

Service improvements to address barriers to accessing healthcare at Austin Health, for people who are Neurodivergent

Disability Liaison Officer Program
PANDDA Conference, 2023



Austin
HEALTH

Austin Health, Victoria



Three campuses:

- Austin Hospital,
- Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital
- Royal Talbot Repatriation Hospital

Austin Hospital:

- 16 acute wards with over 560 beds
- Emergency Department with 42 cubicles, 6 bed children's unit and 23 bed short stay unit

Home to a number of statewide services:

- Spinal Cord Service – 26 beds
- Liver transplant unit
- Respiratory Support Services



Disability Liaison Officer Program

Goal:

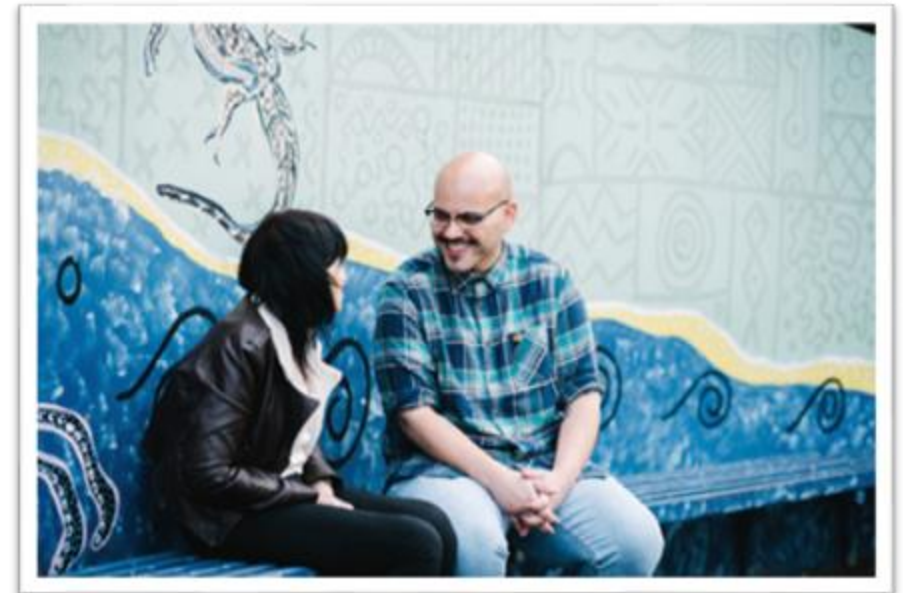
People with disability have the support, resources and assurance they need to safely access health services, with a focus on COVID-19 assessment and treatment

Objectives:

Dedicated support available for people with disability to access COVID-19 assessment and treatment

Ensuring systems and supports are in place to enable people with disability to access the health services they require

Barriers to health service accessibility are systematically addressed



The DLO Team

Bec Jamwal (she/her)

- Works directly with patients as well as supporting DLO research projects

Brynn Lewin (she/her)

- Oversees the DLO Program

Ebony Stewart (she/her)

- Works directly to assist people with disability as inpatients and outpatients to gain better access to healthcare

Gillean Hilton (she/her) and Kristen Morris (she/her)

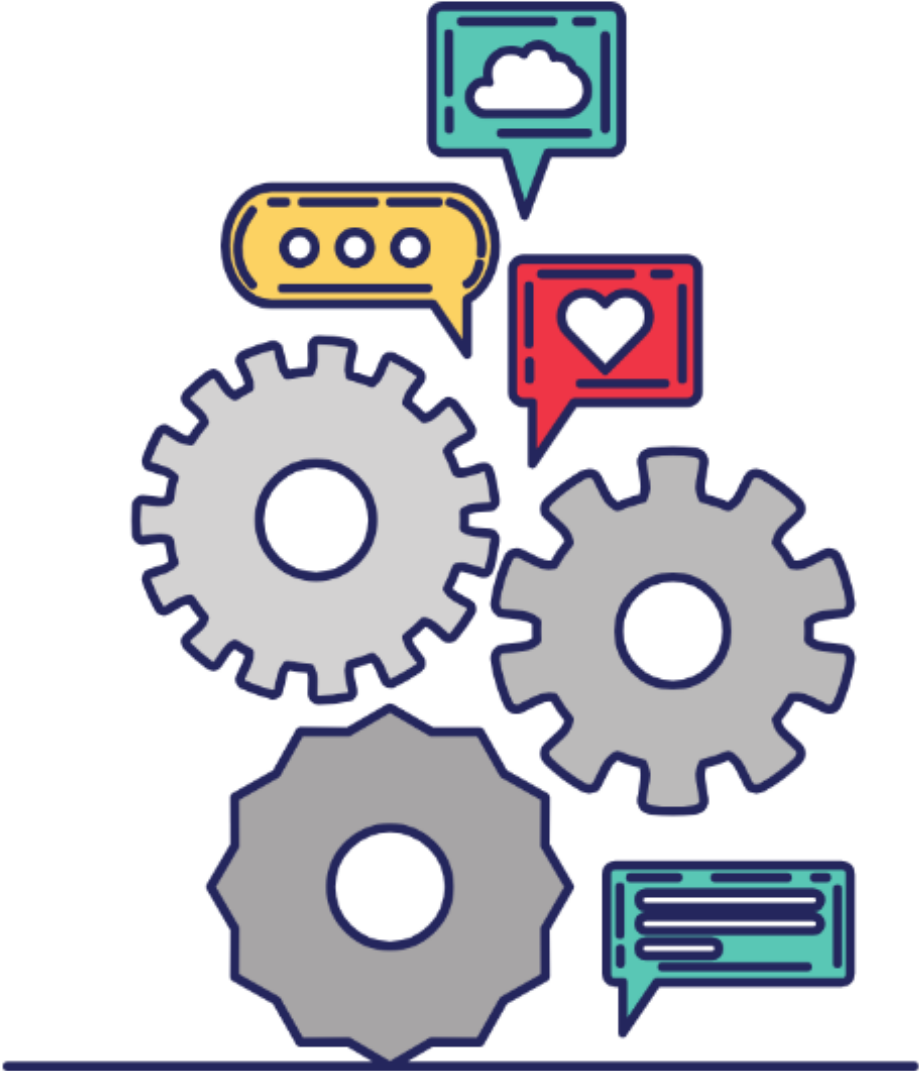
- Coordinating DLO's across the Victorian Sector and leading the improvement initiatives at Austin Health

Sam Lieberman (he/him)


- Specialises in strategic direction and staff disability awareness education



Need for Improvement



Website



Clinics & services

Disability liaison

Disability liaison


[Home](#) > [Clinics & services](#) > [Care & support](#) > [Disability liaison](#)

We support people with disability to use hospital services and access the care and treatment they need.

About us

Disability Liaison Officers (DLOs) support people with disability, their families and support networks to access services at Austin Health.

Our services



Patients & visitors

Coming to hospital

Accessibility for people with sensory disability and neurodiversity

[Home](#) > [Coming to hospital](#) > [While you are here](#) > [Accessibility for people with sensory disability and neurodiversity](#)

We are working with people with disability to ensure our built environment, information and communication are accessible.

Accessibility for sensory disability

At each hospital, lifts have automatic voice announcements at each floor and lift buttons are in braille.

Auslan interpreters can be arranged for d/Deaf or hard of hearing patients. Find out more about our [interpreter services](#).

Guide dogs, audio dogs and other therapy animals are encouraged to accompany people around the hospital. If you need help with toileting animals and giving them access to drinking water, talk to Reception or your care staff.

Accessibility for neurodiversity



Austin HEALTH

AUTISM SPECTRUM CARE PLAN

U.R Number
Surname
Given Name(s)
Date of Birth

AFFIX PATIENT LABEL HERE

Individual Care Plan
To be completed with the patient and/or caregiver, kept in bedside folder and retained on file for future visits.

About me

Key contact
The person who knows the most about my needs, likes and dislikes is MMM
His/her contact details are

I communicate using <input type="checkbox"/> Sentences <input type="checkbox"/> Single words <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gestures <input type="checkbox"/> Sign language <input type="checkbox"/> Pictures <input type="checkbox"/> Written words <input type="checkbox"/> Communication device <input type="checkbox"/> Other <u>OCASIONAL USE OF YES/NO RESPONSES</u>	Sensory sensitivities <input type="checkbox"/> Bright lights <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Loud or unexpected noises <input type="checkbox"/> Touch (e.g. soft or firm touch, specific textures) <input type="checkbox"/> Specific smells <input type="checkbox"/> Specific colours <input type="checkbox"/> Pain <input type="checkbox"/> Other
Dietary requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Preferred food textures <u>ENJOYS CRUNCHY FOOD</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Preferred food colours <input type="checkbox"/> Preferred food tastes <u>SWEET FOODS</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Will arrange to bring my own food	Usual daily routine (eating, sleeping, showering, etc) <u>WAKES UP AROUND 10:00</u> <u>SHOWERS AT NIGHT</u> <u>GOES TO SLEEP AROUND 23:00</u>
Favourite things (e.g. special interests, activities I enjoy doing, things I'm good at) <u>ENJOYS COUCHING IN MUSIC, MAKING FOR DRINK</u> <u>AND THE CAR</u>	
Mood and behaviour Things that might trigger me to become upset <u>BACK TO UNFAMILIAR ENVIRONMENT</u> <u>BEING ASKED TO DO THINGS IN THESE ENVIRONMENTS</u> Warning signs of becoming upset <u>STARTS SHOUTING LAMP</u> If I become very overwhelmed I might hurt myself hit others etc <u>CRASH ON TV</u>	

Autism Care Plan

The aim is to have this form completed prior to person presenting to hospital or as soon as person is known to DLO service.

Can be completed independently or with support from DLO service

Information handed over to care team.

Information transposed into 'Patient Care Preferences'



Patient care preferences

- Cerner Form
- With the aim to be completed for every patient on admission
- If patient chooses to identify as having a disability, then will auto generate a referral to the DLO team
- DLO can also transpose Autism Care Plan information into this form which is readily viewed by patients treating healthcare team

Which people are important to you?

What behaviours are normal for you?

How do we know you are in pain?

My sensory/environment access needs are:

This helps me to talk to you

- My communication system or device
- Symbols
- Pictures
- Gesturing
- Facial expressions
- Simple words
- When you wait for me to respond
- My supporter/carer
- Other:



Social Scripts

Social scripts for routinely accessed services and procedures have been developed and are freely available on Austin Health's website.

Individualised social scripts can also be developed specific to a person's needs and preferences.

The Pathology collector will come to the door by the desk and call your number when it is your turn. They will show you where to go.



The Pathology collector will ask you to confirm your name and your date of birth. They will also ask if you have had a blood test before.



DLO Sensory Box Lending

On d/c, please contact DLO EBONY STEWART teams to arrange pickup

Pt:

Ward:

Tick sensory box items that have been lent. Check each item is returned on d/c:

TOUCH:

Smooth:

Water orb ball (blue)	Poo	Abacus
Water orb ball (red)	Banana	Glitter ball (silver)
Colour changing ball	Glitter ball (blue)	

Rough:

Wobble cushion	Tactile ruler			
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Firm:

Wobble cushion	Tactile ruler	Fidget ball	Fidget UFO
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Squishy/Soft:

Fuzzy caterpillar (green)	Fuzzy ball	Banana
Fuzzy caterpillar (purple)	Poo	Stress ball (red)
Stress ball (elephant)	Stress ball (gold)	Stress ball (purple)
Stress ball (white)	Water orb ball (red)	Water orb ball (blue)
Glitter ball (silver)	Glitter ball (blue)	Tentacle ball
Colour changing ball		

Folding:

Clicking caterpillar (blue)	Click link (orange/green)
Clicking caterpillar (pink)	Click link (orange/blue)
Click link (blue/green)	

Shaking:

Glitter shaker (pink)	Noisy cube	Liquid bubble timer
Glitter shaker (purple)	Rain maker	

Popping:

Silicone popper (rainbow)	Fidget ball
Silicone popper (purple)	Fidget UFO

Sensory Boxes

- Sensory boxes are available to all patients
- Requests can come from patients, carers or staff
- Each Sensory box is customised to the patient's sensory preferences, considering if the toy is safe for the individual patient
- The ward staff will contact DLO for sensory box collection when patient is discharged or no longer wanting the items

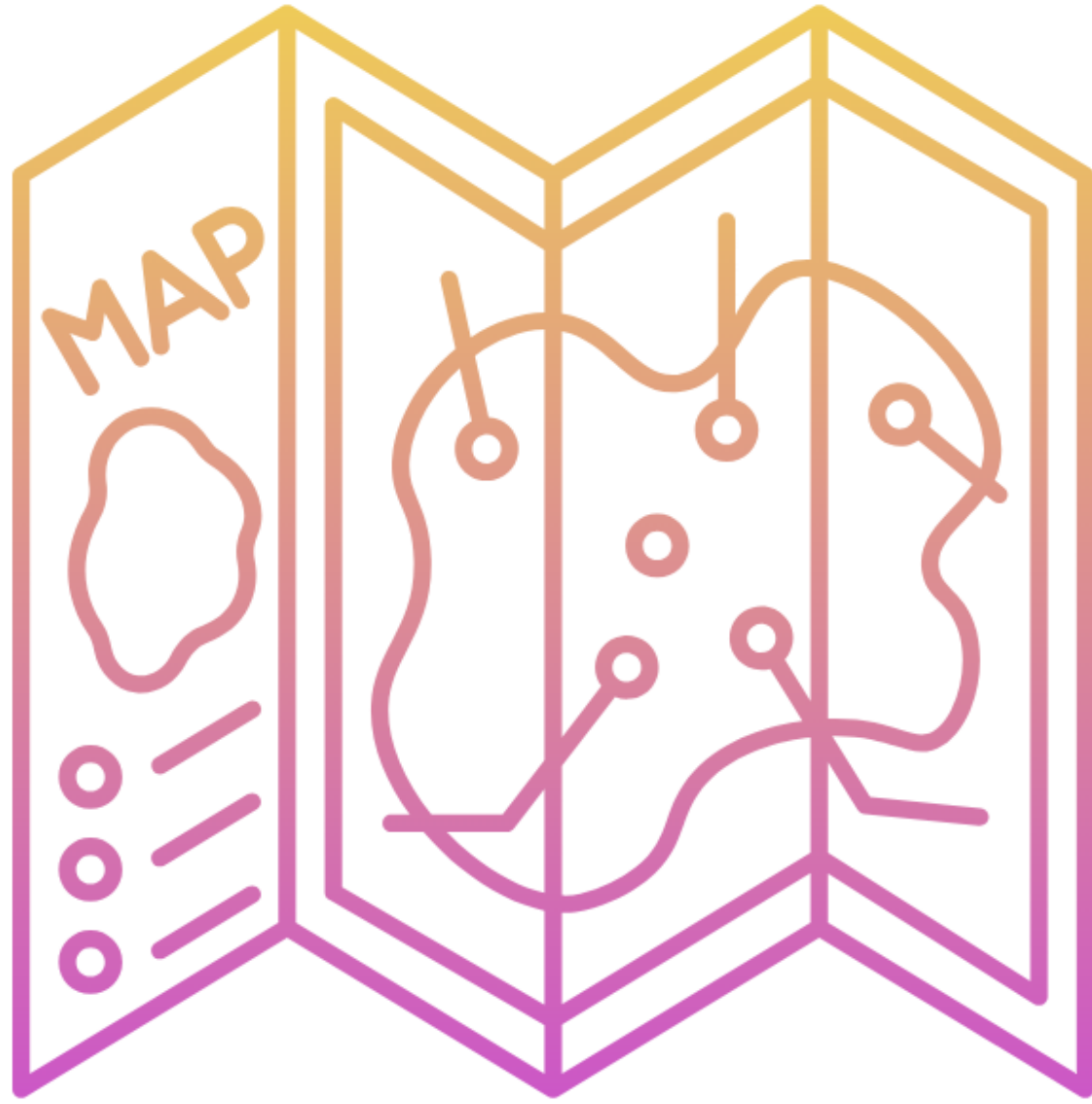




Sensory Box Example

- 7 Items with different textures
- Smooth, Rough, Firm, Squishy/Soft, Folding, Shaking and Popping
- Colored pencils and colouring in pages are also available







DLO contacts

Email: disabilityliaison@austin.org.au

Twitter: @AustinHealthDLO

