

Australasian Academy of Cerebral Palsy and Developmental Medicine Equity Position Statement 2024 – 2026

Purpose of this statement

The Australasian Academy of Cerebral Palsy and Developmental Medicine (AusACPDM) has developed this statement to guide our Academy's commitment to diversity and to promote equity. The AusACPDM is committed to ensuring that an inclusive and equity-driven approach is embedded in all Academy activities. This statement is a starting point and a call for action to address the inequities in experiences and outcomes for people living with childhood-onset disability across Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand. The aim of this statement is to guide the activities of AusACPDM and to ensure that equity is a priority of our work, both now and into the future.

Definition of equity and inequity

Equity, as defined by the World Health Organization, is the “absence of avoidable, unfair, or remediable differences among groups of people, whether those groups are defined socially, economically, demographically or geographically or by other means of stratification.” Thus, inequity is the presence of these avoidable, unfair, and remediable differences.

Need for this statement

People with childhood-onset disability face inequities arising from unfair conditions including stigma, discrimination, poverty, barriers to accessing and/or exclusion from services and resources including healthcare, education, and employment. It is also well recognised that intersectionality occurs - that is, additional discrimination and inequities can be unfairly experienced based on age, religion, ethnicities, sexual orientations, gender identities, socio-economic status, and other factors. Furthermore, in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand (AoNZ), colonisation has significantly impacted, and continues to impact, health outcomes for Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islanders and AoNZ Māori with disparities in timely access to appropriate health care and poorer health outcomes due to systemic and institutional racism.

Our interpretation of equity

We understand equity as an approach and an outcome that we work towards as AusACPDM members. As an approach, it involves allocating and prioritising resources to where there are the greatest needs and making decisions related to AusACPDM activities with this lens. Therefore, an equity approach includes identifying and understanding needs to influence action to eliminate inequities. As an outcome, equity means that everyone has or is supported to have equitable opportunity based on their specific needs, to realise what is important to them and their family.

Our responsibilities as an Academy

AusACPDM aims to provide multidisciplinary scientific education for health professionals and to promote excellence in research and best practice clinical care for individuals with childhood-onset disability.

AusACPDM recognises the importance of human rights and the inherent value of each and every person, based on the following overarching conventions and statements: [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#), [Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#), [Convention on the rights of the Child](#), [Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#), [The Uluru Statement from the Heart](#), the [Treaty of Waitangi / Te Tiriti o Waitangi](#) and [the CARE Principles for Indigenous Data Governance](#).

We are committed to actively responding to inequity and intersectionality as members of AusACPDM. As part of this commitment, we will apply the below principles to the work of our Academy. To uphold these conventions, we have a responsibility to treat every person fairly so that they can thrive and flourish. The below equity principles have been developed in consultation with AusACPDM members.

Equity principles that guide our work:

1. We actively engage people with lived experience of childhood-onset disability.
2. We embed equity visibly in all that we do, including in our Strategic Plan.
3. We celebrate diversity in representation and perspectives across our work.
4. We recognise the unique intersectional inequities that Indigenous individuals and families experience, due to the ongoing impacts of colonisation. We will prioritise partnership with Indigenous groups to better understand these experiences and to take steps to eliminate inequities.
5. We recognise the intersectional inequities that individuals with childhood-onset disability and their families experience. We will work to better understand these experiences to eliminate inequities.
6. We welcome all lived experiences of childhood-onset disability.
7. We embrace a strengths-based approach. We focus on what people can do whilst recognising the unique challenges faced by individuals with childhood-onset disability and their families.
8. We understand the influence that social determinants have on health outcomes for individuals and families living with childhood-onset disability.
9. We collaborate and align with partner organisations to create a more equitable society for people with childhood-onset disability.

Embedding equity across the AusACPDM

Over the next two years (mid 2024 - mid 2026) we will focus on the following goals to embed equity in our work:

- Embed these principles in Board activities
- Embed these principles across committees
- Embed these principles into our conference (scientific and organising committee) and education offerings (Listening & Sharing sessions; co-branded workshops/symposia)
- Review our progress and understanding our successes and challenges including reporting progress by the AusACPDM conference in 2026

Embedding equity into the AusACPDM over the next two years

Principles and associated goals <i>Goals should be developed by end of August 2024 with progress reporting due prior to 2026 conference</i>		
Board (Indicator of success)	Committees (Indicator of success)	Conference (Indicator of success)
Principle 1: Active engagement of people with lived experience of childhood-onset disability and their families		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal (Indicator of success) <p>E.g. Representation of people with lived experience of childhood-onset disability on the AusACPDM board (A minimum of 2 people with lived experience of child-onset disability on the board, appropriately remunerated)</p>	<p>Common goal across committees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal (Indicator of success) <p>Awards & Advocacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal (Indicator of success) <p>International Affairs & Strategic Alliance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal (Indicator of success) <p>Professional development & communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal (Indicator of success) <p>Scientific Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal (Indicator of success) <p>Membership & Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal (Indicator of success) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal (Indicator of success)
Principle 2: Equity is visibly embedded in all we do		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal (Indicator of success) 	<p>Common goal across committees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal (Indicator of success) <p>Awards & Advocacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal (Indicator of success) <p>International Affairs & Strategic Alliance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal (Indicator of success) <p>Professional development & communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal (Indicator of success) <p>Scientific Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal (Indicator of success) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal (Indicator of success) <p>E.g. Conference committee (Commitment to offering virtual attendance for 2026 conference)</p>

	<p>Membership & Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Goal (Indicator of success) <p>E.g. Awards and advocacy / International Affairs and scholarships committees: review and implementation of equity-focussed scholarship and awards selection criteria <i>(At least X% of conference scholarships are awarded to participants from rural, remote or Pacific / Asian nations)</i> E.g.</p>	
<p>Principle 3: We celebrate diversity in representation and perspectives across our work</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Goal (Indicator of success) 	<p>Common goal across committees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Goal (Indicator of success) <p>Awards & Advocacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Goal (Indicator of success) <p>International Affairs & Strategic Alliance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Goal (Indicator of success) <p>Professional development & communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Goal (Indicator of success) <p>Scientific Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Goal (Indicator of success) <p>Membership & Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Goal (Indicator of success) <p>E.g. Reporting participant gender data to include the gender spectrum, not limiting data sets and studies to only two genders.</p> <p>E.g. Recruitment and marketing documentation for any research study to consider the various individual needs of minority groups to ensure opportunities for inclusion.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Goal (Indicator of success) <p>E.g. All attendees at meetings or events of the Academy to have their pronouns clearly visible on their name tags/zoom name, or provided in a way that respects their gender identity and expression <i>(Chairs of online events are briefed on how to add pronouns to name, registration collects information on pronouns and gender express in order to include this information on conference lanyards)</i></p> <p>E.g. Conference theme specific to marginalised communities within child-onset disability</p>
<p>Principle 4: We recognise the unique intersectional inequities that Indigenous individuals with childhood-onset disability and their families experience based on the ongoing impacts of</p>		

<p>colonisation. We will prioritise partnership with Indigenous groups to better understand these experiences and to take steps to eliminate inequities.</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Goal (Indicator of success) <p>E.g. Meetings include an Acknowledgement of Country (where involving people meeting in / dialing in from Australia) recognising the traditional custodians of the country on which the meeting is being held.</p>	<p>Common goal across committees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Goal (Indicator of success) <p>Awards & Advocacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Goal (Indicator of success) <p>International Affairs & Strategic Alliance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Goal (Indicator of success) <p>Professional development & communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Goal (Indicator of success) <p>Scientific Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Goal (Indicator of success) <p>Membership & Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Goal (Indicator of success) <p>E.g. Meetings include an Acknowledgement of Country (where involving people meeting in / dialing in from Australia) recognising the traditional custodians of the country on which the meeting is being held.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Goal (Indicator of success) <p>E.g. Meetings include a Welcome to Country (where involving people meeting in / dialing in from Australia) recognising the traditional custodians of the country on which the meeting is being held.</p>
<p>Principle 5: We recognise the intersectional inequities that individuals with childhood-onset disability and their families experience. We will work to better understand these experiences to eliminate inequities.</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Goal (Indicator of success) 	<p>Common goal across committees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Goal (Indicator of success) <p>E.g. Committees apply strengths-based culturally-safe language guidance to all presentations</p> <p>Awards & Advocacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Goal (Indicator of success) <p>International Affairs & Strategic Alliance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Goal (Indicator of success) <p>Professional development & communication</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Goal (Indicator of success) <p>E.g. All attendees at meetings or events of the Academy will be offered to have their pronouns clearly visible on their name tags/zoom name, or provided in a way that respects their gender identity and expression.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Goal (Indicator of success) <p>Scientific Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Goal (Indicator of success) <p>Membership & Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Goal (Indicator of success) 	
<p>Principle 6: We welcome all lived experiences of childhood-onset disability.</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Goal (Indicator of success) 	<p>Common goal across committees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Goal (Indicator of success) <p>Awards & Advocacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Goal (Indicator of success) <p>International Affairs & Strategic Alliance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Goal (Indicator of success) <p>Professional development & communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Goal (Indicator of success) <p>Scientific Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Goal (Indicator of success) <p>Membership & Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Goal (Indicator of success) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Goal (Indicator of success)
<p>Principle 7: We embrace a strength-based approach. We focus on what people can do whilst recognising the unique challenges faced by individuals with childhood-onset disability and their families.</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Goal (Indicator of success) 	<p>Common goal across committees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Goal (Indicator of success) <p>Awards & Advocacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Goal (Indicator of success) <p>International Affairs & Strategic Alliance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Goal (Indicator of success) <p>Professional development & communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Goal (Indicator of success) <p>Scientific Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Goal (Indicator of success) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Goal (Indicator of success)

	<p>Membership & Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal (Indicator of success) 	
<p>Principle 8: We understand the influence of social determinants on health outcomes for individuals and with childhood-onset disability and their families.</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal (Indicator of success) 	<p>Common goal across committees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal (Indicator of success) <p>Awards & Advocacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal (Indicator of success) <p>International Affairs & Strategic Alliance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal (Indicator of success) <p>Professional development & communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal (Indicator of success) <p>Scientific Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal (Indicator of success) <p>Membership & Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal (Indicator of success) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal (Indicator of success)
<p>Principle 9: We collaborate and align with partner organisations to create a more equitable society for people with childhood-onset disability</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal (Indicator of success) 	<p>Common goal across committees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal (Indicator of success) <p>Awards & Advocacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal (Indicator of success) <p>International Affairs & Strategic Alliance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal (Indicator of success) <p>Professional development & communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal 1 (Indicator of success 1) <p>Scientific Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal (Indicator of success) <p>Membership & Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal (Indicator of success) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal (Indicator of success)

Acknowledgements

This position statement has been developed by AusACPDM members; Dr Rachel Toovey, Amy Hogan (co-chairs), Adj Prof Sarah McIntyre, Dr Katarina Ostojic, Adj AProf Hayley Smithers-Sheedy, Dr Shona Goldsmith, Alexandra Sorhage, Teigan Butchers, and Prof Sue Woolfenden, in consultation with the AusACPDM board, committees and broader membership.

Stakeholders we will consult with Sept – Dec 2024 include:

- First People's Disability Network
- Australian Cerebral Palsy Register Community Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Reference Group
- CPA/Northcott/Afford Ambassadors
- AusACPDM Pacific Group

Feedback

Any further suggestions regarding the statement or stakeholder consultation are welcome by email to Rachel Toovey (r.toovey@unimelb.edu.au) or Amy Hogan (amy@cpsociety.org.nz) by 31 August 2024.

DRAFT