

CANTEEN

STRATEGIC PLAN 2025–2029



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Acknowledgement of Country

Canteen acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Custodians of this land. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and future. We are committed to providing inclusive and appropriate support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, their kin and community.



Ngalaya (Dharawal for ally or friend in battle), is an artwork commissioned by Canteen created by Kamilaroi and Jerrinja woman and artist Jasmine Sarin.

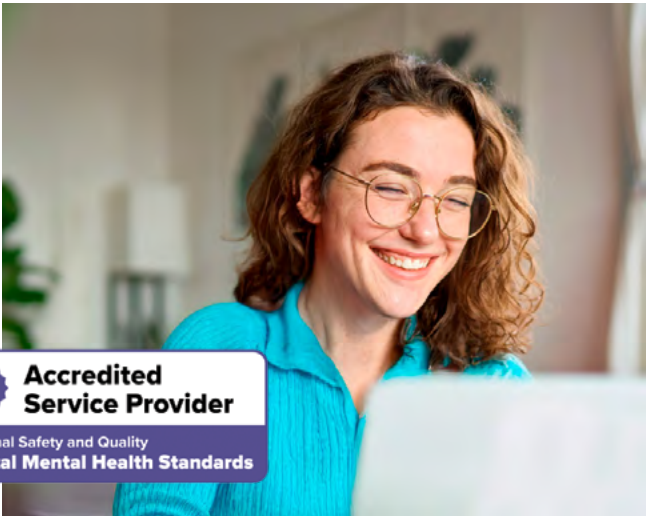
Diversity and Inclusion

We are guided by our values and commitments to ensure that everyone at Canteen feels respected, included and safe. We welcome the LGBTQI+ community and people from all cultures, backgrounds and abilities.



Digital Mental Health Standards

Canteen meets all the Digital Mental Health Standards. This signifies that our support services, governance structures and the way our teams operate are of high quality, safe, and meet international standards.



MAKING OUR VOICES HEARD

Welcome from Canteen’s Board Chair

Young people like me always have and always will be, at the heart of everything that Canteen does. That’s because forty years ago, Canteen was created by six visionary young people grappling with their own cancer diagnosis and treatment. And to this day young leaders continue to hold the majority of the seats at the Canteen board table and provide direction for the organisation at every level. We have also embraced Australia’s traditional custodians through our YARN group, made up of young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island leaders, which provides guidance to the Board and the organisation on providing culturally safe support for our First Nations young people and communities.

As leaders of Canteen, we are fuelled by our passion for making sure that young people get the right support at the right time and in the right way. The Strategic Plan 2025–29 is built on consultations with our young leaders across the country and sets out an exciting plan to really grow our reach to many more of the 100,000 young people in the next four years who we know will be struggling with the terrifying news of either their own or a family member’s cancer diagnosis.

Our voices, the voices of all young people impacted cancer, will be heard in parliaments federally and every state and territory, and in the community, as we strive to make sure that the latest advances in genomics and treatment lead to better health outcomes and that there is greater financial, cultural and other support for young people and their family members diagnosed with cancer.



Dr. Madeleine Way
Board Chair



Young people like me always have and always will be, at the heart of everything that Canteen does.

REACHING MORE YOUNG PEOPLE

Welcome from Canteen’s CEO

Canteen will deliver one million meaningful touchpoints for young people impacted by cancer and their families by 2029. This will see more of the 23,000 young people who have their world turned upside down by cancer each year get the life-changing cancer support they need.

Treatment through one of the internationally regarded, hospital-based Youth Cancer Services or being able to access the latest medical treatments through a Canteen-funded clinical trial can be life-saving for young cancer patients. Whether they’re dealing with their own diagnosis, a close family member’s cancer or the death of a loved one, the psychological impact of cancer can be immense, which is why our specialist counselling services are so important. Meeting other young people impacted by a close family member’s cancer or their own diagnosis is also

transformative for those who’ve been left deeply isolated by their cancer experience. Our evidence-based approach will see us continuously review and improve this broad range of services to deliver the greatest impact for young people affected by cancer.

Reaching more young people means expanding our generous community of supporters. We will provide even more opportunities for them to experience the vital difference they make in young people’s lives. In order to maximise the impact of each kindly donated dollar, we are continuously innovating, and making use of the latest technology.

I am proud and honoured to lead our extraordinary Canteen team who each play a vital role in ensuring that we deliver exceptional support to the young people and families we serve.



Siona Hardy
CEO



Canteen will deliver 1,000,000 meaningful touchpoints for young people.

THE VOICE OF CANTEEN YOUNG LEADERS



“

The YAT ensures that the voices of young people navigating cancer are at the forefront of all decisions here at Canteen.”

– Youth Advisory Team (YAT) Co-Chairs



“

Canteen turned my grief into growth, giving me opportunities I never imagined and friendships that will last a lifetime.”

– Chantelle, ACT



“

To me Canteen means community, understanding and belonging.”

– Imogen, NSW

“

We are so happy to see reconciliation as a strong and continuous theme throughout the strategic plan and that YARN plays a large part in guiding this.”

– Young Adult Reconciliation Network (YARN)



THE CONTEXT FOR CANTEEN'S FUTURE DIRECTION



Every year, another 23,000 young people have their world turned upside down by either their own, or a close family member's cancer diagnosis.

For young people, a cancer diagnosis can disrupt the physical, emotional, social and every aspect of their lives, in ways that are different to those of children or older adults with cancer. These impacts don't all end with treatment, and many are felt lifelong, well into survivorship.

Young people with a family member diagnosed with cancer, also have unique needs. For example, they are up to six times more likely to experience severe anxiety and depression than their peers and can be left with overwhelming responsibility for the wider family when a parent is diagnosed.

That's why it's so important all young people impacted by cancer can access tailored, age-appropriate support to help navigate their own experiences of cancer, and optimise their health, wellbeing, and connections.



We have seen key progress in the care and support available to young people with cancer.

In recent years, there have been improvements in the care provided to young people impacted by cancer. Canteen has led efforts in establishing specialist multidisciplinary care through funding Youth Cancer Services in major hospitals across Australia. Also the first Optimal Care Pathway for Adolescents and Young Adults (AYAs) has been established as the national standard of consistent, safe, high-quality, and evidence-based care and Canteen has been funding AYA-specific clinical trials.



Important challenges remain however that will require focused effort over the years ahead.

Despite this progress, in Australia there remain key differences in AYA cancer incidence, outcomes and overall burden of disease compared to paediatric and adult counterparts. Our AYA cancer incidence rates are also higher than many comparable countries.

Many young people with cancer miss out on the gold standard care provided by Youth Cancer Services, and an even greater number of young people with a diagnosed family member are not getting access to the vital support they need. Survivorship pathways are not standardised, leading to variation or gaps in the care provided to many former AYA with cancer, who are higher risk of chronic illness, mental health challenges, and poorer educational and career outcomes.

Similarly, young people with a diagnosed family member face greater risks of mental health issues as they grapple to juggle substantial carer responsibilities on top of their educational and career needs. On top of this, cancer creates a heavy financial burden for many families, adding to the already immense challenges they face.

CANTEEN 2025–2029 STRATEGY ON A PAGE

PURPOSE

To provide life changing treatment and support to young people facing cancer.

MISSION

Be in the corner of every young person when cancer crashes into their world.

VALUES

We connect.
We empower.
We challenge.
We are real.

Young people are at the heart of everything we do.

OUR DNA



OUR PEOPLE

Our people are our strength, and they are empowered to ensure our organisation delivers exceptional support to young people.

A 10% increase in our employee engagement score.



OUR SUSTAINABILITY

Create a Canteen for now and in the future. Our financial strength is underpinned by innovation and high-quality experiences for our supporters.

Raise \$220 million over 4 years.

GROW OUR REACH



The treatment and support we offer changes lives, but too few young people are getting access. We will ensure that more young people are provided with our vital support each year.

Reach 25% of young people newly impacted by cancer each year with our services and programs.



DEEPEN OUR IMPACT

We will direct our efforts where we can make the greatest difference. We will support young people so they are living longer, more fulfilling and connected lives.

90% of service users recommended Canteen to others facing cancer in their lives.



AMPLIFY OUR VOICE

We are an influential force in the cancer landscape, driving system level change, policy and outcomes. We will build connections for greater impact through our partnerships, advocacy and supporter communities.

Through advocacy and key partnerships, we secure ongoing funding to improve experiences for young people.

KEY ENABLERS

PRIORITIES

OUR AMBITION

Over the next four years, we commit to deliver over **1 million meaningful touchpoints**, to ensure that every young Australian impacted by cancer can access the support and care they need.

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STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



GROW OUR REACH

OUR VISION

The treatment and support we offer changes lives, but too few young people are getting access. We will ensure that more young people are provided with our vital support each year.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

More young people impacted by cancer can connect with inclusive services and supports at the right time, and in a way that suits them best.

OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- ▶ Increase awareness of, and engagement with, Canteen services.
- ▶ Leverage best practice technology and innovation to reach and support young people wherever they are.
- ▶ Increase access to our services for priority populations from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and CALD communities.

KEY MEASURE OF OUR SUCCESS

Reach 25% of young people newly impacted by cancer each year with our services and programs.



An experience like no other. A completely free service that people would pay thousands for. Thank you canteen!!"

AUSTRALIA-WIDE SUPPORT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Cancer can be isolating, but **Canteen ensures no young person faces it alone**. Through support, education, and connection, we reach young people across Australia:



220,000

Total interactions with young people and their parents each year



57,000

People in the wider community access our education programs and free resources



27,000

Moments of expert support, from counseling to leadership training

No matter
where they live,
**Canteen
is there**





DEEPEN OUR IMPACT

OUR VISION

We will direct our efforts where we can make the greatest difference. We will support young people so they are living longer, more fulfilled, and more connected lives.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Young people impacted by cancer benefit from services shaped by their unique needs and preferences, based on the best available data and research.

OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- ▶ Embed the needs and preferences of young people in the design, delivery and improvement of our services.
- ▶ Harness insights to understand our impact to evolve our services and connect with supporters.
- ▶ Invest in research to improve survival and quality of life for young people impacted by cancer.
- ▶ Continue to prioritise better outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, CALD, LGBTQI+, and those with disabilities.

KEY MEASURE OF OUR SUCCESS

90% of service users recommended Canteen to others facing cancer in their lives.

“I felt listened to and the service was very flexible with my schooling program, and it was easy to book a appointment when I wanted one.”



AMPLIFY OUR VOICE

OUR VISION

We are an influential force in the cancer landscape, driving system level change, policy and outcomes. We will build connections for greater impact through our partnerships, advocacy and supporter communities.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Young people impacted by cancer have strong and effective voices which shape the policies, changes and outcomes that matter most to them.

OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- ▶ Increase the breadth and impact of our partnerships and pursue collaborations that will genuinely lead to change.
- ▶ Equip our young leaders and Canteen community to continue their powerful advocacy efforts.
- ▶ Improve our collective understanding of the needs of young people impacted by cancer.
- ▶ Strengthen our collaboration with government to deliver best practice services to young people.

KEY MEASURE OF OUR SUCCESS

Through advocacy and key partnerships, we secure ongoing funding to improve experiences for young people.

“The explore camp helped me a lot. It was the most invaluable experience that was really life changing and allowed me to build really strong relationships and a support system as well as allowing me to be more comfortable talking about my experiences and gain invaluable support.”

KEY ENABLERS





OUR PEOPLE

OUR VISION

Our people are our strength, and they are empowered to ensure our organisation delivers exceptional support to young people.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Young people impacted by cancer receive exceptional services and support from a dedicated, skilled, and empowered team working together to deliver the best possible outcomes.

OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- ▶ Foster a values-driven culture where everyone feels connected to Canteen's mission.
- ▶ Inspire and recognise exceptional commitment and performance of our people.
- ▶ Promote inclusivity and celebrate diversity across our organisation.
- ▶ Encourage the growth of our people and focus on their wellbeing.
- ▶ Continue to build our team's capacity with evidence, data, and tools to deliver optimal support and client experiences.

KEY MEASURE OF OUR SUCCESS

A 10% increase in our employee engagement score.



Everyone—the staff, is friendly and cares with open arms. Very responsive when needed for help or advice."



OUR SUSTAINABILITY

OUR VISION

Create a Canteen for now and in the future. Our financial strength is underpinned by innovation and high-quality experiences for our supporters.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Young people impacted by cancer can be assured of access to Canteen's life changing services and programs, now and for years to come.

OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- ▶ Grow diverse and sustainable sources of revenue that ensures our ongoing support for young people.
- ▶ Maximise effectiveness and efficiency of our resources.
- ▶ Build stronger supporter communities that have meaningful connections to their extraordinary impact.
- ▶ Reinforce our operational foundations to stay agile and better adapt to an ever-changing landscape.
- ▶ Minimise our organisational carbon footprint.

KEY MEASURE OF OUR SUCCESS

Raise \$220 million over 4 years.



The best thing about this service was connecting with others who have gone through the loss of a parent and helping someone who had gone through it as well, to be there for each other and to offer advice."

