

1. Responses to Questions on Notice

1.1 What systems and resources has Yooralla put in place to assist people with varying levels of cognitive impairment to speak up about abuse? (Page 7, Proof Committee Hansard transcript)

Yooralla created a Customer Rights and Empowerment team in 2013 which has the function to increase empowerment by equipping customers with the tools to safeguard, protect and promote their full and equal rights. This is delivered through the strengthening of peer supports, leadership mentoring, a rights training program, self-advocacy competency and stakeholder participation. The team consists of three full time trainers and is resourced with training and associated training tools.

The following are the key programs delivered by the Customer Rights and Empowerment team.

- **LifeSkills Speaking Up** is a training module for customers to learn more about themselves, their rights, relationships and keeping safe; developing skills and knowledge in self-protective behaviours and giving people the confidence to speak up when things do not feel right. The program covers relationships, individual rights, staying safe, advocacy, getting help and how to make a complaint. 200 customers with varying needs including those with cognitive impairment have, so far, participated in the program. A key outcome of the LifeSkills program was that participants created their own Community of Practice group called YES (Your Enquiries Solved). This is a peer support group of individuals who have completed the program.
- **My Rights training** consists of training for Yooralla customers, families and staff. It encourages individual empowerment and participation in decision-making focusing on understanding customer rights. As a result Yooralla about to trial a customer peer support and parent peer support program.
- The **Peer Support Program** provides training for people with disability, by people with disability, to gain knowledge on the Human Rights legislation and other applicable Acts.
- Our **Referral program** supports customers to access external advocates.
- The **Independent Advocacy Advisory Committee** is a stakeholder advisory group comprising customers, family members, independent advocates and external advocacy agencies provide feedback, recommendations and advice to the Yooralla Board Service Delivery and Quality Committee on customer issues.

In response to the needs of customers in our Residential and Respite Support Services, the Customer Rights and Empowerment team also developed a taxi tip sheet for customers on how to stay safe in taxis. The tip sheet and Easy English version are attached.

To support people with limited communication capacity, Yooralla has an Assistive Technology Program. Yooralla's Communication & Assistive Technology team provide services that enhance peoples' lifestyle and communication ability by providing information about and access to assistive technologies and equipment. Assistive technology can include specialised devices and mainstream tablets, smart phones and

apps which are used for communication, education and work. Yooralla also employs speech pathologists to support communication needs.

1.2 A perception that OH&S Legislation leads to poor client care, what are the Unions at work in Yooralla, and what is the consultation process? (Page 8 – Proof Committee Hansard transcript)

Yooralla's priority is to safeguard the human rights of people with disability and assist them to live the lives they choose. Our services are provided in the context of many Acts, regulations and standards, of which Occupational Health and Safety legislation is one. The majority of the time the safety of customers and staff is not in conflict, for example safe manual handling practice keeps both parties safe. Where it is challenging to meet both obligations equally, the first priority is to protect the human rights, safety and wellbeing of the customer. Yooralla uses evidence-based practice and transparent decision making processes in conjunction with our customers and their support network to arrive at these decisions.

Yooralla employs a diverse range of staff and has professional engagement with a range of Unions including the Health Services Union (HSU), the Health and Community Services Union (HACSU), Health Workers Union (HWU), and the Victorian Health Professionals Association (VHPA). We also employ nurses and teachers and have professional communication with the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (ANMF) and the Australian Education Union (AEU).

The Victorian OHS legislation was amended in 1993 to remove specific reference to unions in the OHS legislation, and refers to Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) who are elected employee representatives (who may or may not be union members). Yooralla is finalising a review of HSRs for each Designated Working Group across Yooralla and organising elections where required. Issues that cannot be resolved locally can be escalated to the Yooralla Safety Leadership Team which is chaired by the Chief Executive Officer.

2. Other comments raised with Yooralla during the Public Hearing

2.1 What is Yooralla?

Established in 1918, Yooralla is one of Australia's largest 'not for profit' providers that support people with disability to live independent and fulfilling lives. Yooralla values the right of every person, irrespective of age, gender, financial circumstance or level of disability, to access high-quality services that will allow them to achieve their goals.

Over 2000 people work at Yooralla in a variety of settings and with a wide range of skills.

Yooralla provides a range of accommodation alternatives, respite, in-home support, therapy, attendant care, specialised equipment, employment, recreation, information, education and training, and practical skills for daily living. Yooralla operates from 112 sites across the state of Victoria, of which 62 are residential facilities and 16 day services. We also provide in home personalised supports, children's services, a foster care program and an education facility operating as a registered training organisation. An overview of the organisation and governance structure is depicted the table below.

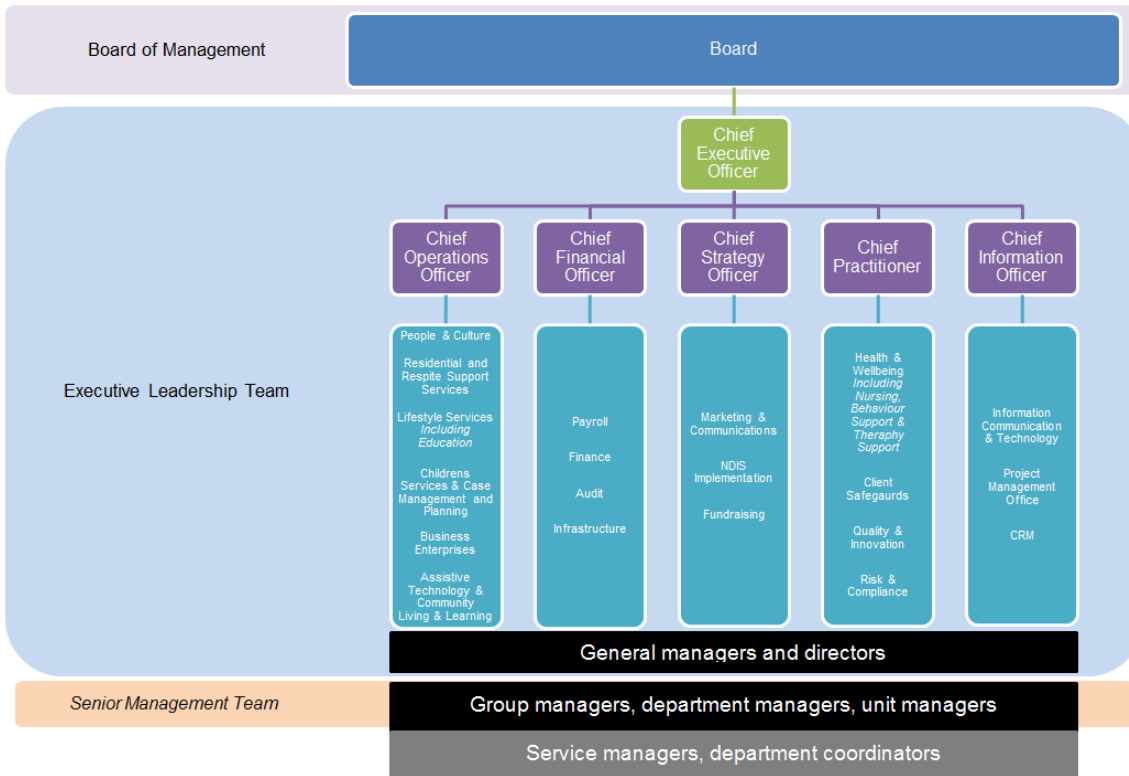


Table 1: Overview of Yooralla organisational structure

2.2 Management Reporting Framework

The use of the RiskMan incident reporting and management system is not widely used across the disability sector. Yooralla has customised the product to suit reporting and monitoring requirements within the Disability Sector. It provides significant real time benefits for the analysis, reporting and management of incidents,

complaints and feedback across Yooralla. Yooralla would like to reiterate it's earlier invitation to demonstrate the system to the Committee or a Committee representative.

2.3 Validity of the response rate to staff survey as part of the HDAA Audit

HDAA was the organisation engaged by the Joyce Review Steering Committee to assess Yooralla's ability to embed the Joyce Report recommendations regarding customer safety. HDAA specialises in the assessment of health and human services and are an approved Victorian Government assessor.

The HDAA survey was one of the many tools used by HDAA to assess Yooralla's compliance with the recommendations. The pulse survey was designed to capture the general sentiment of the staff and was issued to all staff, including casuals. HDAA noted that the 25% survey response was a good response for this pulse survey.

2.4 Governance Structure

Since 2013 Yooralla's Board and leadership team have been refreshed. We are currently recruiting two more Board Directors.

As stated in Yooralla's opening address at the Senate Hearing on 30 June 2015, "Governance" was a key aspect of a DHHS commissioned review undertaken by KPMG and we are confident that the report will confirm that Yooralla is appropriately governed.