

# Disability Action Plan 2024-26

Grampians Health acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we operate, the Wadawurrung, Djab wurrung, Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Jupagulk peoples, and their connections to land, waterways and community.

We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging, and extend this to all First Nations peoples today. Grampians Health recognises and values the contributions that First Nations peoples make in our society. Sovereignty has never been ceded. It always was and always will be, Aboriginal land.

Grampians Health is committed to providing inclusive services and an inclusive working environment. We believe in equality of healthcare for all.

Grampians Health is a registered NDIS provider.



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## Message from the CEO

I'm proud to present Grampians Health's inaugural Disability Action Plan which demonstrates our commitment to becoming a safer, more accessible and more inclusive health service.

Grampians Health was created with the purpose of serving our community on a deeper level, and this Disability Action Plan is an integral part of providing greater access to and more personalised care for our community. We're also providing more accessibility and opportunity for people with disability in our workforce – for our existing team members, and those who are looking to join us.

We sincerely thank the people with disability, carers, support workers, and other community organisations who gave candid, considered input to assist in the creation of this Plan. This invaluable guidance helps us work toward our goal of providing an integrated model of care that always puts people first.

The actions in this Plan are an acknowledgement of the barriers we must remove to ensure our patients receive personalised, compassionate care.

We look forward to implementing these important actions to provide safer, more accessible and inclusive healthcare, and sharing the progress of this plan with you.

### **Dale Fraser**

Chief Executive Officer  
Grampians Health

## About Grampians Health

Grampians Health, established on November 1, 2021, unites Ballarat Health Services, Edenhope and District Memorial Hospital, Stawell Regional Health and Wimmera Health Care Group to provide secure, enduring healthcare that adapts to workforce and community changes.

This collaborative partnership builds upon years of strong cooperation among the four health services. Together, we will deliver better healthcare, enhance services and advance careers, closer to home, now and into the future.

To deliver quality care to the communities we serve by providing safe, accessible and integrated health services resulting in positive experiences and outcomes.

- Our patients: We are steadfast in our commitment to providing positive experiences for our patients, ensuring the users of our health service feel their needs are met and they receive effective support.
- Our staff, students and service partners: We uphold a positive workplace culture that not only strengthens the communities we serve, but also supports the delivery of quality, safe, accessible, and integrated health services.
- Our community: We value the broader community as a crucial part of our mission. Their involvement is key to our commitment to deliver positive experiences and beneficial outcomes for everyone. Together, we are building a healthier and more inclusive future.

Grampians Health believes that regional and rural Victoria deserves equality in health outcomes, no matter where you live, and we will work tirelessly to deliver a preeminent regional healthcare model servicing the entire Grampians region equitably.

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**GRAMPIANS HEALTH PURPOSE:** *To deliver quality care for our community through safe, accessible and connected health services.*

**GRAMPIANS HEALTH VISION:** *Grampians Health will be a trusted, progressive and innovative leader of regional and rural healthcare.*

## Our values

Grampians Health will be a trusted, progressive and innovative leader of regional and rural healthcare. Whilst we come from diverse backgrounds and communities, we are a unified team and our collective goal is to provide an integrated model of care that always puts people first, ensuring that they are receiving personalised and compassionate care. Our values guide how we work with each other, our patients, and the broader community.



**Collaboration:** We are stronger together. Recognising and utilising strengths to share knowledge, solve problems, build relationships and deliver the best outcomes possible.



**Accountability:** We do what we say and say what we do. Openness, honesty and transparency support us to be courageous, take responsibility for our actions and follow through on our commitments.



**Innovation:** We adapt and innovate to achieve best outcomes. Everyday, we apply expertise and integrity to make responsible choices, always striving for continuous improvement.



**Respect:** We appreciate and value all people. Our actions and words reflect our commitment to a safe and fair health service for all.



**Compassion:** We show that we care. All people deserve to be treated with compassion, kindness and empathy.

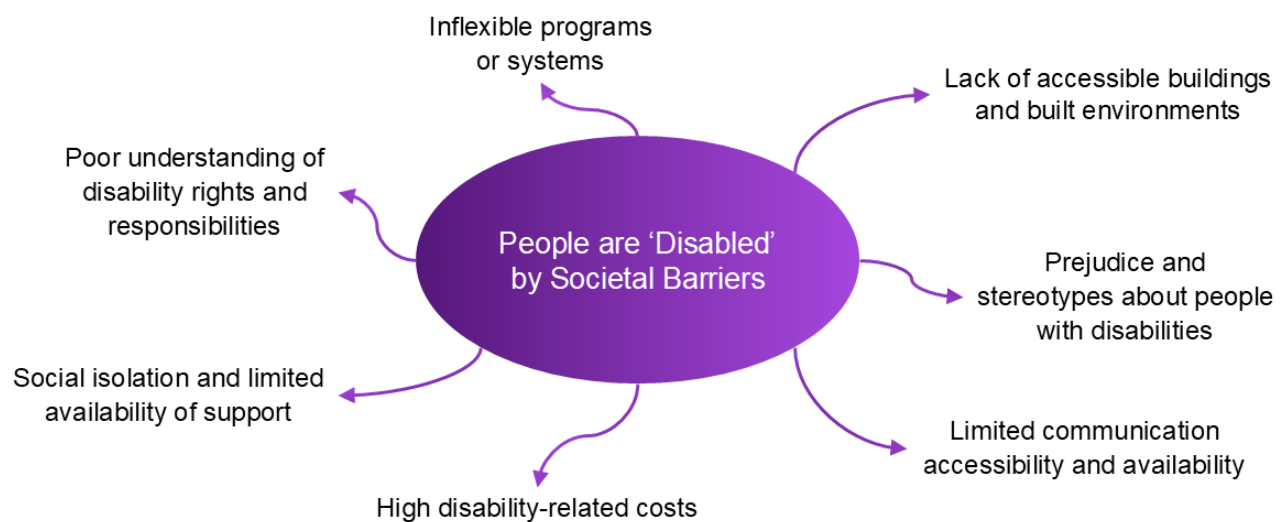


## What is a Disability Action Plan?

Grampians Health endorses the definition of disability that is set out by the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006). It describes individuals with disabilities as people who have long-term visible or invisible physical, psychosocial, intellectual and/or sensory differences that, when interacting with inaccessible environments, prevent full and equal participation.

The Social Model of Disability suggests that individuals with impairments are 'disabled' by the social attitudes and barriers that operate within society which disable them from being a full and inclusive member of a community. Embracing this perspective shift is crucial for the successful implementation of the Disability Action Plan.

## Social Model of Disability



This Disability Action Plan lays the foundation for our organisational approach to all disability-related work. This Plan brings together our existing and future activities under three priority areas and guides our work for success.

In March 2022, the Victorian Government released *Inclusive Victoria*, a plan for making the Victorian community inclusive and accessible for everyone. The priority areas in our Disability Action Plan address the actions and systemic reforms that the Government has committed to.

Our Plan is also inherently linked to Grampians Health's *Gender Equality Action Plan (2021-2025)* and *Innovation Reconciliation Action Plan (February 2024-February 2026)*. Combined, these Plans will make Grampians Health a safer, more accessible and more inclusive health service for our community.

We are fortunate to have had input from people with disability, carers, support workers, and other community organisations to ensure we have captured a cross-section of our community that is representative of the cohort this Plan will benefit.

Previously, Grampians Health has had limited capacity to capture information about staff members who have disability. With the planned rollout of a new human resources software, we will be able to record this information for new starters, as well as our 7,500 existing team members. This will help us better understand and continue to remove barriers to employment for people with disability at Grampians Health.



Patient Elie Enock at Queen Elizabeth Centre, Ballarat



# Disability STATISTICS IN AUSTRALIA

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More than 1 in 5 Australians have a disability.<sup>1</sup>

Results from the 2022 Australian Survey of Disability and Carers indicated that approximately 20% of Victorians have a disability;<sup>2</sup> however only approximately 11% were eligible to be a participant of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).<sup>3</sup>

37% 

OR 1 IN 3 PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY HAVE A SEVERE OR PROFOUND DISABILITY<sup>4</sup>

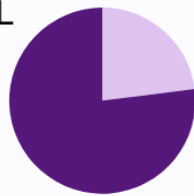
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24% OR 1 IN 5 PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY LIVING IN HOUSEHOLDS NEEDS HELP WITH HEALTHCARE<sup>6</sup>



77%

OR 3 IN 4 PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY'S PRIMARY DISABILITY IS OF A PHYSICAL NATURE<sup>5</sup>



23%

OR 1 IN 4 PEOPLES' PRIMARY DISABILITY IS COGNITIVE OR BEHAVIOURAL, ENCOMPASSING CONDITIONS SUCH AS INTELLECTUAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISORDERS, AND DEMENTIA<sup>5</sup>

49.9%

OR LESS THAN HALF OF AUSTRALIANS WITH DISABILITY HAVE THEIR NEEDS FULLY MET<sup>7</sup>

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47%

NEARLY HALF OF PEOPLE AGED UNDER 65 WITH SEVERE OR PROFOUND DISABILITY SAW 3 OR MORE HEALTH PROFESSIONALS FOR THE SAME CONDITION, COMPARED WITH 1 IN 3 (34%) OF PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY OTHER THAN SEVERE OR PROFOUND<sup>8</sup>

# Our COMMUNITY

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4,417 

PEOPLE WITH  
DISABILITY<sup>9</sup> LIVE IN THE  
GRAMPIANS REGION<sup>10</sup>

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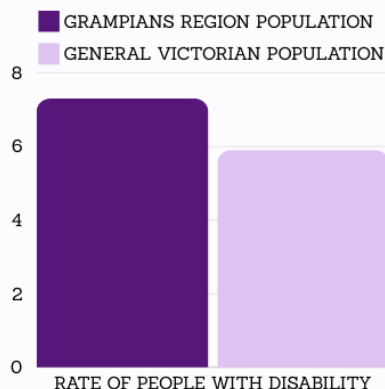
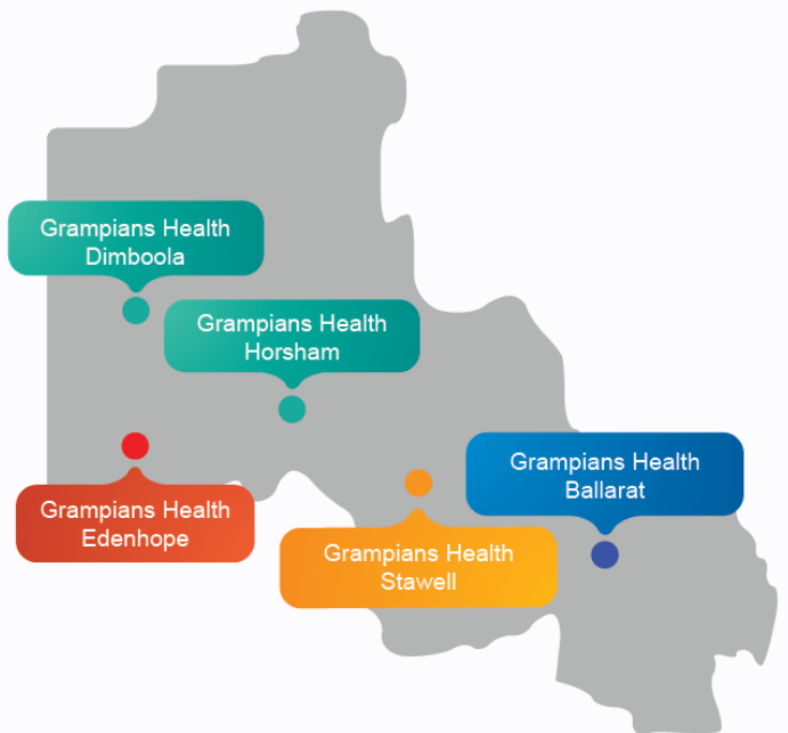
13.9%

OF PEOPLE IN THE  
GRAMPIANS REGION  
PROVIDE UNPAID  
ASSISTANCE TO A PERSON  
WITH DISABILITY<sup>12</sup>

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7.3%

THE RATE OF PEOPLE  
WITH DISABILITY IN THE  
GRAMPIANS REGION  
COMPARED TO 5.9% IN  
THE GENERAL  
VICTORIAN POPULATION<sup>11</sup>



## INTERSECTIONALITY MATTERS

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44.7%

OF ABORIGINAL AND  
TORRES STRAIT  
ISLANDER PEOPLE IN  
VICTORIA HAVE A  
DISABILITY<sup>13</sup>

11%

OF AUSTRALIANS  
AGED 0-14 HAVE A  
DISABILITY<sup>14</sup>

38.1%

OF LGBTQIA+ VICTORIANS  
REPORT HAVING A  
DISABILITY OR LONG-TERM  
HEALTH CONDITION,  
INCLUDING MENTAL HEALTH,  
COMPARED WITH 17.7% OF  
THE GENERAL AUSTRALIAN  
POPULATION<sup>15</sup>

## Grampians Health Disability Liaison Office

Our Disability Liaison Officers collaborate with health professionals to ensure a safer, more accessible, and inclusive healthcare experience during hospital visits and outpatient appointments.

Our Disability Liaison Officers may help with:

- Identifying and addressing barriers that may be preventing you from accessing Grampians Health.
- Developing a 'Disability Care Plan' and assisting with implementing modifications or strategies for hospital visits or outpatient appointments to improve the health service experience for individuals with a disability.
- Supporting your hospital care team to enhance their understanding of your social, environmental, emotional, communication, and sensory adjustments.
- Being a point of contact between families, health professionals, disability providers, support coordinators, and therapy teams for inpatient and outpatient services.
- Working with your NDIS team to support discharge planning.
- Attending outpatient appointments at Grampians Health with you to assist you with understanding the medical information given to you.
- Providing generalised advice about the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

## Key priorities

### *Priority Area 1: Accessibility*



- Support individuals with a disability who are experiencing barriers to access the health services they need.
- Identify and address barriers in the built environments.
- Enhance the accessibility of our communication and digital systems.

### *Priority Area 2: Inclusivity*



- Strong leadership and governance informed by the voice of people with disability.
- Raising awareness of the social model of disability.
- Support and maintain people with a disability in employment.

### *Priority Area 3: Innovation through Partnership*



- Improve systems that recognise and utilise information provided by people with disability about their own care needs.
- Partnering with disability organisations in our communities.



## Priority Area 1: Accessibility

**One** – Support individuals with a disability who are experiencing barriers to access the health services they need.

Actions to achieve	Outcome Measure	Responsibility	Time Frame
A. 1.1 Disability Liaison Officers will be available to assist with reducing individual barriers people with disabilities face.	Disability Liaison Officers will continue to assist with addressing individual barriers people with disabilities face when accessing the service.	Disability Liaison Office	2 years of funding
A.1.2 Grampians Health will actively identify service accessibility issues and use a range of strategies to address.	All complaints and feedback from consumers regarding access issues are provided to the Corporate/facility management team or relevant service directors as appropriate.  Accessibility issues will be identified via incident, risk identification, audit and feedback.	Consumer Liaison Office  Service Directors	Ongoing
A.1.3 Resources and clinical information systems are responsive to people's disability, cultural background, age and/or developmental needs.	Patients with a disability who are identified as requiring additional assistance due to disability are flagged on clinical information systems, so staff are better positioned to provide the required assistance in a timely manner.	Chief Information Officer	Ongoing

**Two** – Identify and address barriers in the built environments.

Actions to achieve	Outcome Measure	Responsibility	Time Frame
A.2.1 Services are physically accessible to people and /or provide a flexible response to enhance accessibility where possible.	All new capital developments and refurbishments include consumer involvement and people with disabilities in the planning and are compliant with disability access standards.	Chief Redevelopment and Infrastructure Officer	Ongoing
A.2.2 Services have a clear and accessible point of contact.	Entrances of Grampians Health campuses will include a customer service/information centre that assists patients and visitors entering the facility.	Chief Redevelopment and Infrastructure Officer	Ongoing

**Three** – Enhance the accessibility of our communication and information systems.

Actions to achieve	Outcome Measure	Responsibility	Time Frame
A.3.1 Provision of interpreting services to ensure people with a disability have equal access to information and services.	<p>Appropriate signage across the organization at key consumer contact points (reception areas, front of house, etc) to raise awareness for staff to consider interpreter access for consumers, and for consumers to feel comfortable in asking for such services.</p> <p>Interpreting services available across Grampians Health Campuses.</p>	Director Quality and Safety	Ongoing

Actions to achieve	Outcome Measure	Responsibility	Time Frame
A.3.2 Grampians Health will provide information in the way that best facilitates each person's understanding of the complaints and feedback process.	Ensure that information related to the complaints and feedback process is accessible by providing feedback brochures, forms, and other relevant materials in formats that can accommodate diverse needs across Grampians Health.	Consumer Liaison Office	Ongoing
A.3.3 Undertake Communication Access Assessment to develop action plan to improve communication accessibility across Grampians Health.	Conduct a Communication Access Assessment, develop an action plan, and implement recommendations to enhance communication accessibility throughout Grampians Health.	Director Quality and Safety	June 2025



## Priority Area 2: Inclusivity

**One** – Strong leadership and governance informed by the voice of people with disability.

Actions to achieve	Outcome Measure	Responsibility	Time Frame
I.1.1 Build accountability and transparency through reporting Disability Action Plan progress.	Enhance accountability and transparency by providing a yearly update on the progress of the Disability Action Plan, both internally and externally.	Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Subcommittee	Ongoing

Actions to achieve	Outcome Measure	Responsibility	Time Frame
I.1.2 Establish and maintain Advisory groups and Committees to oversee the Disability Action Plan.	The Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Subcommittee will oversee the implementation of the Disability Action Plan and will hold a minimum of 4 meetings annually.	Chief Redevelopment and Infrastructure Officer Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Subcommittee	2023 Ongoing
I.1.3 Enhance opportunities for people with a disability to play an active role in codesign and improving the health service.	Increase the representation of consumers with disabilities within Grampians Health by actively recruiting them for the Grampians Health Consumer Register and key committees	Director Quality and Safety	Ongoing

**Two – Raising awareness of the social model of disability.**

Actions to achieve	Outcome Measure	Responsibility	Time Frame
I.2.1 Strengthen health service staff understanding of the social model of disability and the barriers people face.	Mandatory disability awareness training will be available to staff.	People and Culture - Manager Learning and Development	Ongoing
I.2.2 Staff will receive information on Equity and Diversity and as part of their orientation.	All new team members have completed induction and have undertaken workplace values-based reviews every two years.	People and Culture - Manager Learning and Development	Ongoing
I.2.3 Disability awareness days in Grampians Health calendar.	Promotion of disability awareness days each year such as but not limited to International Day of People with a Disability (IDPWD).	Chief People Officer/Director Engagement,	Yearly

Actions to achieve	Outcome Measure	Responsibility	Time Frame
		Equity Diversity and Inclusion Subcommittee	

**Three – Support and maintain people with a disability in employment.**

Actions to achieve	Outcome Measure	Responsibility	Time Frame
I.3.1 All recruitment policies, procedures and templates reviewed to ensure language, content and format are inclusive and reflect the needs of people with a disability.	Employment Equal Opportunity (EEO) policy is in place. Templates reviewed, and changes implemented as required.	Director Employee experience and workplace operations.	Ongoing
I.3.2 Ensure the needs of employees with a disability are being met and Grampians Health is actively employing and retaining people with a disability.	People and Culture consultants ensure the needs of employees with a disability are being met and Grampians Health actively employing and retaining people with a disability.	Director Employee experience and workplace operations	2023 Ongoing
I.3.3 Develop and promote Grampians Health employment policies and guidelines to protect the rights of people with a disability to participate equally in the workforce.	Ensure that our employment policies and guidelines at Grampians Health actively support equitable workforce participation for people with disabilities.	Director Employee experience and workplace operations	Ongoing





## Priority Area 3: Partnership

**One** – Improve systems that recognise and utilise information provided by people with disability about their own care needs.

Actions to achieve	Outcome Measure	Responsibility	Time Frame
P.1.1 Explore the investment into systems that assist visitors to the health service receive the support they need whilst visiting the health service.	Identify meaningful systems that allow people with a disability to alert staff that they require additional support.	Disability Liaison Office	Ongoing
P.1.2 Implementation of documentation that allows people to identify their disability specific care needs.	Disability Care Plans will be available throughout Grampians Health.	Disability Liaison Office	2025

**Two** – Partnering with Disability Organisations (DO) in our communities

Actions to achieve	Outcome Measure	Responsibility	Time Frame
P.2.1 Consultation and codesign initiatives to improve the interface between disability providers and Grampians Health.	Meetings will be held with disability providers to identify ways to improve the communication and care of people with disabilities in our health service.	Director Engagement	Ongoing
P.2.2 Grampians Health will continue supporting NDIS participants in acceding NDIS services.	Grampians Health will continue the provision of NDIS services.	Chief Operating officer Community and Aged Care	Ongoing

## Planning and monitoring

Over the course of this Disability Action Plan, Grampians Health will continue to build a service that our community trusts and is proud of. We will grow a workforce that is empowered, well-trained, safe and connected.

Grampians Health will take a phased approach to implementing this Disability Action Plan:

- Year 1 (2024) will see the organisation establish and consolidate consistent approaches to supporting individuals with disabilities within Grampians Health.
- Year 2 (2025) will be a year of continued unification, with the introduction of new initiatives across the health service to better support the needs of consumers.
- Year 3 (2026) will see the health service continue to grow its capacity to deliver services across the region to individuals with diverse needs.

The monitoring and evaluating of achievements and progress over the life of the Disability Action Plan will require a whole of Grampians Health approach. Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Subcommittee will support the process evaluating specific identified initiatives, as well as broader organisational improvements and achievements in access and inclusion.

We are continually listening to the voices of our community; people with disability, people who care for those with disability, and community organisations that serve those with disability. Their voices remain central to the work that we're doing, and we look forward to welcoming their feedback on the progress of this Plan.



## References

- <sup>1</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (2022), [Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings](#), ABS Website, accessed 31 July 2024
- <sup>2</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (2024), [Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers 2022](#), ABS Data download, accessed 15 July 2024
- <sup>3</sup> Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2024), [People with disability in Australia 2024](#)
- <sup>4</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (2024), [Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers 2022](#), ABS Data download, accessed 15 July 2024
- <sup>5</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2020
- <sup>6</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (2024), [Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers 2022](#), ABS Data download, accessed 15 July 2024
- <sup>7</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (2022), [Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings](#), ABS Website, accessed 2 August 2024
- <sup>8</sup> Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2024), [People with disability in Australia 2024](#)
- <sup>9</sup> 'people with disability' is defined as "requiring daily assistance with communication, mobility or self-care" in the ABS Census information.
- <sup>10</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (2024) 'Core activity need for assistance - Census', by region summary [<https://dbr.abs.gov.au/index.html>], accessed 26 July 2024
- <sup>11</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (2024) 'Core activity need for assistance - Census', by region summary [<https://dbr.abs.gov.au/index.html>], accessed 26 July 2024
- <sup>12</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (2024) 'Data by region summary: Grampians', accessed 31 July 2024
- <sup>13</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (2024) 'Data by region summary: Victoria', accessed 31 July 2024
- <sup>14</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (2024), [Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers 2022](#), ABS Data download, accessed 15 July 2024
- <sup>15</sup> Victorian Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (2022) 'Pride in our future: Victoria's LGBTIQ+ strategy 2022–32', accessed 26 July 2024