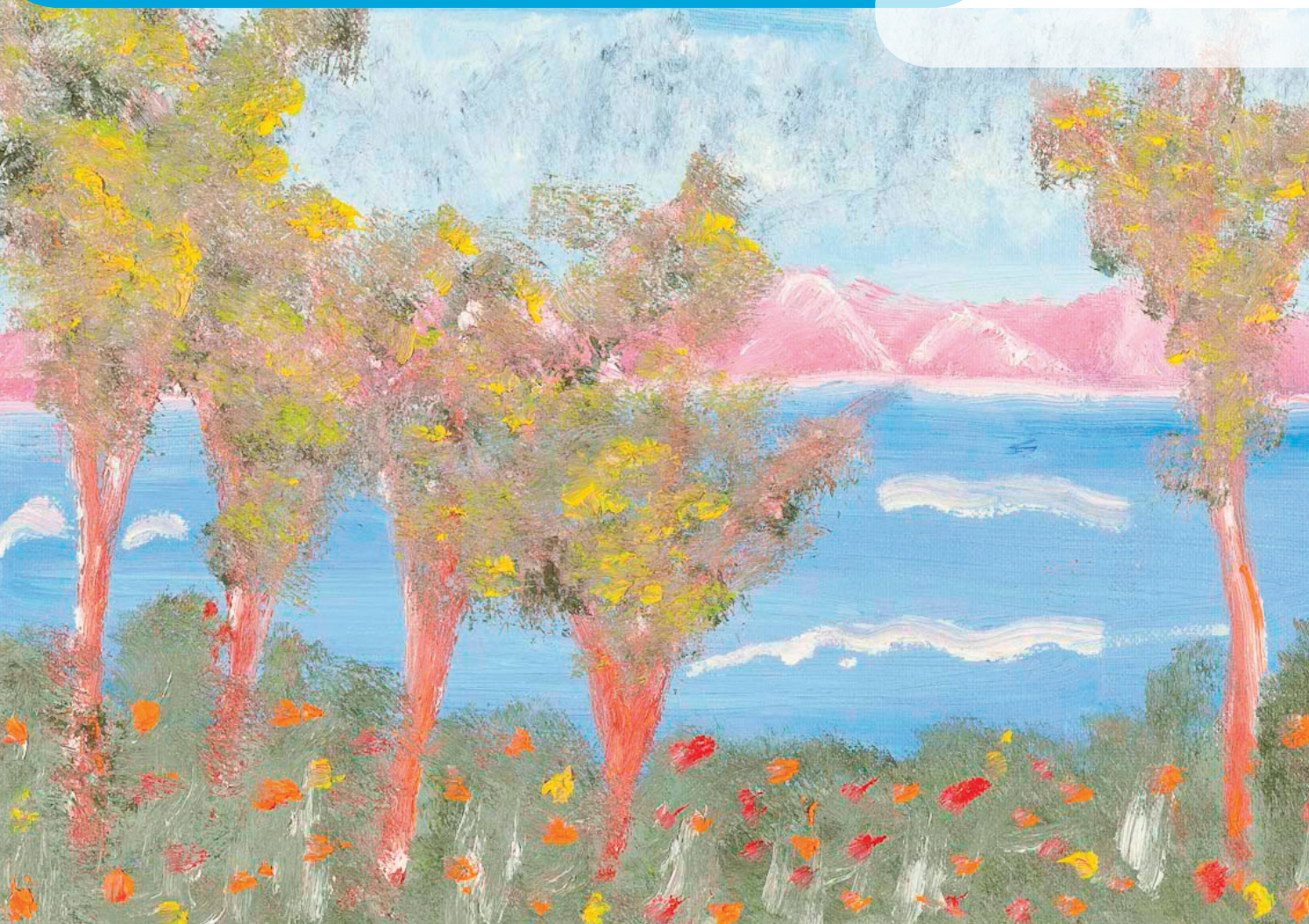


Embracing the Challenges

Corrections Victoria Disability Framework
2013–2015

Corrections Victoria



This Plan can be downloaded from
www.justice.vic.gov.au.

For further information about the Corrections Victoria
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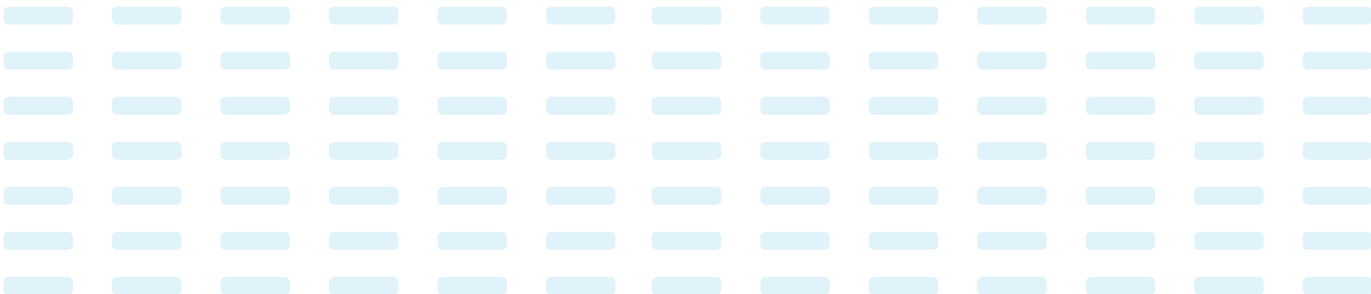
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Embracing the Challenges

Corrections Victoria Disability Framework
2013–2015



As part of its mandate to continually improve community safety, Corrections Victoria is committed to providing relevant and effective programs and services for offenders and prisoners with a disability.

Embracing the challenges – Corrections Victoria Disability Framework 2013 – 2015 is an innovative plan, which celebrates achievements, identifies challenges and assembles a suite of responses that are designed to improve the quality of programs and services for people with disabilities in the Victorian correctional system, which together aim to address re-offending.

The development of this Framework takes place at time of significant Government reform spearheaded by the introduction of the new Community Correction Order and its wide range of tailored conditions. This has provided a renewed focus on supporting offenders to successfully complete their orders within the community, an issue of particular concern for offenders with a disability.

In this Disability Framework, we recognise and celebrate the improvements made to existing programs and the successful implementation of new ones. You will find many examples listed in the Disability Framework; however, there are three that I think are deserving of special mention:

- ***completion of the prison pathway for prisoners with a cognitive impairment***

The pathway from maximum to medium to a minimum security prison location has been completed, with Dhurringile Prison now established as this minimum location. The longer-standing components of the pathway at Port Phillip and Loddon Prisons have delivered more than 50 offending behaviour programs comprising over 450 episodes of treatment. The construction of new programs rooms at both locations and the appointment of new specialist disability staff at Loddon have enabled this program expansion to take place, a strong indication of our commitment to prisoners with a disability.

- **establishment of the Corrections Victoria Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) program**

The ground-breaking Corrections Victoria research into the prevalence of ABI in Victorian prisons provided the driver for this innovative and unique program which supports offenders with an ABI. It is with great pride that I can tell you that this research won the prestigious 2011 International Corrections and Prisons Association Research Award. Often referred to as the 'hidden disability', the program has conducted more than 750 screenings to assist in the identification of offenders with an ABI.

- **extensive, targeted and ongoing staff training program**

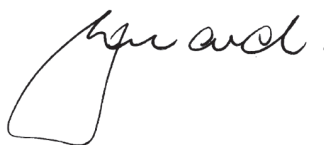
A multi-layered training program has been established and delivered to continually build the skill base of the Corrections Victoria workforce to improve the interactions between staff and offenders with a disability. Training was provided to over 1,500 staff, seeking to increase our capacity to work more effectively with an often challenging cohort of offenders.

While we have achieved successful outcomes with these and other programs and services, we continue to face a variety of challenges in the way that Corrections Victoria responds to the needs of offenders with disabilities. We know that we must continue to consider what is working and what we can improve. This Disability Framework identifies the range of issues and challenges that exist for offenders with a disability, and establishes key responses and future directions to meet these challenges. Some of our key challenges include:

- providing service responses to small and highly complex groups of offenders – women and Indigenous people, for example, who experience multiple disadvantage
- attracting and developing a workforce skilled in working with offenders with a disability as a highly specialist area

- enhancing community intervention/support to work more effectively with offenders on a Community Correction Order, and better supporting prisoners reintegrating into the community.

As the title suggests, **Embracing the challenges – Corrections Victoria Disability Framework 2013 – 2015** provides us with a plan for the future of correctional services for people with a disability for the next three years. We will respond to many of these challenges with a focus on improving programs and services, increased workforce capacity and better integration and collaboration between key stakeholders. I seek your support in continuing to address this challenging issue.



Jan Shuard PSM
Commissioner

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Introduction

Both the Victorian and Australian Governments have recognised the need for a policy focus on forensic disability as part of broader planning for people with a disability.

The Victorian Government State Disability Plan and the National Disability Strategy both acknowledge that the experience people with a disability have when coming into contact with the criminal justice system requires improvement.

Additionally, in 2011 the Victorian Government initiated a parliamentary inquiry titled *“Access to and interaction with the justice system by people with an intellectual disability and their families and carers”*, which considered ways of improving outcomes for people with a disability in both the criminal justice system and the broader community. This policy context supports Corrections Victoria’s focus on effective responses for offenders with a disability.

Purpose

The Corrections Victoria Disability Framework 2013–2015 Embracing the challenges provides a comprehensive and coordinated plan to further improve outcomes for offenders and prisoners with a disability¹, by building on the work of the two previous Frameworks – the *Corrections Victoria Disability Framework 2007–2009 Addressing the Barriers* and the *Corrections Victoria Disability Framework 2010–2012 Committing to the Challenges*.

While significant progress has been made in recent years through these strategies, the third iteration of the Framework will continue to address the challenges of over-representation, accessible services and programs, and will continue to work towards better outcomes for offenders with a disability.

The mission of Corrections Victoria is “*To deliver a safe and secure corrections system in which we actively engage offenders and the community to promote positive behaviour change*”. This applies to offenders in prison and on Community Correction Orders.

Underpinned by this mission, the approach to prisoners and offenders with a disability is multi-dimensional, responding to a range of needs, both in terms of their management and their reoffending. The evidence base continues to report on this complexity of need. The profile of this cohort is characterised by the typical indicators of social disadvantage²: homelessness, poor family and social networks, substance abuse³, patchy schooling and lack of employment – and other factors specific to disability such as poor communication skills and an absence of everyday living skills. A specialist approach to address this complexity, over and above the range of standard services, is required to engage offenders, build their skills and change attitudes and behaviours so as to ultimately address poor recidivism outcomes⁴. For example a program for prisoners with an intellectual disability that addresses violent offending will take around seven months to complete compared to three to four months for mainstream prisoners, due to the need for repetition of material.

The understanding of what is effective in reducing reoffending continues to evolve⁵. The utility of cognitive behavioural therapy⁶ is well evidenced, when programs are delivered in a way that is accessible to offenders with a disability – a much more activity based approach is essential. The need for flexibility and the range of support options to address individual circumstances is well understood, for both offenders in the community and for prisoners returning to the community, including clinical support and accommodation.

In accordance with this evidence, the Framework seeks to provide equality of opportunity for offenders with a disability to adopt a crime-free lifestyle. Targeted approaches designed to effectively engage prisoners and offenders with a cognitive impairment⁷ have been implemented over the last six years through the initiatives of the first two Disability Frameworks. This Framework continues this approach by building on achievements to date as well as addressing emerging issues and identified gaps.

Three broad themes have been adopted in this third Corrections Victoria Disability Framework, with innovation and efficiency a primary focus in each:

- improved programs and services
- greater workforce capacity
- better integration and collaboration between key stakeholders.

1 Corrections Victoria continues to adopt the definition of 'disability' found in the Australian *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*. This definition includes:

- cognitive impairment, including intellectual disability and acquired brain injury
- mental illness
- sensory disability
- physical disability.

2 Hayes, S. C. (2005). *A review of non-custodial interventions with offenders with intellectual disabilities* Current Issues in Criminal Justice 17(1): 69–78. Corrections Victoria Research Paper Series No 2 (September 2007) Intellectual Disability in the Victorian Prison System: Characteristics of prisoners with an intellectual disability released from prison in 2003–2006.

3 Preliminary findings from a Victorian Law Enforcement Drug Fund study indicate that prisoners with an intellectual disability are poly substance users.

4 Corrections Victoria Research Paper Series No 2 (September 2007) Intellectual Disability in the Victoria Prison System: Characteristics of prisoners with an intellectual disability released from prison in 2003–2006.

5 Lindsay, W.R. Steele, L Smith A.H.W. Quinn, K and Allan R, (2006). *A community forensic intellectual disability service: Twelve year follow up of referral patterns and assessment of harm reduction* in Legal and Criminal Psychology, 11, 113–130.

6 Murphy, G Powell, S Guzman, A Hayes, S, (2007). *Cognitive Behavioural Treatment for Men with Intellectual Disabilities and Sexually Abusive Behaviour: a Pilot Study* in Journal of Intellectual Disability Research 51 (11) 902–912.

7 The term cognitive impairment is used to include Acquired Brain Injury and intellectual disability.

Current Service Model

The current statewide approach of the Corrections Victoria Disability Program reflects the sustained evolution of a key service over the last six years, which has resulted in specialist pathways for offenders and prisoners with an intellectual disability and ABI.

This Framework recommits to the four principles developed as part of the inaugural Corrections Victoria Disability Framework. This Statement of Principles (see Appendix 1) underpins the provision, management, development and planning of services, programs and policy to prisoners and offenders with a disability. As part of this Framework a service model has been developed. Underlying this service model are the vision, mission and objectives of the CV Disability Program.

Vision

To lead the provision of evidence based 'offender centric' rehabilitation pathways for offenders with a disability that are responsive, integrated and holistic across the Victorian correctional system.

Mission

To provide offenders with a disability within Victoria's correctional system with an equal, fair and inclusive opportunity for rehabilitation and reintegration that minimises their risk of re-offending and maximises community safety.

Objectives

- develop, design and implement programs and pathways for this cohort that are evidence based

- and reflect the key policy and values of Corrections Victoria and the Department of Justice
- consolidate treatment pathways to reflect an offender centric approach to program delivery that is responsive to the risk and needs of offenders with a disability
- develop appropriate systems and pathways for offenders with a disability entering and exiting the Victorian correctional system
- provide and maintain a statewide approach to program delivery that ensures consistency, credibility and confidence in service delivery
- proactively and responsively engage internal and external stakeholders in the ongoing development, monitoring and review of disability-specific pathways.

Scope

The target group of this Framework is inclusive of all sentenced and remand prisoners, all offenders on community-based dispositions, and offenders on post-sentence orders with a cognitive impairment. More specifically:

- Disability is defined under the Australian *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*. The four major categories are cognitive impairment (intellectual disability and Acquired Brain Injury), physical disability, psychiatric disability and sensory impairment.

Model

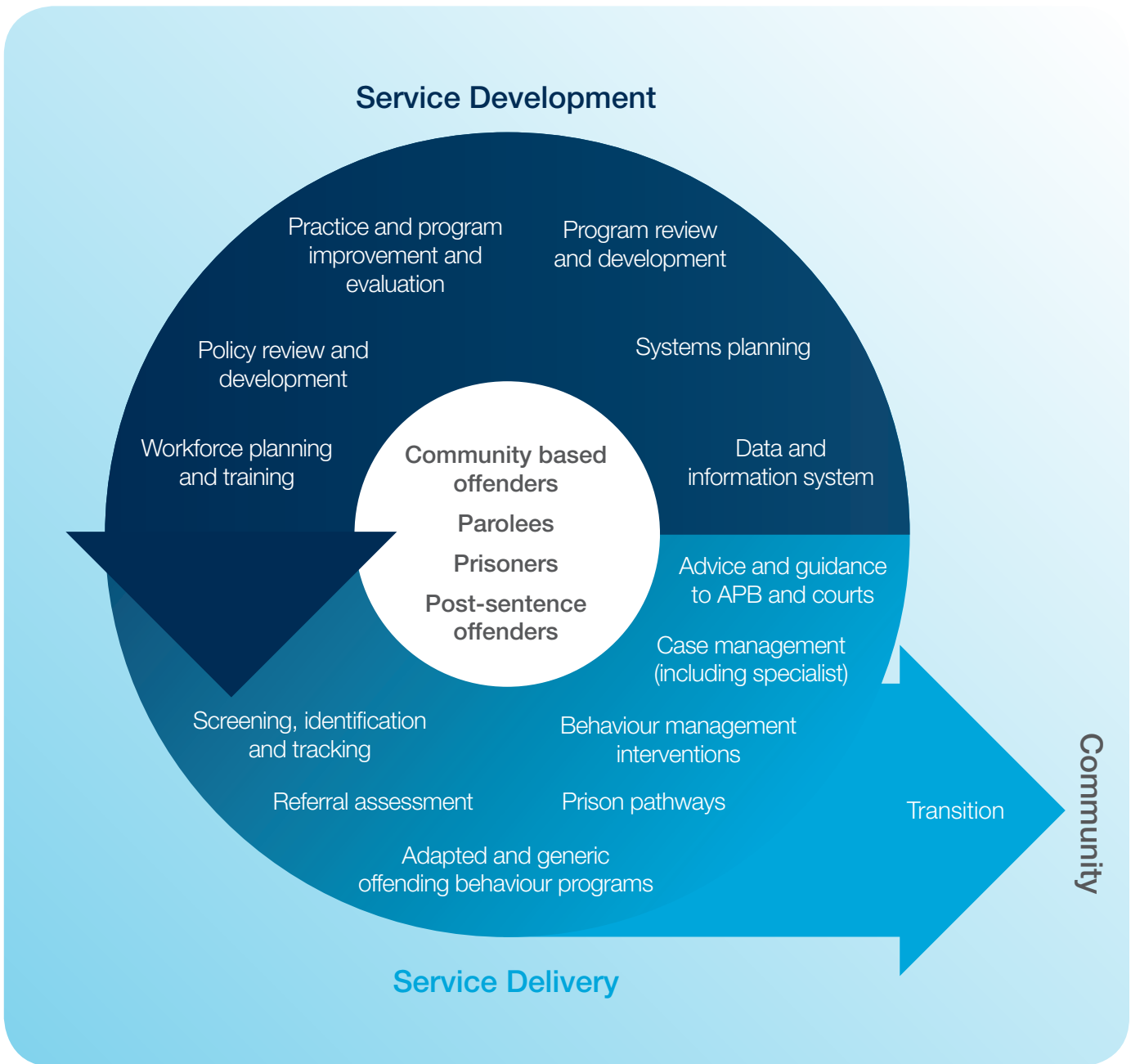
The key function is service delivery, which includes:

- screening identification and tracking
- referral and assessment
- prisoner and offender placement and day-to-day management
- program provision and transition to and/or support in the community.

A range of other activities support service delivery.

These include:

- systems planning
- data and information systems
- program development and review
- policy development and review
- evaluation and practice improvement.



Achievements

This section lists the range of service and programs, training and capacity building and work with key stakeholders, reporting on what has been achieved to date. These are listed in Action Plan (see Appendix 2) as Continuing Activities.

Program and Services

- In 2009, Corrections Victoria was presented with an **Australian Crime and Violence Prevention Award** for the Joint Treatment Program – Prisoners with a Cognitive Impairment program, Marlborough Unit – Port Phillip Prison. This award recognised the innovative approach undertaken by the program including the joint implementation of behaviour management plans by custodial and clinical staff to address behaviours of concern.
- Since 2009, two new **program rooms** have been added to the Marlborough Unit, Port Phillip Prison. As a result, the Disability Pathways program **specialist prison clinical team** delivered 51 adapted offence-specific (violence and sex offending) and offence-related programs, encompassing over 450 episodes of treatment. This suite of programs uses innovative approaches, such as art therapy, to meaningfully engage prisoners with a cognitive impairment.
- In 2010 the Disability Pathways Program assumed responsibility for the Corrections Victoria component of the **Multiple and Complex Needs Initiative (MACNI)**. The MACNI Program, overseen by the Victorian Department of Human Services (DHS), provides support to highly complex people with multiple disabilities in the community, including those involved in the correctional system for which the standard service system is not able to respond appropriately.
- A formal **mentoring program** has been developed at Loddon and Port Phillip Prisons. The Disability Pathways Program team conduct a formal recruitment and selection process, ongoing training and regular supervision to ensure suitable prisoners are selected and supported in the mentoring role. This program plays a significant role in reinforcing appropriate behaviour and building the skills of prisoners with a cognitive impairment.
- The goal of establishing a **‘supported’ prison pathway** for prisoners with a cognitive impairment through maximum, medium and minimum security has been achieved, with the Disability Pathways Program being extended to Loddon Prison and Dhurringile Prison:

- At **Loddon Prison**, two specialist clinical staff provide support to prisoners in the specialist Avoca Unit as well as to prisoners with a disability in the mainstream units. A new programs room was opened in August 2012, allowing adapted programs to be conducted there for the first time.
- At **Dhurringile Prison**, the first specialist unit for prisoners with a disability at a minimum security prison was opened in 2012. The ongoing development of this new minimum security program option is a key 2013–2015 initiative.
- The innovative **Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) Correctional Service Program** was piloted in the North West Region of the Victorian Department of Justice in 2010. Following the pilot program’s success in identifying offenders with an ABI across both prisons and CCS, Corrections Victoria created an ongoing ABI clinician role. Over an 18-month period, the ABI Clinician:
 - conducted 751 offender screenings
 - identified 123 offenders with an ABI
 - provided 362 primary/secondary consultations.
- A **Community Treatment team** of five clinicians has been established to provide statewide treatment and support for offenders with a disability on post-sentence regimes. The Community Treatment team provides offence-specific, maintenance and living skills programs for groups, as well as working one-on-one with highly complex and challenging offenders across Victoria.
- Corrections Victoria was awarded the 2011 **International Corrections and Prisons Association Research Award** for its investigation of acquired brain injury in the Victorian prison system, in partnership with arbias Ltd and La Trobe University.⁸ This research underpinned the development of the ABI Pilot Program in 2010.
- The Big Issue delivered the **Street Soccer Program** to prisoners with a disability at Marlborough Unit, Port Phillip Prison and the Avoca Unit, Loddon Prison. A recent evaluation by La Trobe University *‘Centre for Sport and Social Impact Port Phillip Prison Street Soccer Program Research Report 2010’* found that the program has been successful at engaging participants, building team skills, fitness, and lowering participants’ stress and anxiety.
- Corrections Victoria funds the Office of the Public Advocate (OPA) to deliver the **Governor’s Disciplinary Hearing (GDH) program**. This program provides independent support to ensure that all prisoners with a disability understand the process if they are required to appear at a GDH. Since the commencement of this program in March 2009, OPA has attended 342 Hearings.
- Corrections Victoria continues to respond to the individual needs of offenders with a **physical or sensory disability**. This includes providing advice and training to locations with specific challenges associated with managing offenders with a disability.
- Corrections Victoria has **improved identification** of offenders in the community with an intellectual disability through the implementation of a new flag on the E-Justice information system.

Workforce Development

- **Extensive disability training** has been delivered to more than 1,500⁹ front-line correctional staff, including:
 - introductory disability awareness training, including to 175 Community Corrections Officers in the last three years
 - specialist sessions by external experts on hearing impairment, vision impairment and autism spectrum disorder
 - introductory and advanced training on acquired brain injury to prison and CCS staff
 - ongoing training to staff in specialist prison units

⁸ Corrections Victoria Research Paper Series No 4 (April 2011) Acquired Brain Injury in the Victorian Prison System, Department of Justice, Melbourne.

⁹ Individual staff may have participated in multiple training sessions.

- Since 2005, Corrections Victoria has played a significant role in supporting and sponsoring the biennial **Australian Community Support Organisation (ACSO) Forensic Disabilities Conference**, which progresses both internal workforce professional development and a broader forensic disability workforce.
- Disability Program staff have contributed to the expanding body of forensic disability knowledge, having presented approximately 20 papers at national and international conferences and been published in peer reviewed journals.
- Corrections Victoria has continued to host an annual **International Day of People with Disability Lecture**, to bring together stakeholders across the forensic disabilities workforce. In 2010, Corrections Victoria was proud to host Mr Graeme Innes, Disability Discrimination Commissioner and Race Discrimination Commissioner with the Australian Human Rights Commission. The 2011 guest lecturer was the Hon Tony Staley AO, Chair of the Victorian Disability Advisory Council.
- The **Disability Portfolio Holders network forum** is conducted on a quarterly basis and provides professional development, training and networking opportunities for staff from across prisons, CCS and DHS.

Collaboration

- The collaboration between **Department of Human Services Disability Services** and Corrections Victoria is integral to ensuring community safety through reducing the rate of reoffending by offenders with a disability. In particular, the Disability Pathway Program's partnership with Disability Forensic Assessment and Treatment Services (DFATS), DHS, creates capacity for:
 - co-facilitating programs
 - organising formal assessment of disability
 - informing CV of the imminent entry into prison of people with an intellectual disability
 - engaging with Disability Client Services, DHS to initiate timely case management for prisoners with an intellectual disability returning to the community.
- Corrections Victoria led the development of the **National Forensic Disability Working Group**, which reports to the Correctional Services Administrators' Conference (CSAC). This group includes representatives from all State and Territory correctional jurisdictions, as well as New Zealand. Its purpose is to share best practice as well as to progress issues of mutual interest such as Indigenous offenders with a cognitive impairment.
- The **Grampians Region "Committing to the Challenges" Working Group**, an initiative of the 2009–2012 Framework, brought together key areas of the Department of Justice, including representatives from prisons, Community Correctional Services (CCS) and Corella Place, as well as representatives from Housing, Disability Services and Youth Justice in the Department of Human Services. The working group, chaired by the Grampians Regional Director, Department of Justice, aims to *"address the needs of prisoners, offenders and residents of Corella Place with a disability and reduce their impact on the community through an integrated cross department approach"*.
- Corrections Victoria and Disability Services Division have established an inter-departmental committee to guide a more effective and integrated response to offenders with a disability on post-sentence regimes.

Future Directions

This section sets out the outcomes we aim to achieve and the range of issues and gaps that we need to address in order to do so. These are listed in the Action Plan as **New Activities**.

Program and Services

- **Outcome we are working towards**

Provide programs and services that are responsive to the diverse needs of offenders with a cognitive impairment to reduce reoffending and improve community safety.

- **Challenges**

Offenders with a disability have a right to equality of opportunity. In a correctional environment, this translates to providing access to generic and/or specialist programs and services, while being responsive to the diverse needs of offenders with a cognitive impairment in order to better address their offending behaviour. As outlined in the Corrections Victoria Disability Service Model, many elements of a comprehensive approach for offenders with a disability are in place.

However, this Framework recognises that there is scope to improve the range of services and programs which are currently available and address existing gaps. It has long been recognised that offenders with a disability require habilitation – addressing gaps in their skills – as well as rehabilitation to address their offending behaviour. Development of daily living skills will support an offence-free lifestyle. The new specialist unit at Dhurringile Prison completes the pathway from maximum to minimum security prison settings and creates the opportunity for the extension of the mentoring program and additional supports for prisoners with a cognitive impairment. A renewed focus on those offenders transitioning from prison is also necessary to fully complete the pathway from prison back into the community, while recognising that offenders who have never served a prison sentence may have different needs that require differentiated targeted interventions.

Gaps also remain in the services which are available for specific sub-populations. For example, culturally appropriate interventions for Indigenous offenders with a disability may prove to be more effective in reducing the rate of return to prison and the over-representation of this sub-group. The challenge of working more effectively with Indigenous offenders with a disability is not unique to Victoria, and is a priority for the National Forensic Disability Working Group, which Corrections Victoria chairs. Another group likely to require a different response are those with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Although small in number, these offenders can create significant challenges for the corrections system. The recent independent ASD research conducted by Deakin University is providing valuable information on the scale of this sub-population.

Similarly, female offenders with a disability are a small but highly complex group, often with co-occurring disorders such as a personality disorder and with a history of trauma and abuse. The challenges specific to this group require a differentiated approach, though the small numbers make economies of scale difficult. Initially program suitability and staff training will be considered. Underpinning all of these interventions are improved data collection as well as monitoring and evaluation as part of a cycle of program development and improvement.

- ***What we will do to meet these challenges***

1. Support the extension of the prison pathway to the minimum security location of Dhurringile Prison.
2. Review the prisoner mentoring program at Port Phillip Prison and Loddon Prison and extend it to Dhurringile Prison.
3. Introduce the Living Skills program for offenders and prisoners with a disability in a range of settings.
4. Consider strategies to enhance practice with Indigenous offenders with a disability, including exploring options to make interventions more culturally appropriate and meaningful.
5. Scope the needs for more systematic support for female prisoners with a disability (including staff

training, behaviour management plans, mentoring and structured days).

6. Receive and respond to the findings of the Disability Pathways Program evaluation by Deakin University.
7. Introduce ongoing monitoring and evaluation of program involvement and completion through the development of the new Offender Management database for the CV Offending Behaviour Programs Branch.
8. Heighten the focus on the needs of community based offenders with a disability, including application of the new intensive case management model.
9. Explore a needs analysis of community based offenders with an intellectual disability to inform improved practice.
10. Investigate the application of the Governor's Disciplinary Hearing process for CCS Fines and Sanctions Administration Panel Hearings.
11. Explore the viability of a volunteer mentoring program for community-based offenders with a disability.

Workforce Development

- ***Outcome we are working towards***

Improve the specialist knowledge and capacity of frontline and clinical staff to work more effectively with offenders with a disability.

- ***Challenges***

Offenders with a disability may require different support from frontline CCS, custodial and clinical staff from that provided to non-disabled offenders. Providing relevant learning opportunities for these staff has long been a focus of the Corrections Victoria Disability Program. This sizeable training program has linked training to particular roles or disabilities to ensure staff can provide support and services that are more meaningful and relevant to this group of offenders.

There are several challenges that exist in developing a workforce skilled in providing services and programs

for offenders with a disability. First, there is significant diversity in the roles of staff who work with offenders with a disability across Corrections Victoria. Ensuring that each training program is relevant to the needs of each staff member is critical. Secondly, there are often time and scheduling challenges associated with providing the type of training required. One of the challenges of a statewide training program is to ensure that staff across all regions have access to the disability training that is most relevant to them.

Thirdly, training may be required to ensure frontline staff can respond to the support and/or program needs of a particular offender with a disability. This information and training is often required quickly and may need customisation to reflect the individual needs of the offender, particularly those with multiple disabilities.

Finally, Corrections Victoria recognises that offenders with a disability seek support from a range of external stakeholders. Contributing to the improved capacity of the workforce across the broad forensic disability sector can be challenging, but will ultimately result in better offender outcomes while also promoting forensic disability as a career path.

These challenges demonstrate that disability-related training needs to be delivered to the right people, at the right time, with the right level of information and using the right modes of delivery. Of course, formal face-to-face training is not the only way in which staff can develop skills in working with offenders with disabilities. There will be a focus on providing additional learning resources and modes of delivery to ensure information and training is more accessible to all frontline staff working with offenders with a disability.

- **What we will do to meet these challenges**

1. Support a range of locations to establish a community of practice model. The community of practice will be designed to review current services, processes and programs and explore opportunities to further support offenders with a disability at the location.
2. Undertake a workforce development plan that will identify key skill sets required for staff in specialist

disability units, prison reception staff and remand prison staff who may work with prisoners with a disability. This plan will also map the learning pathways and training programs available to all staff working with offenders.

3. Review current training programs and identify opportunities for improvement, program consolidation and additional training programs based on the workforce development plan.
4. Identify opportunities for training programs that can be delivered in a variety of modes to better meet the needs of staff with limited opportunities to attend face-to-face training.
5. Provide joint learning and development opportunities for CV and ACSO in relation to delivering offence-related programs for offenders with an intellectual disability.
6. Support ACSO to establish an Australian clearing house of information relevant to the forensic disability sector.
7. Seek opportunities for promoting forensic disability as a career path. This may include delivering information sessions, developing information kits and supporting students on placement.

Collaboration

- **Outcome we are working towards**

Maximise positive outcomes for offenders with a disability by working more closely and effectively with key stakeholders.

- **Challenges**

Stakeholders are critical in diverting the progress of offenders with a disability into the criminal justice system and supporting their reintegration back into the community. Significantly, Victoria has long had meaningful and effective involvement of Disability Services (Department of Human Services) across community corrections and in prisons, dating back to the late 1980's. This partnership is embedded in legislation through the requirement for Justice Plans for offenders with an intellectual disability on Community Correction Orders. The roles and respective

responsibilities of Corrections Victoria and Disability Services are detailed in a protocol between the two organisations.

To further strengthen interventions along this interdepartmental continuum, more attention needs to be paid to the effective support of offenders with a disability on community based dispositions and parole. Opportunities have been identified to provide targeted interventions for offenders with a disability, in collaboration with stakeholders.

Returning to the community from prison is a critical point in the offending cycle, with this cohort being particularly at risk of re-offending. The challenge is to develop a range of supports which can be tailored to meet individual needs – in some cases this may involve mainstream community organisations, in others disability-specific forensic services, or for others, a combination of both. The other key group which requires enhanced community intervention is offenders with a cognitive impairment who have had multiple community-based dispositions prior to a period of imprisonment – this group may benefit from an ‘opportunity’ for diversion from prison.

- ***What we will do to meet these challenges***

1. Integrate the CV Disability program initiatives with the DOJ Disability Action Plan, the Victorian State Disability Plan and the National Disability Strategy.
2. Extend the CV Prison and CCS Disability Portfolio Holders Network to further include representatives from DHS.
3. Explore opportunities to work with DFATS in the community.
4. Work with specialist organisations to consider the needs of people with Autism Spectrum Disorder in the correctional and forensic disability systems.

Appendices – Appendix 1

Guiding Principles¹⁰

Providing equitable access to services

- All prisoners and offenders with a disability have the same rights as non-disabled prisoners and offenders to access and participate in services and programs that are appropriate to their needs. Every attempt will be made to reduce the barriers that prevent their participation in services and programs.
- Where necessary, additional measures will be supported to ensure all persons have access to services and programs.

Supporting improved access to justice

- All staff will receive the necessary leadership, training, support and preparation to work effectively and appropriately with prisoners and offenders with a disability.
- Staff will be made aware of the legislative and procedural provisions that protect the rights of prisoners and offenders with a disability who have an impaired capacity for their own decision-making.
- The provision of effective correctional practice in relation to prisoners and offenders with a disability will be based on research and best practice to ensure quality outcomes and best value from the resources available.

Protecting and promoting diversity

- In valuing difference, the diversity (race, culture, ethnicity, nationality, health, sexuality and gender) of prisoners and offenders with a disability is recognised and respected. The development and implementation of best practice initiatives will encourage and support this diversity.
- Equality of opportunity for prisoners and offenders with a disability will be actively promoted, and unlawful discrimination will not be tolerated.

Strengthening our partnerships

- Close partnerships with the disability, mental health and broader health sectors are integral to providing better outcomes for prisoners and offenders with a disability in addressing re-offending and enhancing community safety. Such partnerships will help achieve consistency of responses and integrated service systems.

¹⁰ In developing these principles, the contribution of the following sources is duly acknowledged: *Goals, values and principles*, Rikosseuraamusvirasto (Finnish Prison and Probation Service); Statement of purpose and Prison service orders, Her Majesty's Prison Service, United Kingdom; *Mission of the Correctional Service of Canada*, Correctional Service of Canada; *State disability plan 2002–2012*, Department of Human Services, Victoria.

Appendix 2 – Action Plan

Programs and Services

Provide programs and services that are responsive to the diverse needs of offenders with a cognitive impairment to better address offending behaviour.

Outcome/Aim	Continuing Activities	New Activities
<p>Prisoners with a disability are supported to progress along a pathway from maximum security prison through to minimum security prison.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consolidate the Disability Prison Program at Port Phillip and Loddon Prisons. • Big Issue Street Soccer program for prisoners with a disability at the Marlborough Unit, Port Phillip Prison. • Continue the Governor's Disciplinary Hearing program across all Victorian prisons for prisoners with an intellectual disability. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement and support the extension of the prison pathway to the minimum security location of Dhurringile Prison. • Review the prisoner mentoring program at Port Phillip Prison and Loddon Prison and extend to Dhurringile Prison. • Introduce the Living Skills program for offenders and prisoners with a disability in a range of settings.
<p>Responses address multiple disadvantage, such as exist for Indigenous offenders with a disability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CV Disability Pathways program will continue to have responsibility for the CV component of the Multiple and Complex Needs Initiative (MACNI), which provides support to highly complex people with multiple disabilities in the community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider strategies to enhance practice with Indigenous offenders with a disability, including exploring options to make interventions more culturally appropriate and meaningful. • Scope the needs for more systematic support for female prisoners with a disability (including staff training, behaviour management plans, mentoring and structured days).

Programs and Services (continued)

Provide programs and services that are responsive to the diverse needs of offenders with a cognitive impairment to better address offending behaviour.

Outcome/Aim	Continuing Activities	New Activities
<p>Quality of programs and services are maintained, monitored and improved.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to deliver the Joint Treatment Program and adapted programs for offenders with a disability. Continue the high-level data collection on prisoners and offenders with intellectual disability and ABI collected by existing CV information systems. Continue to respond to challenges relating to the needs of offenders with a physical or sensory disability. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receive and respond to the findings of the Disability Pathways Program evaluation by Deakin University, which will underpin ongoing work in the disability portfolio. Introduce ongoing monitoring and evaluation of program involvement and completion through the development of the new Offender Management database for the Offending Behaviour Programs Branch.
<p>Offenders with a disability on supervised orders in the community are supported to complete orders.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consolidate the Disability Pathways Program working with post-sentence offenders and explore community based programs for other offenders with a disability in the community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heighten the focus on the needs of community based offenders with a disability, including application of the new intensive case management model. Explore a needs analysis of community based offenders with an intellectual disability to inform improved practice. Investigate appropriate support processes for the Governor's Disciplinary Hearing and for CCS Fines and Sanctions Administration Panel Hearings. Explore the viability of a volunteer mentoring program for community-based offenders with a disability.

Workforce development

Improve the specialist knowledge and capacity of frontline and clinical staff to work more effectively with offenders with a disability.

Outcome/Aim	Continuing Activities	New Activities
<p>Corrections Victoria staff are trained and supported in their work with offenders with a disability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver a variety of training programs, including targeted training for Offending Behaviour Programs staff and front-line correctional staff including introductory disability training for Community Corrections Officer recruits. • Provide a forum for the Disability Portfolio Holders Network to support them in their roles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a community of practice model that could be applied at a range of locations. • Undertake a workforce development plan including staff in specialist disability units, prison reception staff and remand prison staff to build their skill base. • Improve, consolidate and/or design additional disability training programs to better target staff in particular roles.
<p>A broader forensic disability workforce is fostered and feeds into Corrections Victoria workforce as needed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the Australian Community Support Organisation (ACSO) Forensic Disability Conferences in 2013 and 2015. • Conduct the annual International Day of People with Disability Lecture in 2013, 2014 and 2015, which provides a valuable opportunity to promote the work of CV in the broader disability sector. • Promote the placement of clinical students within CV (particularly the disciplines of Occupational Therapy/Social Work/Art Therapy/Psychology). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with ACSO to establish an Australian clearing house for information relevant to the forensic disability sector. • Promote forensic disability as a career path within corrections by detailing available specific training and volunteering. • Explore cost neutral partnerships with ACSO to deliver offence-related programs for offenders with an ID.

Collaboration

Maximise positive outcomes for offenders with a disability by working more closely and effectively with key stakeholders.

Outcome/Aim	Continuing Activities	New Activities
<p>Collaborate with Disability Services, DHS to further improve integrated service response.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to support the close operational relationship between CV and DHS in the Loddon Mallee, Gippsland and Southern Regions and use these partnerships as a model for connecting with other Disability Services regions statewide. Continue the DoJ/DHS/CV Grampians 'Committing to the Challenges Working Group'. Continue the collaboration with DFATS in prisons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend the CV Prison and CCS Disability Portfolio Holders Network to further include representatives from DHS. Continue the work of the Corrections Victoria and Disability Services IDC. Explore opportunities to work with DFATS in the community.
<p>Corrections Victoria is aligned with key department, state and national initiatives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue the leadership role associated with CSAC National Forensic Disability Working Group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrate the CV Disability program initiatives with the DOJ Disability Action Plan, the Victorian State Disability Plan and the National Disability Strategy.
<p>Collaborative partnerships with key disability organisations create opportunities for multi-dimensional, cross-sectoral communication.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain the established links with key stakeholders such as the Office of the Public Advocate, Salvation Army and ACSO. Maintain open communication with key disability advocacy organisations such Victorian Coalition of ABI Service Providers, Brain Injury Australia and Victorian Advocacy League for Individuals with Disability Inc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with specialist organisations to consider the needs of people with ASD in the correctional and forensic disability systems.

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