



towards 2017

Strategic Direction 2011–2017

Frontyard Youth Services



Introduction

For the past 21 years, Frontyard Youth Services has been at the forefront of innovative and responsive service delivery to homeless or at-risk young people in Melbourne's CBD. This *Strategic Direction* sets out a vision and a roadmap which will see these services grow and develop from now to 2017 and beyond.

This plan was developed through close consultation with our most important stakeholders – the young people themselves – as well as our key partner organisations and our team of passionate and dedicated staff.

It is an exciting time for Frontyard as the strategy will enable us to be even more responsive to the emerging and changing needs of the young people with whom we work. Melbourne City Mission has committed to redeveloping the current location of Frontyard so we will have space to grow into a holistic and iconic centre dedicated solely to the provision of youth services.

With an increased emphasis on training and education, the *Strategic Direction* provides the foundation for our vision to ensure young people receive the support they require, are able to access the services they need and are able to become independent of the service system.

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Background

Where we've come from

Frontyard Youth Services commenced in 1984 as the Info Deli. In its current format, Frontyard was made possible by funding of the facilities, operational platform and services by Melbourne City Council, Department of Human Services and Melbourne City Mission.

Over the last 21 years, the range and number of services and programs has expanded and is now a 'one stop shop' for young people in the Melbourne CBD. Today, it consists of nine co-located services and many visiting or referral services helping over 1,500 young people (aged 12–25 years) a year overcome the challenges of homelessness and disadvantage.

In late 2010, supported by Melbourne City Mission, Frontyard Youth Services undertook a process to determine where it is heading and how it will get there by 2017. This *Strategic Direction*, with an accompanying two-year operational plan, was developed through research and consultation with key stakeholders, including the young people who Frontyard serves.

Current context

The broader social, political, environmental and economic context within which Frontyard operates highlights important considerations, including:

- Expanded cultural diversity and growth. With outer Melbourne growth corridors facing unprecedented growth, young people will continue to come into the CBD to have their needs met. Ongoing immigration from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds and the needs of indigenous young people will increase the requirement to provide CALD (culturally and linguistically diverse) services.
- The changing structure of the family means that there is no longer a 'typical family' profile, which has a strong influence on the experience of young people and the triggers that lead to homelessness.
- Disability, gambling, mental illness, drug and alcohol abuse, violence, crime, unemployment and poverty will continue to be complex problems in the future. Frontyard will need ongoing, extensive knowledge of each of these and how they impact the young people accessing its services.
- Rapidly evolving technology, which has a higher take-up by young people, provides Frontyard with opportunities to increase connectivity to services and social inclusion through social networking and mobile technology.
- Funding providers (government, philanthropic/trust based, corporate, etc.) are increasingly seeking evidence of the positive outcomes and opportunities services create. To successfully secure ongoing funding, Frontyard programs and services will need to provide robust data and information to demonstrate their ability to provide a 'hand up' rather than a 'hand out'. Hence it will be important to identify essential data sets and improve the skills, technology and processes used to capture, validate, analyse and report information.
- Over 100,000 people are homeless in Australia, over 8,000 of those are young people in Victoria.

Current situation

Established co-located services include:

- Melbourne Youth Support Service – Melbourne City Mission
- Young People’s Health Service – Royal Children’s Hospital
- Legal Services – Youthlaw
- Gateway Reconnect – Melbourne City Mission
- Employment Services – Job Services Australia
- Financial Support – Centrelink
- Family Reconciliation Mediation Program – Melbourne City Mission
- Youth Connections – Melbourne City Mission
- Young and Pregnant Parenting Program – Melbourne City Mission

Currently, many services and programs for homeless and ‘at risk’ youth are unconnected and provided by different agencies. This makes it difficult for young people to easily access what they need, when they need it and many ‘fall through the cracks’. This perpetuates the cycle of homelessness and increases the risk of young people becoming chronically disadvantaged, dependant on social services and unable to achieve their potential.

Frontyard has addressed this by developing a reputable and successful model of co-located, collaborative services. However, its current facilities and location at 19 King Street are ‘at capacity’ and there is no room for expansion.

Local, state and federal governments are developing ‘whole of government’ approaches to youth homelessness which Frontyard, as a fully integrated service model, is well positioned to facilitate and deliver.

Emerging trends

Through our research, we identified that over the next 5–10 years the biggest challenges facing vulnerable young people in the CBD will be:

- Recycling through the system – becoming trapped in homelessness
- Inability to access appropriate services as and when needed
- Inadequate facilities and services to meet physical, social and emotional needs
- Social isolation, exclusion and disconnection from family and community
- Increasing mental health problems, chronic housing and accommodation shortages, limited and inflexible education and training options, insufficient employment and recreational opportunities will all place increasing stress on both young people and the services that meet their needs
- Together with rapidly emerging technology and a bewildering range of services and programs, the challenges young people face will increase in complexity.

Purpose

The *Frontyard Towards 2017 Strategic Direction* aims to directly and effectively address these challenges. Through the identified key result areas, objectives and goals, Frontyard will fulfill its mission and achieve its 2017 vision.

For current and potential future service providers, funding partners, government agencies and the community, this document provides insight into where Frontyard is heading and how it will get there.

Approach

This *Strategic Direction* and supporting operational plan were developed from October–December 2010 through extensive research and consultation including:

- A review of current literature and government policy directions relating to youth homelessness and disadvantage
- An online survey of over 200 service providers currently assisting young people across Melbourne and Victoria
- Interviews with key stakeholders of Frontyard Youth Services
- A series of six workshops with co-located and partner service providers and representatives from Melbourne City Mission.

The development of Frontyard's *Towards 2017 Strategic Direction* is underpinned by, and consistent with, Melbourne City Mission's strategic philosophy which includes:

- Community inclusion
- Integrated service delivery
- A hand-up, not a hand-out
- Financial sustainability.

This *Strategic Direction* is also consistent with, and supports the respective philosophies of, the current service providers.

Key Result Areas

The following Key Result Areas (KRA) provide insight into where Frontyard Youth Services will focus its efforts and the difference this will make to creating positive, sustainable futures for young people facing the challenges of homelessness, marginalisation and disadvantage:

- Service development and innovation
- Service integration
- Facilities and location
- Infrastructure development and sustainability
- Informed service delivery.

Assumptions

Frontyard's ability to achieve its 2017 vision and strategic objectives is dependant on the following assumptions:

- Melbourne City Mission continues to be the lead agency for CBD Youth Services
- Ongoing support and endorsement from the Melbourne City Mission Board; Executive; and Employment, Education and Training division
- Adequate capital investment is sourced and financial sustainability achieved
- All programs have recurrent and sustainable funding, prioritised within the context of Melbourne City Mission's Strategic Plan
- This *Strategic Direction* recognises the need to consider service development and investment, alongside the needs of all Melbourne City Mission services

- Service funding continues at the current rate (pending the outcomes of the Fair Work Australia SACS Case currently underway)
- The ability to recruit and retain suitably skilled staff
- Current service partners continue to play an integral and vital role in Frontyard and pro-actively contribute to the achievement of the vision and objectives.

Mission and vision

What we do and who we serve

Frontyard Youth Services is an innovative and progressive service delivery model where complementary services work together to address the physical, emotional and social needs of young people aged 12–25 years, who are homeless or marginalised and spend time in the Melbourne CBD.

Frontyard is a 'gateway' and meeting place where relationships with young people start at the front door. It is a place where young people are recognised for who they are and where they are heading, rather than where they have been or their presenting problems.

At Frontyard:

- Our services are streamlined, seamless, united and integrated to ensure young people develop sustainable pathways out of homelessness.
- We recognise that the needs of young people change over time and provide services and programs to meet those changing needs.
- We engage with 'at risk' young people at the earliest possible opportunity – within 30 days of becoming at risk of homelessness.
- We build and sustain strong community partnerships to ensure consistently great client outcomes.
- We advance community capacity and ability to respond to local needs, actively supporting outer metropolitan and regional areas by sharing our knowledge and skills.
- We educate young people, families, schools, local communities and partners.
- We advocate for young people, influencing government policy as 'one' voice.

Frontyard plays a defined role in supporting young people from the provision of early intervention and prevention for those at risk of homelessness, through to the most marginalised, high risk and chronically homeless.

Homelessness and what it means

While numerous definitions of 'homelessness' exist, Frontyard recognises that young people move between the different stages of homelessness, as defined by Chamberlain and Mackenzie (1993):

- **Primary homelessness:** people without conventional accommodation such as those who 'sleep out', or use derelict buildings, cars, railway stations for shelter.
- **Secondary homelessness:** people who frequently move from temporary accommodation such as emergency accommodation, refuges, and temporary shelters. People may use boarding houses or family accommodation on a temporary basis.
- **Tertiary homelessness:** people who live in rooming houses, boarding houses for the medium or long-term, where they do not have their own bathroom and kitchen facilities and tenure is not secured by a lease.

- **Marginally housed:** people in housing situations close to the minimum standard.
(Source: *Homelessness and mental health linkages: review of national and international literature*, Department of Health and Ageing, 2005)

One of the most important shifts in thinking about homelessness is the now widely accepted view that homelessness is a process, rather than a state of 'being'. Frontyard Youth Services is committed to establishing sustainable pathways out of homelessness.

Where we are heading

As the leading provider of integrated services for 'at risk', marginalised and disadvantaged young people, we:

- Create a welcoming, empowering place where young people can be who they are and access the services they need
- Offer innovative, cohesive and linked services to help young people actively create positive and sustainable pathways out of homelessness
- Increase the number and range of services to close existing gaps (e.g. mental health, dentistry)
- Develop ourselves and each other to build a unified, effective response to meet the needs of every young person who comes to Frontyard
- Share our knowledge and support with outer metropolitan and rural communities to develop local responses for their young people
- Build strong relationships with governments, funding partners, other service providers and the wider community, to provide a voice, pathways and advocacy for disadvantaged young people.

Core values

Regardless of the services, programs and support Frontyard provides, all are delivered based on seven core values:

- Positive client and provider outcomes
- Collaboration and co-operation
- Client empowerment and self-determination
- Prevention and early intervention
- Accountability and transparency
- Dedication, co-operation and effort of all staff
- Community participation and responsibility.

Service delivery principles

Reflecting the core values, the following principles guide the way in which Frontyard Youth Services are delivered:

- Provide an integrated and collaborative service for our clients
- Cross-service promotion of the availability and accessibility of all youth services working with Frontyard
- Provision of a welcoming, client friendly and equitable environment
- Where appropriate, assist young people to reconnect with their family/carers and the community

- Promote an ethos of client self-determination, autonomy and social independence that enhances self-worth by building on individual strengths and abilities
- Acknowledge the rights and responsibilities of young people
- Promote the development of prevention and early intervention strategies
- Develop collaborative systems for cross-service data collection and dissemination
- Promote awareness and resolution of issues affecting young people at risk
- Continually improve service delivery, success rates and client outcomes.

Key themes

The following themes have been identified as top priorities in setting Frontyard's future direction. The development and provision of these facilities, services and programs in an integrated and sustainable way will make a significant difference to young people who are 'at risk', disadvantaged and homeless.

Service development, innovation and integration

Frontyard is committed to developing services to meet the increasingly complex needs of vulnerable young people.

Future services will include additional health services (drug and alcohol, mental illness, sexual assault), increased focus on the social and emotional needs of young people (recreation, art, music and programs to connect young people to the community), mentoring, life skills education, training and employment programs.

Services will need to be increasingly seamless and connected to ensure a client-focused, 'whole of person' approach.

Client-centric services, focused on individual needs

Holistic (wrap-around) service provision, tailored responses and self-determination are the keys to creating permanent pathways out of homelessness for young people. In addition to addressing vital physical needs, social inclusion and community connection are required to meet each individual's social and emotional needs. This calls for increased integration, and co-ordinated and collaborative service delivery.

Somewhere safe, welcoming, practical and empowering

Young people have identified the need for a safe, welcoming 'one stop, drop-in shop' with expanded services and hours, additional practical assistance, support and somewhere to 'hang out'. This highlights the need to retain a central, easily located, young people-centric facility, staffed by highly-skilled, compassionate and enthusiastic staff.

Expanded physical facilities

In addition to the shortage of appropriate crisis accommodation and transitional housing, the current 19 King Street location is recognised as being 'at capacity'. The *Strategic Direction* addresses this challenge with an extensive redevelopment project over the next five years.

Sustainability

Future funding will increasingly require robust data collection, analysis and knowledge sharing to demonstrate the effectiveness of the integrated service delivery model, programs and services.

The long term viability and effectiveness of Frontyard will rely on informed service delivery, increased provider collaboration to link services and reduce duplication, and measurable, tangible outcomes for young people. Alternative, recurrent and streamlined funding models are also needed to ensure ongoing sustainability.

Building on established strong foundations

Frontyard is a well-regarded, reputable service with a demonstrated 25 year track record for enabling successful outcomes for young people. The maturity of the service delivery model, skilled youth workers and well-established partner relationships provide a strong base for future development.

A shared commitment to the purpose, core values and common service delivery principles, established systems and infrastructure create the foundations for significant development and expansion. Our goal is to provide a wide-ranging, fully-integrated service that creates permanent pathways out of homelessness and disadvantage for young people, enabling them to achieve their potential.

Our partners

Because of the commitment and collaboration of many people, organisations and government agencies who share a common purpose, Frontyard Youth Services is able to provide wide ranging services and programs to help disadvantaged young people.

We thank these organisations for their input into the *Frontyard Towards 2017 Strategic Direction* and look forward to their ongoing support:

Aborigines Advancement League Inc	Banyule City Council	Banyule Youth Service
Bill Board	Capital City Local Learning and Employment Network	Centrelink*
City of Whittlesea Youth Services	Crossroads Youth and Family Services	Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA)
Department of Health	Department of Human Services	Doutta Gala Community Health
Drummond Street Services	Hanover Welfare Services	HomeGround Services
Hume City Council	ICMS Crossroads Salvation Army	Job Services Australia*
Kildonan UnitingCare	MacKillop Family Services	Melbourne City Council
Melbourne City Mission*	Northern Melbourne Institute of TAFE at Crossroads FHSS	Northland Secondary College
Orygen Youth Health	Quantum Support Services	Royal District Nursing Service Homeless Persons Program
The Big Issue	Victoria Police	Victorian Youth Mentoring Alliance
Women's Information, Support and Housing in the North (WISHIN)	Young People's Health Service*	Youth Projects
Youthlaw*	*co-located Frontyard service providers	

KRA 1: Service development and innovation

Background

Frontyard is recognised as a 'tertiary' provider and often acts as a safety net for young people in the CBD who have exhausted all other options. Advanced responses are required to meet the often complex and changing needs of those who face the ongoing risk of chronic homelessness.

Service development and innovation is all about improving our existing services as well as expanding to include new services, programs and initiatives to meet current, ongoing and future needs. This will include involving young people in the development and delivery of services, ensuring informed practice delivery and developing our people.

Innovation will require programs and initiatives to develop collaborative and creative responses to deliver client-focused responses that meet each individual's unique needs.

Where we are now

Our research has identified a need for additional health services to address challenges associated with drug and alcohol abuse, mental illness and sexual assault. Young people are finding it increasingly difficult to access vocational training that will lead to sustainable employment in a field that builds their skills, strengths and passions.

Recognising that young people achieve more positive, sustainable outcomes when services work collaboratively, Frontyard will seek opportunities to develop innovative programs to increase life and vocational skills, social inclusion and community connection.

Staff employed by Frontyard Youth Services are recognised as being knowledgeable and skilled. This future direction provides the opportunity to develop advanced practitioner, specialist skills to effectively meet the specific and complex needs of young people.

Young people actively contribute to the development of services, programs and facilities, gaining self-esteem, confidence and skills through their involvement.

Objective

Frontyard is the leader in the provision of services with and for young people who are marginalised and homeless. We actively support the well-being of young people to reduce disadvantage, build social inclusion and foster self-determination.

Goal 1: Service providers (either expanding existing provider portfolios or engaging new providers) are identified and engaged to meet the needs not currently met by existing services and programs (e.g. mental health, dentistry, life and vocational skills training, and mentoring).

Goal 2: Frontyard has an established training program, partnering with Melbourne City Mission's Employment, Education and Training team.

Goal 3: Frontyard has a formalised and established Mentoring Program.

Goal 4: Through the development and implementation of a Youth Engagement Strategy, young people are actively involved in the planning, running and ongoing development of Frontyard.

Goal 5: Partnering with tertiary education institutions and Melbourne City Mission, Frontyard has an established and integrated/collaborative research, practice and policy approach to ensure tangible and sustainable outcomes for young people.

Expected outcomes

Achieving these goals will ensure young people are empowered, self-reliant, involved, connected and valued.

Services and programs will be developed and improved to meet identified needs, actively demonstrating their value through evidence-based practice.

KRA 2: Service integration

Background

Over the years, Frontyard Youth Services has evolved from being a collection of disparate services to a collaborative co-located and community-based network.

Researchers, governments and providers recognise the value of 'holistic', wrap-around, tailored service delivery and service providers at Frontyard have responded to the needs of young people they help by providing:

- Youth worker reception – responding to the need for youth-friendly entry and assistance to identify needs
- One-stop shop – responding to the need for multiple, interrelated services, flexibility and informality (no appointments) to counter high referral drop-out rates
- Early intervention and prevention, crisis services (accommodation, financial support, health, legal and material aid) mediation, life and vocational skills, employment, and community connection.

Integrated service delivery goes beyond collaboration, involving initiatives, programs, systems and processes that demonstrate the value of a co-ordinated approach and proactive sharing of information.

Where we are now

The biggest challenge young people are likely to face over the next 5–10 years is the likelihood of recycling through the system to become chronically homeless adults.

Even when they can establish relationships with a service provider, these young people invariably have additional needs requiring other services. Often required to repeatedly re-tell their story, many young people 'fall through the cracks'.

Navigating the service system 'maze' makes it a challenge for young people to access the services they need, when they need them.

A shortage of affordable accommodation, disconnection from family and community (social exclusion), and limited employment opportunities create the biggest barriers for young people who are at risk, homeless and experiencing disadvantage.

Objective

Frontyard provides a range of integrated, cohesive and seamless services to actively create sustainable pathways out of homelessness into self-reliant, community participation.

Goal 1: Co-ordinated by the Youth Work Team, each service uses a permission-based referral checklist to help young people identify and select the services they need and provide the ability to map each young person's journey. A Frontyard passport system for co-case management will be established.

Goal 2: Each service participates in regular knowledge-sharing sessions to increase staff awareness about their respective services, young people's challenges and skills to support them, as well as learning more about each specialist area.

Goal 3: All service providers actively seek opportunities to submit combined service funding applications for projects to expand and innovate services and programs. The benefits of integrated service delivery are known and demonstrable.

Goal 4: Frontyard provides combined outreach services, where young people hang out.

Goal 5: Frontyard provides a range of scheduled information sessions for school welfare co-ordinators, counselors and other providers who support young people who are at risk of homelessness.

Goal 6: Frontyard has a collaborative peer supervision and reflective practice program to support and develop all staff.

Expected outcomes

Achieving these goals will ensure young people get the services they need and don't fall through service system gaps. This will: increase cross-referrals; facilitate individualised support, goal-setting and skill-building; strengthen engagement and provide young people with a strong sense of purpose and the resources, capacity and support to build sustainable, self-determined pathways out of homelessness.

All activities take a 'whole person-centred' approach ensuring that each young person's individual needs are fully understood and met. The integrated service approach will build strong relationships and bridges for young people to connect them with their community of origin where appropriate.

KRA 3: Facilities and location

Background

Young people currently accessing Frontyard's services have identified the need for a safe, welcoming 'one stop, drop-in shop' with expanded services and hours of operation.

This includes the physical location and accessibility of Frontyard as well as the need to connect young people to community-based services.

Where we are now

Inadequate facilities and services to meet the physical, emotional and social needs of young people has been recognised as the third biggest challenge faced by those who are 'at risk', disadvantaged and marginalised.

In addition to the shortage of appropriate crisis accommodation and transitional housing, the current physical location of Frontyard at 19 King Street is 'at capacity' and unable to expand to accommodate additional services and programs.

The current location includes a number of physical barriers to accessibility, including the layout and facilities which have evolved over the last 10 years as the service has grown to meet demand. There is also recognition that the current facility is strongly service delivery-focused which may limit the participation of young people and the ability to meet their physical, emotional and social needs.

Redeveloping and/or relocating the existing facility, with co-location of essential services within the CBD, is seen as a high priority which will require significant investment.

Objective

By 2017, Frontyard will develop and enhance the physical environment of 19 King Street to deliver integrated services and more effectively respond to the needs of young people.

We will share our knowledge and work in partnership with other communities to ensure the 'Frontyard Integrated Service Model' can be modified and replicated in other areas where there is a need for a youth-centric response to homelessness and disadvantage.

Goal 1: Supported by Melbourne City Mission Facilities Management, Frontyard will develop and implement a process to enhance Frontyard's facilities and location at 19 King Street.

This will include determining the potential yield of 19 King Street to inform future opportunities for growth.

Goal 2: Develop and implement a Frontyard Communications Plan to raise awareness and educate the community about who we are, what we do, what's available and where we are through marketing and public relations.

Goal 3: Develop the 'Frontyard Integrated Service Model' of practice and support to include localised responses for identified high-need metropolitan and regional communities.

Expected outcomes

Achieving these goals will increase accessibility and create a welcoming and empowering environment for young people.

We will provide holistic and integrated services, reduce the incidence of young people 'falling through the cracks', and enable the creation of sustainable, self-determined pathways out of homelessness and disadvantage.

KRA 4: Infrastructure development and sustainability

Background

Future funding will increasingly require robust data collection, analysis and knowledge sharing to demonstrate the effectiveness of integrated programs and services.

Informed service delivery; measurable and tangible outcomes for young people; increased provider collaboration to reduce duplication and link services; and alternative, streamlined funding models are all needed to ensure ongoing sustainability. 'Whole of government' approaches, together with innovative corporate and philanthropic funding will be required to supplement public funding.

Where we are now

Frontyard Youth Services is currently enabled via 27 different funding sources. While this demonstrates the value and quality of existing services and programs, there is a need to streamline the existing infrastructure.

The existing structure has been in place for over 10 years and was originally established to create a sustainable response to youth homelessness within the Melbourne CBD.

Policies, processes, roles and responsibilities are well established, providing a platform to expand and improve service delivery.

Objective

By 2017, Frontyard will have further developed an effective support structure, empowering culture, robust systems, processes, and tools to ensure effective and sustainable service delivery.

Goal 1: Refine the existing mission, values and service principles to create a shared sense of purpose and strong and supportive culture reflective of the changing needs of young people.

Goal 2: Review and revise the roles, responsibilities and membership of the Frontyard Strategic Alliance, Service Management Team and other support structures to enable the *Strategic Direction*.

It is expected that the Frontyard Strategic Alliance will provide active governance and resources to support the achievement of the goals and objectives of this Strategic Plan.

Goal 3: Review all existing policies, protocols, processes, systems and tools to identify opportunities for improvement and alignment with the future direction of Frontyard.

Goal 4: Identify additional, alternative funding sources to supplement existing funds and facilitate service and program expansion and sustainability.

Expected outcomes

Achieving these goals will ensure that Frontyard builds on its strong foundation to successfully achieve its objectives.

This will include developing services and programs which have recurrent funding and are able to demonstrate positive and sustainable outcomes for young people.

Provider and community relationships will be strengthened to ensure Frontyard's long-term viability and value.

KRA 5: Informed service delivery

Background

Extensive research continues to highlight the services and approaches required to create sustainable pathways out of homelessness and disadvantage for young people.

Now more than ever, it is vital to demonstrate evidence-based practice, applying what we learn from research to everyday service and program delivery.

Informed service delivery is also required to build essential skills, knowledge and capability of both service providers and the community.

Young people are more 'tech savvy' than ever and are early-adopters of new technology, given the opportunity. Providing access to tools and technology that foster self determination, autonomy, connection and independence is recognised as an increasingly effective way to link young people to the services they need.

Where we are now

Funding partners and government agencies are increasingly requiring evidence of the tangible benefits of targeted service responses. To meet this requirement, each of the objectives and goals within this Strategic Direction have identified targets and measures to ensure the costs and benefits can be tracked and evaluated.

However, Frontyard Youth Services and its provider partners continue to be constrained by inefficient, outdated and fragmented information systems. Each provider is required to capture, track, report and evaluate their own data which hinders vital sharing and consolidation of information.

Objective

By 2017, Frontyard will have comprehensive systems and tools to monitor young people's progress and service effectiveness, ensure informed practice delivery, build knowledge and skills and meet the requirements of our funding partners.

Goal 1: To develop a research plan, Melbourne City Mission will partner with a broad range of research institutes, such as Victoria University, RMIT University and Monash University.

Goal 2: Develop and implement a Frontyard Information Services Strategy, partnering with Melbourne City Mission's Information Technology Team, government agencies and corporate sponsors to ensure our systems and processes support streamlined, effective data collection and analysis.

Expected outcomes

Achieving these goals will ensure evidence-based practice, effective knowledge sharing, build skills and create a compelling case for ongoing program and service funding. Providing and sharing evidence of the outcomes achieved by young people will build community capacity to

provide localised responses and inform the development of early intervention and prevention initiatives.

Young people will have access to current and emerging technology as a means to connect with required services, develop skills and communicate effectively.

To overcome these challenges, it will be necessary to make a significant investment in both research and information systems. This will require extensive support from academic and information system partners.

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The following sources provided the background upon which the *Frontyard Towards 2017 Strategic Direction* and supporting operational plan have been developed.

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