals. Specialist outpatient clinics delivered 160,868 service events, supporting ongoing treatment and chronic condition management.

Our at Home Care services, including GEM at Home, Hospital in the Home, Post-Acute Care, Transition Care, and Residential In Reach, help patients transition safely from hospital to home or community settings, supporting recovery, reducing readmission risks, and promoting independence. By expanding services across acute,

Bendigo Health is a leading regional provider of hospital clinical services, delivering a wide range of general and specialist care to meet the diverse needs of our community.

community, and rehabilitation care, we provide safe, compassionate, and clinically excellent care.

Looking ahead, Bendigo Health will further enhance healthcare by expanding clinical services, subspecialties, training, and access. This will improve outcomes, reduce reliance on out-of-region services, strengthen referral pathways, and ensure person-centred, coordinated care.

From emergency care and surgery to maternity, paediatrics, and specialist services, our goal is to continually

strengthen Bendigo Health's role as a trusted provider and leader in regional healthcare.

As we work toward becoming a tertiary-level hospital, we remain committed to excellence, innovation, and better health outcomes for the communities we serve.



Enhancing the Quality of Healthcare Services

Anaesthetics
At Home Care
Cancer
Cardiac
Cath Lab
Ear Nose and Throat
Emergency Department
Endocrinology
Gastroenterology
General Medicine
General Surgery
Imaging
Infectious Diseases
Intensive Care Unit

Mental Health
Neurology
Obstetrics and Gynaecology
Ophthalmology
Orthopaedic
Paediatrics
Palliative Care
Pathology
Plastics
Rehabilitation
Renal
Respiratory
Urology
Virtual



Residential Aged Care

Bendigo Health delivers Residential Aged Care through a person-centred approach across five dedicated sites, offering 266 beds tailored to the unique needs of older people.

Simpkin House provides 30 single rooms for Aged Persons Mental Health, alongside an eight-bed Specialised Dementia Care Unit.

Stella Anderson Nursing Home offers 60 single rooms, combining privacy, comfort, and personalised support. Carshalton House accommodates 45 residents in single rooms, while

Golden Oaks Nursing Home includes 53 shared rooms and a 10-bed Transition Care Program to aid recovery after illness or hospitalisation.

Joan Pinder Nursing Home provides 60 single rooms, blending modern amenities with a warm, community-focused environment.

Our philosophy is simple: people come first.

We ensure dignity, choice, and meaningful connections so residents can live with purpose and belonging.

We provide quality, compassionate care for people unable to live independently, with each facility supporting residents' physical, emotional, and social needs in a safe, respectful, and home like environment.

Looking ahead, Bendigo Health will enhance and expand aged care services over the next five years.

A key priority is the redevelopment of Carshalton House into a High Care Facility and Memory Support Unit, creating modern, therapeutic, and community-oriented environments designed for comfort, safety, and wellbeing.

We will also broaden opportunities for residents to remain active and connected by offering activities seven days a week, strengthening

partnerships with community groups, and increasing volunteer involvement. Innovative tools such as robotic companions and age-appropriate technology will further promote social interaction, mental stimulation, and enjoyment.

Partnerships with Retirement Living and local community facilities will support smooth, well-planned transitions between care settings.



Carshalton House

45 Single Rooms

Golden Oaks Nursing Home

53 Shared Rooms

10 Transition care programme

Joan Pinder Nursing Home

60 Single Rooms

Simpkin House

30 Aged Persons Mental Health Single Rooms

8 Bed Specialised Dementia Care Unit

Stella Anderson Nursing Home

60 Single Rooms



Community and Continuing Care

We provide care that supports physical health, emotional wellbeing, and social connection, helping people maintain independence and quality of life.

Our goal is to enable people to live with dignity and confidence, whether recovering from illness, managing long term conditions, or adapting to changes in health and lifestyle.

Services are delivered across the Loddon Mallee Region, with teams based in Bendigo, Castlemaine, Echuca, Swan Hill, Mildura, and Kyneton.

We offer a wide range of supports including community allied health, community nursing, aged care assessment, home care packages, and carer support services to assist people in accessing the right care, navigating service systems, and receiving coordinated, tailored support.

In addition, we provide dental care, chronic disease management, outpatient rehabilitation, diabetes management and support for people transitioning home.

Bendigo Health's Community Services support people to live independently, safely, and well in their own homes and communities, promoting health, independence, and connection at every stage of life.

This commitment to person centred care is flexible, responsive, and grounded in local needs.

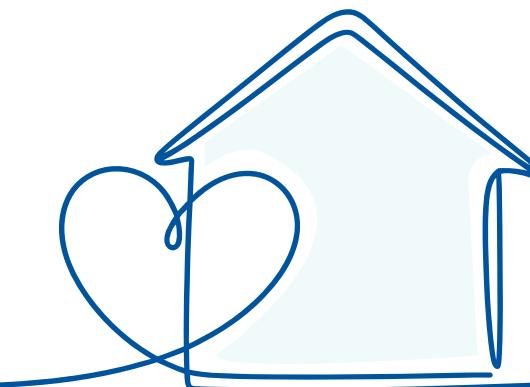
Over the life of the Strategic Plan, we will expand our Community and Continuing Care capability to meet growing demand for out of hospital services, reduce unnecessary hospital presentations, and help people remain well at home.

Our approach is underpinned by consumer directed care principles, giving individuals greater choice and control over the services they receive.

This will position Bendigo Health as a leader in community and continuing care for the Greater Bendigo region, supporting people to live well, stay connected, and remain active members of their communities.



Aged Care Assessment
Carer Support Services
Community Allied Health Services
Community Care Services
Community Dental Services
Community Nursing Services
Diabetes Education Service
Geriatric Evaluation Management at Home
Home Care Workforce
Hospital Admission Risk Program
Hospital in the Home
Outpatient Rehabilitation Services
Post Acute Care
Rehabilitation in the Home
Residential in Reach
Transition Care Program



Research



We undertake high quality research and clinical trials, advancing new treatments, improving care practices, and driving better health outcomes for the communities we serve.

With more than two decades of experience, Bendigo Health has built a strong foundation in research, generating local evidence, driving innovation in care, and creating opportunities for research close to home.

Our work spans clinical trials, ethics and research governance, accelerator and innovation programs, and research grants.

Over the life of this Strategic Plan, we wish to position Bendigo Health as a leading Clinical Regional Research Hub, accelerating clinician

led research, attracting high quality clinical trials, and fostering strong partnerships with universities, funding bodies, and industry.

The Hub will anchor a thriving research culture across the Loddon Mallee region, supported by shared infrastructure, skilled leadership, and expanded innovation capacity.

We aim to substantially increase the number of clinical trials conducted locally, expand clinician led research, and strengthen collaborations with universities.

Joint academic appointments, such as Clinical Chairs, Fellows, and PhD supervisors, will further develop research capability and create strong links between clinical practice and academic expertise.

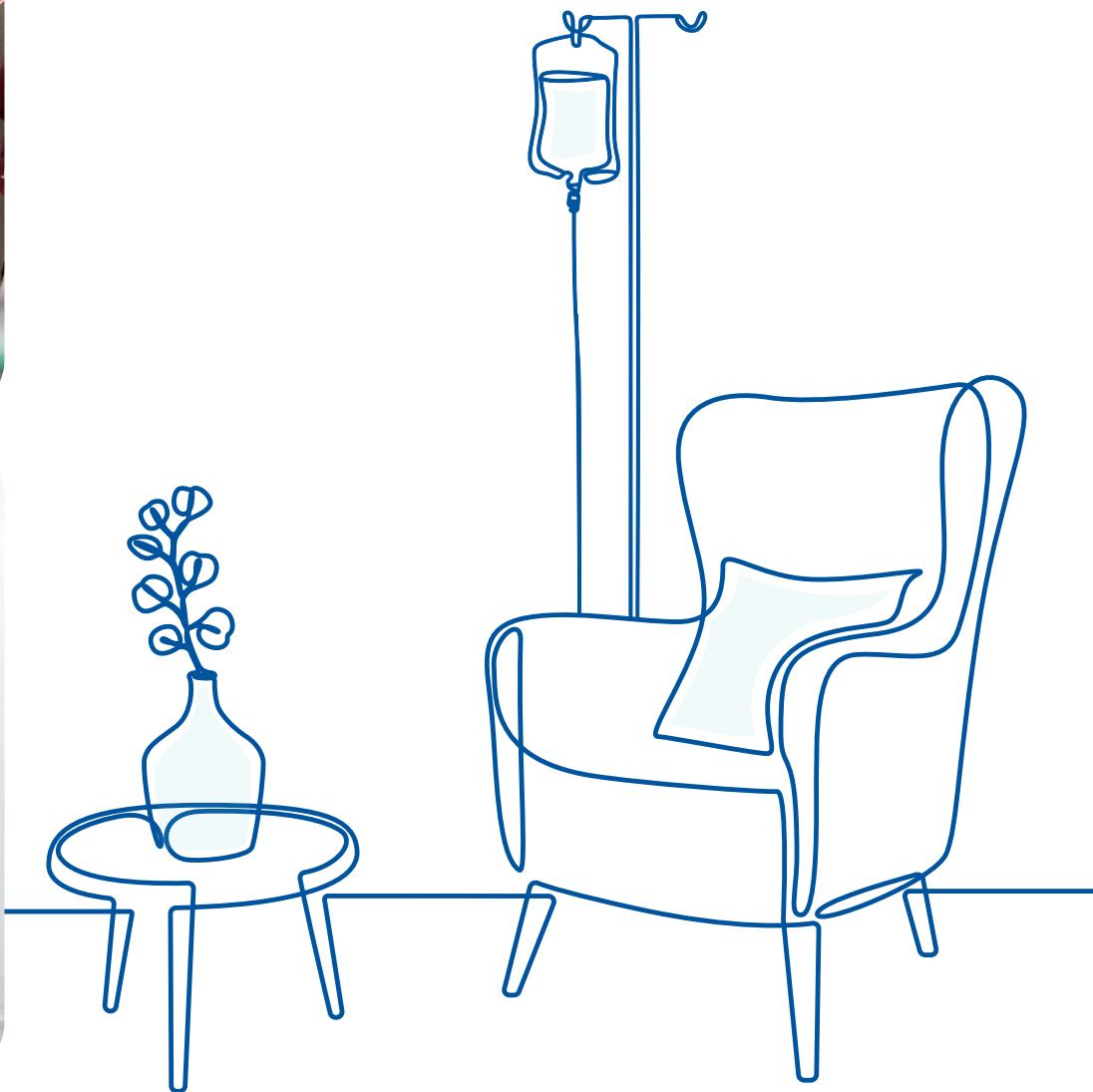
We will work to secure greater success in attracting competitive funding from the The National Health and Medical Research Council, Medical Research Future Fund, and philanthropic organisations, enabling investment in high impact research.

This will improve patient outcomes by increasing access to trial therapies

and embedding evidence based care into everyday practice.

This research focus will strengthen our ability to deliver cutting edge, evidence based healthcare, while ensuring patients in our region can access innovative treatments locally. It will also reinforce Bendigo Health's role as a key driver of regional health innovation, building a future where research excellence is embedded in everyday care.

Through these efforts, we will position Bendigo as a leading destination for clinical researchers.



Public Health



The Loddon Mallee Public Health Unit, in partnership with Bendigo Health, works to protect, promote, and improve the health and safety of people across our region.

Established in 2020 during the COVID 19 pandemic to meet urgent community health needs, the Loddon Mallee Public Health Unit continues to play a vital role in protecting and improving public health.

Drawing on deep local knowledge, strong community connections, and trusted partnerships, the Unit works to keep our region healthy and safe. Serving nine council areas, Buloke, Campaspe, Gannawarra, Greater Bendigo, Loddon, Macedon Ranges, Mildura, Mount Alexander, and Swan Hill, the Public Health Unit is

responsible for tracking and managing reportable diseases, preparing for and responding to health emergencies, promoting healthy lifestyles, preventing illness, and supporting clean, safe environments for better health.

In partnership with the Department of Health and local organisations, the Unit works to reduce health risks, prevent disease, and improve wellbeing for all communities across the region.

Over the life of this Strategic Plan, our focus is on strengthening public health leadership and coordination across the Loddon Mallee. This includes updating key strategic plans, embedding climate resilience in our approach, promoting inclusive and connected communities, and enhancing prevention, preparedness, and equity in public health services.

Key initiatives include developing a region wide Public Health Strategic Plan, revising the Population Health Plan to 2029, and aligning our efforts with state and local government health priorities.

Our work will integrate social, environmental, and cultural determinants of health, ensuring that our public health system is comprehensive, forward looking, and able to meet the challenges of the future.

Through these efforts, the Loddon Mallee Public Health Unit will continue to protect health, prevent illness, and create environments where individuals and communities can thrive.



Emergency Management
Environmental Health
Notifiable Conditions
Prevention and Population Health



Shared Services



Bendigo Health is proud to be part of a regional collaboration that strengthens healthcare delivery across the Loddon Mallee.

Through the Loddon Mallee Shared Services joint venture, 15 health services – including Bendigo Health, work together to provide support services and technologies that benefit the entire region.

This innovative model ensures equitable, high quality, and cost effective services are accessible to all health organisations in the Loddon Mallee, regardless of location or size.

By pooling resources, expertise, and systems, Loddon Mallee Shared Services enables participating services to operate more efficiently, improve

patient care, and invest in sustainable healthcare solutions. Loddon Mallee Shared Services delivers a broad range of critical services.

Digital Services manage and support the platforms used by Loddon Mallee Local Health Service Network partners, enhancing patient care and operational performance.

Workforce Systems Support streamlines rostering, payroll, and training records. Virtual Care expands access for rural and remote patients through telehealth consultations and remote monitoring.

Recruitment Services attract skilled professionals, while People and Culture Capability supports staff wellbeing, professional development,

Bendigo Health, through the Loddon Mallee Shared Services joint venture, partners with 15 regional health services to deliver shared technologies and support improving healthcare across the region.

and workplace culture. Procurement, Supply Services, and Contracts ensure timely access to medical equipment, consumables, and service agreements.

Finance Services manage budgets, payments, and governance across the network. Health Information and Coding Services maintain accurate documentation, enabling appropriate funding for services.

Beyond these, Bendigo Health provides shared capabilities in Virtual Care, Communications, Fundraising, and Volunteer Coordination – fostering community engagement and support.

Most Loddon Mallee Shared Services core services are hosted through Bendigo Health, creating a centralised, expert-driven model that helps smaller

sites build capability, respond quickly to change, and deliver consistent, high quality care across the region.

Over the life of this Strategic Plan, Loddon Mallee Shared Services, Bendigo Health, and partners will work to build a more connected, efficient, and resilient health system – one that maximises resources, embraces innovation, and delivers better health outcomes for all communities in the Loddon Mallee.

With digital platforms now embedded into everything we do, the Loddon Mallee Shared Services joint venture has become a critical enabler to progress the shared deliverables of the Loddon Mallee Local Health Service Networks.



Communications
Digital
Finance
People and Culture
Procurement and Contracts
Recruitment
Supply
Virtual Care
Volunteerism
Workforce Systems



Our Support Services

Our Support Services enable safe, efficient, and high-quality healthcare by underpinning all Bendigo Health's operations, providing the essential, behind-the-scenes capabilities that ensure our organisation functions effectively every day.





People and Culture

At Bendigo Health, our people are our greatest strength. Every staff member contributes to delivering safe, high-quality care, whether at the bedside, behind the scenes, or in essential administrative roles.



We are committed to creating a positive, inclusive and respectful workplace where all staff feel valued, supported, safe, and empowered to do their best work.

Our People and Culture division supports this commitment by providing expert advice and services across a range of important areas, ensuring every staff member is positioned to thrive.

At Bendigo Health, we aim to be a great place to work.

Advisory Services provide guidance to support staff development and help resolve workplace concerns with care and fairness.

Our Industrial Relations and Occupational Health and Safety teams play a vital role in protecting staff rights and wellbeing and that both physical and psychological safety are prioritised across the organisation.

Through effective Workforce Planning, we ensure we have the right people, in the right roles, with the right skills to meet the evolving needs of our

health service and the communities we serve.

As part of this Strategic Plan, we will implement a comprehensive Workforce Plan focused on attracting, developing, supporting, and retaining a skilled and compassionate workforce.

A region-wide Human Capital Management platform will strengthen integrated workforce planning, while investments in leadership development and targeted wellbeing initiatives will ensure our people feel valued.

We will enhance our Employee Value Proposition as a competitive advantage, positioning Bendigo Health as an employer of choice.

To further support staff, we are addressing accommodation as part of our recruitment offering and exploring options for childcare solutions.

We will also deepen our partnerships with education providers to improve visibility of career pathways and create more opportunities for growth and development within our workforce.



Finance

Budgeting and forecasting are essential to aligning Bendigo Health's financial resources with our organisational priorities.

Ongoing forecasting throughout the year allows us to remain agile, responding to changing service demands while maintaining financial discipline and accountability.

Financial Planning and Capital Projects ensure that major infrastructure and equipment investments are both affordable and strategically aligned with long-term goals.

The Finance team also leads business case development and investment support, preparing robust financial analyses for new initiatives and

service expansions to ensure sustainability and alignment with regional healthcare objectives.

Financial reporting and compliance are another core function, providing accurate and timely reports that meet all legislative and regulatory requirements.

Strong financial systems and internal controls are in place to manage risk, protect resources, and support operational integrity.

Procurement and Accounts Payable support the day-to-day delivery of care by ensuring the timely purchase and payment of goods and services. Revenue and funding management remains critical in securing and

Financial sustainability underpins Bendigo Health's future. Our Finance services ensures every dollar is planned and managed to support the delivery of high-quality, safe and consistent care, now and into the future.

maximising income from government, grants, and activity-based funding to maintain service delivery.

As a leading regional health service, Bendigo Health also provides financial advisory and regional support through Loddon Mallee Shared Services to health partners across the Loddon Mallee Local Health Service Network.

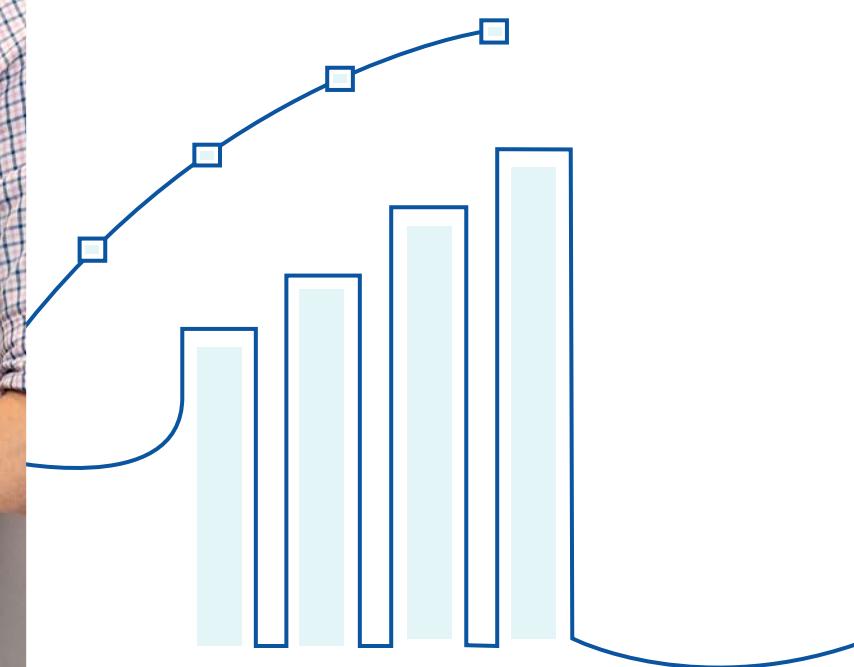
In addition, the Finance division oversees our Public Private Partnership with Exemplar, managing associated performance and compliance obligations.

The broader division also includes Health Information Services, such as clinical coding, data entry, and Freedom of Information compliance,

along with performance reporting, materials management, and facilities management.

Over the life of this Strategic Plan, we will ensure sustainable funding and resource allocation to maintain and expand access to care.

We will also support service delivery through environmentally responsible practices by reducing waste, improving waste management, and embedding sustainability across operations, clinical care, and procurement.



Education

Education at Bendigo Health supports healthcare students and staff by providing real-world clinical experiences that develop skills, understanding, and workplace readiness essential for delivering quality care.



Our commitment to education ensures a well-prepared workforce capable of delivering high-quality, safe, and consistent care to the community.

We provide targeted orientation, training, and ongoing support to healthcare professionals across all disciplines, enabling them to develop the knowledge and skills required to meet evolving healthcare needs. Specialised education and support are offered for undergraduate placements as well as professional development opportunities for early career clinicians and lived experience staff.

These programs include discipline-specific and multidisciplinary learning experiences that enhance clinical expertise, promote resilience, and foster a culture of continuous improvement. Corporate Education supports all staff through training in leadership, management, wellbeing, teamwork, and building a positive workplace culture.

Our Learning Management System provides flexible, online access to training and educational resources for Bendigo Health employees and regional health services, expanding our reach and impact throughout the Loddon Mallee region. Collaboration with health services strengthens access

to education, facilitates sharing best practices, and promotes consistent, high-quality training for all.

We will provide strategic leadership in developing a region-wide leadership framework and implementing a shared Learning Management System, enabling consistent, evidence-based education and structured leadership development to build a capable, adaptable workforce across the Loddon Mallee Local Health Service Network. Regular education quality assurance processes ensure programs remain current, meet rigorous standards, and align with the needs of staff, students, and the wider health service.

Over the life of this Strategic Plan, we will build structured learning pathways, deepen academic partnerships with La Trobe University, Monash School of Rural Health, and Bendigo TAFE, advance early career programs, integrate micro-credentialing, and unify training platforms aligned with the Electronic Medical Record rollout.

These initiatives will prepare a skilled, adaptable workforce ready to meet future healthcare challenges and continue delivering high-quality care to our community.



Quality

At Bendigo Health, quality and safety are at the heart of everything we do, driving continuous improvement, patient-centred care, and a safe environment for patients, staff and community.



Quality works across four key areas, Quality and Compliance, Risk and Patient Safety, Consumer Experience and Engagement, and Improvement and Innovation, to ensure we provide safe, responsive, and high-quality care.

We are committed to maintaining rigorous standards through robust clinical governance and a strong focus on continuous improvement.

Our focus on quality and compliance ensures we meet regulatory requirements, accreditation standards, and best-practice benchmarks across all areas of care and service delivery.

Our commitment to risk and patient safety ensures we proactively identify and manage risks and place the safety of our patients at the forefront of all we do.

The voice of our patients and consumers is essential to shaping how we deliver care.

Through Consumer Experience and Engagement, we gather and respond to feedback that helps us understand what matters most to our patients and

identify areas for improvement. We also engage directly with consumers, carers, and community members in co-designing services that are safe, accessible, and effective.

We foster a culture of improvement and innovation by supporting staff to lead change, test new ideas, and implement evidence-based improvements that drive better outcomes for patients and the organisation.

We will support the standardisation of medical credentialling, data capture and clinical governance across the Loddon Mallee Local Health Service Network.

Our work is supported by strong data systems that enable us to measure progress and inform decisions.

Over the life of this Strategic Plan, we will embed data-driven decision-making, prioritise the patient experience, and build an organisational culture that values innovation, accountability, and continuous learning.





Property and Planning

The Property and Planning teams underpin Bendigo Health's ability to deliver safe, high-quality care by ensuring our facilities, infrastructure, and spaces are fit for purpose, now and into the future.



We support the organisation's long-term vision by aligning property and infrastructure with Bendigo Health's Strategic and Operational Plans.

This includes integration with Clinical Services Planning to ensure that growth in demand and new models of care are supported by the right facilities, workforce, and resources.

We oversee space allocation across the organisation to ensure efficient, safe, and appropriate use of facilities.

This includes adapting to evolving clinical and workforce requirements, providing flexible solutions, and maintaining compliance with safety and accessibility standards.

Our master planning provides the roadmap for future investment in hospital and community infrastructure.

It identifies opportunities for expansion, renewal, and innovation, ensuring our facilities can continue to meet the needs of the Loddon Mallee region.

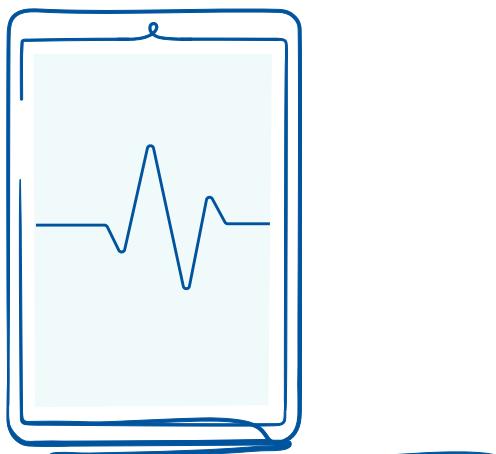
Property and Planning manages rental facilities, leases, and tenancy agreements to ensure value for money and alignment with operational needs.

Facilities management extends to building maintenance, compliance, and environmental sustainability initiatives that keep our infrastructure safe, reliable, and future-focused.



Digital

At Bendigo Health, digital services play a critical role in supporting the delivery of high-quality, safe, and consistent care by enabling clinical excellence, operational efficiency, and innovative healthcare solutions.



Our Digital team works across multiple specialised areas to ensure technology enables clinical quality, operational effectiveness, and innovation at Bendigo Health. Clinical Systems Support and Development maintains and enhances digital tools used by healthcare professionals in patient care.

This includes ensuring clinical systems are reliable and continuously evolve to meet the needs of clinicians and patients.

Enterprise Systems and Corporate Applications manage the complex software and platforms underpinning the organisation's core functions. These systems support essential areas such as patient records, administration, finance, and corporate reporting, ensuring consistent, seamless operations across the organisation.

Information Communications Technology Infrastructure and Operations oversees the physical and technical backbone of our digital environment, including servers, computers, networks, and internet connectivity. Their work ensures all staff have dependable access to technology and systems needed to deliver care and manage operations effectively.

Cybersecurity, along with ICT governance, risk, and compliance, is vital to safeguarding Bendigo Health's digital environment. These functions protect sensitive systems and data from threats and ensure all digital activity complies with regulatory standards, strengthening trust, safety, and organisational resilience.

End User Support and Service Management provides responsive assistance to staff, ensuring timely help with IT issues.

Services such as the Information Technology Helpdesk ensure employees have the tools, knowledge, and support to perform their roles with confidence and efficiency.

Over the life of this Strategic Plan, we will implement a transformative upgrade of our data warehouse and analytics environment. This initiative will enable real-time insights, integrate data across clinical, operational, financial, and workforce systems, and establish a scalable foundation for predictive analytics, performance optimisation, and data-driven research, empowering a digitally enabled, high-performing health service.



Legal and Governance

Bendigo Health's Legal and Governance services ensure our care is delivered safely, ethically, and responsibly, providing vital support for compliance, accountability, and sound decision-making across the organisation.



The Legal team provides expert advice and guidance across a wide range of complex issues, including medical negligence, complex medical treatment decision-making, mental health law, and compliance with healthcare regulations.

Legal support is also central to navigating coronial investigations, protecting whistle blowers and offering practical guidance on matters such as court appearances and regulatory inquiries.

In addition, the team ensures that all contracts, research agreements, property transactions, and matters involving intellectual property, or procurement are legally sound, compliant, and aligned with best practice.

Their work protects Bendigo Health from legal risk while enabling innovation and operational effectiveness.

The Governance function supports the effective operation of the Board of Directors and its sub-committees, helping them fulfil their obligations

under relevant legislation such as the Health Services Act and the Public Administration Act.

This includes managing meetings, reports, correspondence, and key documentation such as Board resolutions and official minutes.

The team also ensures the Board adheres to its Charter and Terms of Reference, complies with regulatory requirements, and upholds governance standards in areas such as safety, privacy, and ethical conduct.

Over the life of this Strategic Plan, Legal and Governance will strengthen enterprise-wide compliance frameworks, provide enhanced support for staff and Board members, and support the development of policies that align with evolving legislative and regulatory requirements.

This ongoing focus on strong legal foundations and accountable governance will be essential in enabling safe, transparent, and responsible healthcare now and into the future.



Equity and Inclusion

Everyone is welcome here. At Bendigo Health, we are committed to fostering culturally safe, inclusive environments where equity, respect, and belonging are central to the care we provide and the culture we create.



Our approach to equity and inclusion extends to all members of our community.

Our goal is to ensure that every person feels respected, welcomed, and supported when accessing care or working at Bendigo Health.

We are committed to building a health service where every individual, regardless of background, identity, or ability, feels valued and supported. Our services are designed to be inclusive, responsive, and informed by deep cultural understanding.

We aim to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people feel culturally secure, empowered, and welcomed, with services grounded in respect, understanding, and self-determination.

Through Gender Impact Assessments, we evaluate how our policies, programs, and services meet the diverse needs of women, men, and gender-diverse people, embedding fairness and equity into everything we do.

Disability Liaison Support plays a critical role in ensuring people with disabilities have equitable access to care.

We also raise awareness about their rights, helping to build a more inclusive and understanding workplace and community. Interpreter Services are available to support people who speak languages other than English, ensuring clear communication and equal access to our services.

Cultural Safety Awareness
Training empowers staff with the knowledge and sensitivity to work effectively and respectfully with people from all cultural backgrounds, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Our training emphasises respect, safety, and cultural responsiveness in every interaction.

We are also dedicated to fostering inclusive, emotionally safe spaces for LGBTIQA+ community members. Over the life of this Strategic Plan, we will embed cultural safety, respect, and inclusion across all levels of our organisation.

This includes equipping our staff with the confidence and capability to deliver culturally safe care, and reinforcing our commitment to a fair, inclusive, and respectful environment for all.



Communications and Volunteerism

Communications and volunteerism build strong connections with our community, enhancing care and trust.



Volunteers play an invaluable role in enriching patient experience and supporting staff. In the Emergency Department, they provide comfort and reassurance to patients and families during stressful times.

Through the Discharge Lounge and Volunteer Express Bus, they assist patients returning home, helping free up vital hospital beds.

Volunteers are also a constant presence in our five aged care facilities, where they provide companionship, social interaction, and a sense of community for residents.

Beyond these areas, volunteers contribute across Cancer Services, Specialist Clinics, Day of Surgery, Palliative Care, Dementia Support, and women's and infant services.

Programs such as Meet and Greet, patient surveys, administrative assistance, bereavement walking groups, and life-story biographies highlight the breadth of their support.

The School Holiday Volunteer Program also introduces young people to

healthcare, fostering future pathways into the profession.

The Corporate Affairs team manages the communication, media, and engagement activities that enhance Bendigo Health's reputation and strengthen trust with both internal and external stakeholders.

Their work includes proactive and responsive media liaison, staff and patient communications, and targeted public health messaging. They also coordinate government and stakeholder engagement, ensuring alignment with regional priorities.

Creative services such as graphic design, photography, publications, and event management further support the organisation's profile.

By delivering clear, consistent, and timely communication, Corporate Affairs plays a pivotal role in promoting transparency, celebrating achievements, and reinforcing Bendigo Health's identity as a leading regional health service.



Our Strategic Partners

Be.Bendigo

Bendigo Community Health Services

Bendigo and District Aboriginal Co-operative

Bendigo TAFE

Bendigo Urgent Care

City of Greater Bendigo

DJAARA

Downer

Emergency Services

Exemplar Health

La Trobe University

Loddon Mallee Local Health Services Network

Monash School of Rural Health

Murray Primary Health Network





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