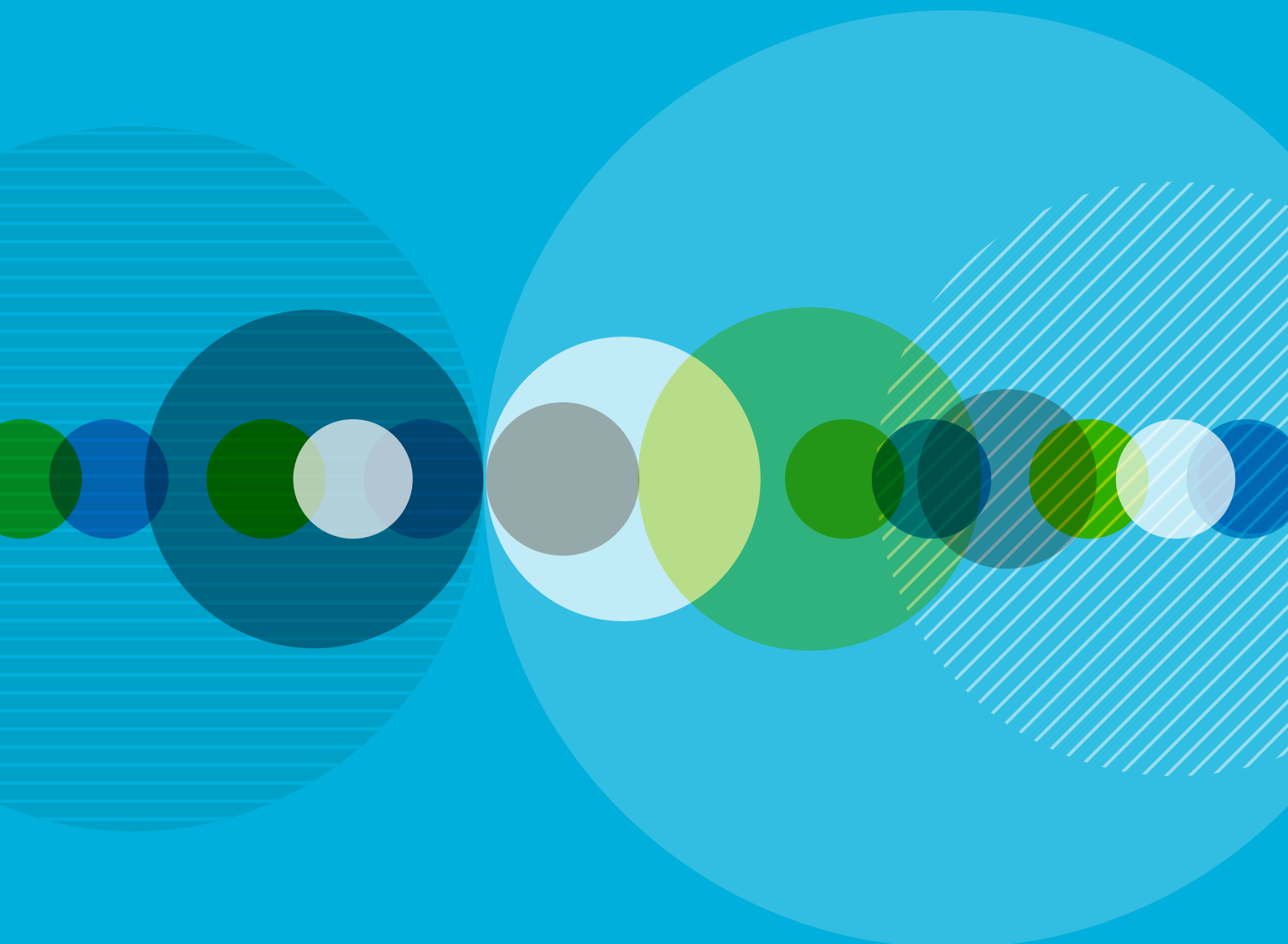


# working together

STRATEGIC PLAN 2013 - 2017



In the spirit of respect, the Telethon Kids Institute acknowledges the Aboriginal people and their Elders who are the Traditional Owners of the land and seas of Australia.

**TELETHON**  
**KIDS**  
**INSTITUTE**  
Discover. Prevent. Cure.

# Stakeholders

Our stakeholders are many and varied. They fall under the banners of:

- Employees, honorary staff and students
- The community, in particular the children and families of Western Australia and beyond.
- Health practitioners
- Academic and research partners and collaborators
- Campus partners – Children and adolescent health services, including Princess Margaret Hospital for Children (PMH), and the University of WA School of Paediatrics and Child Health (SPACH).
- Policy and practice organisations (including hospitals, Medicare locals, primary care, non-government organisations, disability organisations)
- Industry (health / biotech industry and corporate sector)
- Local, State and Federal Government
- Donors and supporters, including Telethon / Seven West Media



# Vision

To improve the health and wellbeing of children through excellence in research.

# Values

**We make a difference** by ensuring our research is translated into action now and in the future.

**We challenge** existing ideas and ourselves, and seek innovative and creative ways of working.

**We work together** and with our community to bring better health and wellbeing to children.

**We care** for children and the community, in Western Australia and beyond.

**We respect** the contributions of all who work at and with the Institute.

**We uphold** these values as a measure of our success and the integrity of our work and organisation.

# Introduction and Context

The Telethon Kids Institute is entering an exciting stage of development.

Our goal over the next five years is to create a new blueprint for a research institute – one that embraces its community and judges itself by its ability to make a difference in that community.

We also recognise and will foster the critically important links between laboratory, clinical and population-based research to underpin our focus on translation and discovery, and deliver benefits to the community. We will do this together – unified in our leadership, excellence, passion, and vision.

In spite of significant gains there remain major challenges for child health, many driven by socioeconomic inequities and others which transcend economic, social and ethnic boundaries.

Children<sup>1</sup> continue to face disease burdens driven by biological, social, economic and cultural factors – poor mental health, diabetes and obesity, cancer, infectious diseases, immune disorders and developmental disorders are just some examples.

Nowhere is the burden greater than for children living in situations of vulnerability, including Aboriginal<sup>2</sup> people, immigrant and refugee populations and other groups living in socioeconomic disadvantage in Australia, as well as those in low and middle income countries.

*Our goal over the next five years is to create a new blueprint for a research institute*

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STRATEGIC PLAN 2013 - 2017

<sup>1</sup> In this document, the term “children” is used to encompass children and young people

<sup>2</sup> We have used the term Aboriginal to refer to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

*We will do this  
together –  
unified in our  
leadership,  
excellence,  
passion, and  
vision*

Now is an important time to respond to these challenges and position ourselves to address future challenges; building on our record of excellence in child health research, but doing it more effectively, with greater impact and a stronger voice.

Ensuring our research improves health and wellbeing is central to our strategy. Research is all about working with partners, responding to the needs of our community, making sure that what we do makes a difference, communicating what we do and nurturing our people and those with whom we work.

Our Institute has developed a national and international reputation for excellence. While we will continue to tackle important issues for children everywhere, and build programs of work that are relevant in Australia and the world, we are at heart an institute for Western Australian children and families.





## How do we see our Institute in the next five years?

In five years' time, Telethon Kids will be different to what we are today. We will have taken our strengths built up since 1990 and combined them with a values-driven approach to setting bold and relevant questions, active partnerships with a broader range of stakeholders and management that enables research and encourages innovation. We expect to be able to demonstrate to our community how we help to improve child health and wellbeing through excellent research, influence and action.

### **Specifically, in five years' time, we will:**

- Be headquartered in new facilities within the New Children's Hospital building, taking advantage of this opportunity to strengthen our role in clinical research, and will have an increased presence in regional Western Australia, interstate and overseas
- Have transitioned to a new leadership team, with a clear plan for leadership succession into the future
- Have research teams that are focussed and collaborative, ensuring that we achieve the best outcomes for children with the resources that we have and build
- Embrace a diverse range of staff and collaborators, and welcome people as part of the Institute even if they are not formally employed by us
- Be financially secure, with a greatly enhanced fundraising base, a substantial capital fund, and the resources to cover the indirect costs of research as well as invest in new research opportunities
- Have developed the systems and processes to enable us to report on specific outcomes of our research during the previous five years, and to document how our work has contributed to improvements in health and health services

# In the next five years, we will also celebrate these things that define us:

## Outcome driven:

we will achieve significant health and wellbeing outcomes for children.

## Connected:

we will actively participate in national and international child health networks, and we will apply the knowledge we gain to more effectively tackle health challenges in Western Australia and beyond.

## Culture:

we will have an increased sense of purpose and clarity about who we are. We will be highly regarded by our staff, students and stakeholders and we will welcome all those who join us. We will foster a spirit of generosity among our staff, promoting a culture of sharing, collaboration and nurturing of developing careers.

## Community-focused:

we will build our relevance and engagement with consumers and the community more broadly. We will embrace new ways of working, including ensuring that our research focus is informed by our partnerships with the community and key stakeholders. The community will take pride in our work based on the increased recognition and understanding of what we do and what we have and will continue to achieve.

## Agenda-setting:

we will be seen as a leader in creation and implementation of knowledge to address health issues for children across all sectors of the community. We will be collaborative, dynamic and responsive, and take a leading role in advocating for children based on the evidence of what works. We will be well placed to respond to national and global issues through increased partnerships and diversified funding opportunities.

## Research excellence:

we will retain and recruit researchers of the highest calibre, to ensure that the Institute is known both nationally and internationally for its research excellence.

## Well managed and governed:

we will have a clear, transparent and dynamic structure that allows both specialist and multi-disciplinary teams to be assembled to conduct specific projects. Our focus will be on shared decision making where possible. Our management and governance will operate according to the highest principles of transparency, accountability, integrity and equity. Telethon Kids will be seen as an attractive and desirable place to work.

# Strategic goal 1

Our research will be driven by its potential to improve health and wellbeing of children

## Strategic priorities:

- We will identify and prioritise bold and relevant questions of importance to child health and wellbeing, together with our community and our stakeholders
- We will foster the critically important links between laboratory, clinical and population based research to underpin our focus on translation and discovery
- We will embrace a diversity of approaches to translation, built around active partnerships with practitioners, policy makers, community groups, non-government organisations, industry and other researchers at all stages of the research cycle, from conception of research ideas through to implementation of research findings into action
- We will adopt new research approaches, including compiling teams for strategic research projects, and partnering with academics and professionals from diverse disciplines
- We will direct at least 10% of our discretionary internal research funding to “high risk, high return” research ideas
- We will improve our capacity for business development, including capturing of intellectual property and commercialisation





# Strategic goal 2

We will work together with stakeholders to achieve the best health and wellbeing outcomes for children

## Strategic priorities:

- We will actively foster internal and external collaborations, with a range of support schemes, incentive programs and recognition awards
- We will bring us together with our Campus partners as an integrated research, education and translation enterprise that will maximise the impact of research for the community
- We will further develop our community and consumer involvement programs, and establish other forums between stakeholders and researchers, to ensure a two-way dialogue with relevant sectors of the community and recognise the importance of the people's voice in making research relevant
- We will be a voice for child health policy, practice and research and advocate for children and families based on the evidence of what is needed and what works using a broad range of strategies
- We will identify a number of priority relationships with policy and practice organisations, academic collaborators, federal and state governments and industry, and consolidate them as actively-managed formal partnerships
- We will have an active focus on Asian-based collaborations recognising our proximity to Asia
- We will explore the benefits of establishing a Child Health Research Network in WA (a platform to develop collaborations, build capacity, and develop common goals)

# Strategic goal 3

We will build capacity and excellence in our people, in recognition that they are our greatest asset

## Strategic priorities:

- We will develop a career path for all staff and establish mechanisms for succession for all leadership positions
- We will develop a strong and transparent performance development framework for all staff, underpinned by professional and skills development strategies
- We will cultivate excitement and reward productivity to ensure that we continue to attract ambitious and talented people to our teams
- We will implement specific strategies to improve recruitment and retention of Aboriginal staff
- We will provide equal opportunity for all staff
- We will ensure a supportive and flexible workplace for those balancing families and careers
- We will attract more Higher Degree students and ensure the highest quality supervision and career development
- We will improve job security for our staff, including increasing the duration of contracts and providing mechanisms to buffer researchers from reliance on competitive grant cycles
- We will embrace researchers with clinical and non-clinical backgrounds and actively encourage their involvement across our research programs
- We will equip all of our researchers to articulate the vision and purpose of the Institute, their role in it and how their research will ultimately improve the health of children

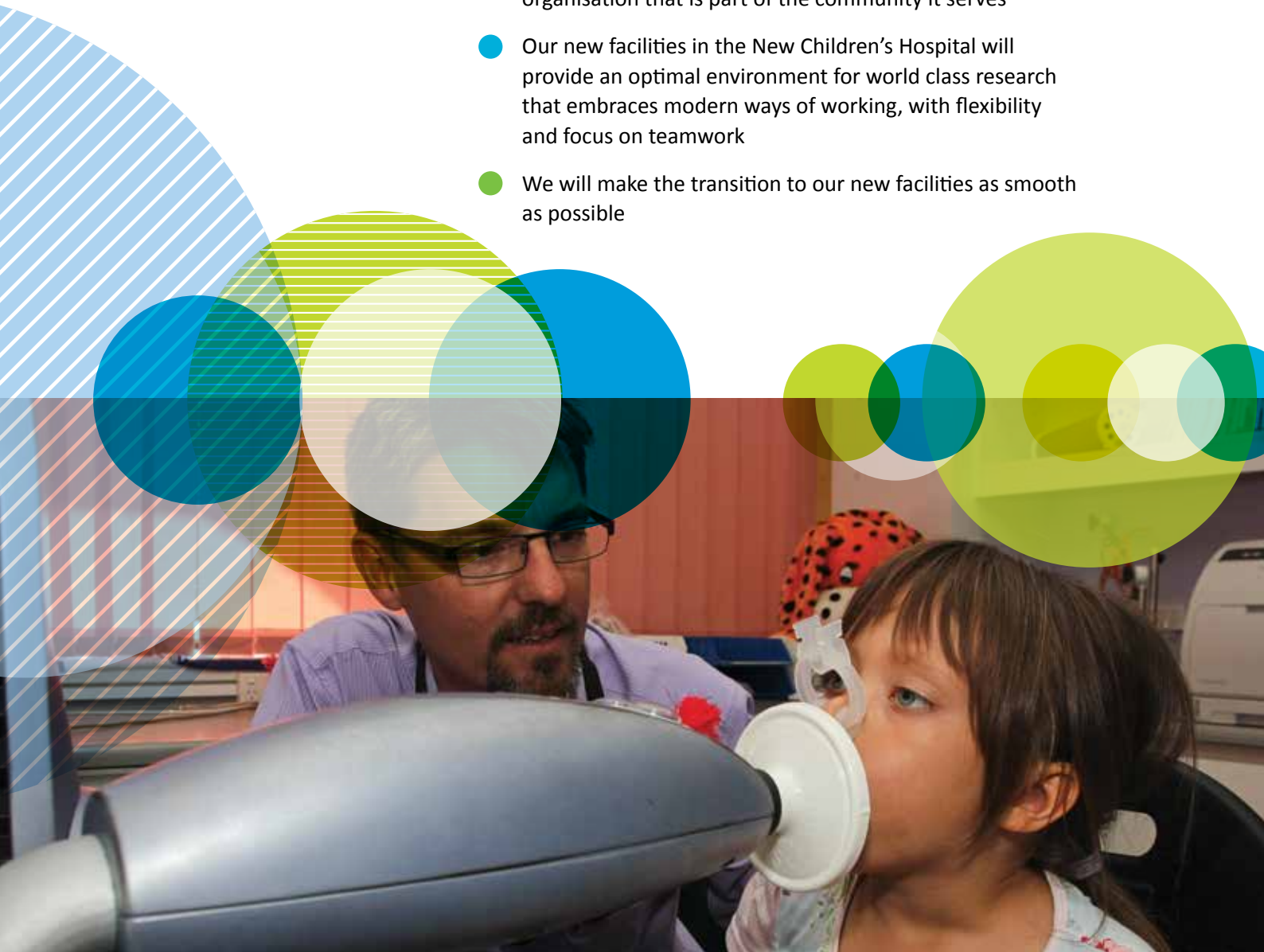


# Strategic goal 4

We will be a great organisation in the eyes of our staff, supporters and other stakeholders

## Strategic priorities:

- We will have a structure that provides for transparent and accountable leadership and management and clarity of roles, reporting channels and delegations
- We will ensure flexibility to adapt to changing circumstances, e.g. allowing multi-disciplinary teams to be assembled to conduct specific projects
- We will provide a safe, family-friendly, eco-friendly and culturally sensitive workplace
- We will establish the Institute's reputation as an organisation that is part of the community it serves
- Our new facilities in the New Children's Hospital will provide an optimal environment for world class research that embraces modern ways of working, with flexibility and focus on teamwork
- We will make the transition to our new facilities as smooth as possible

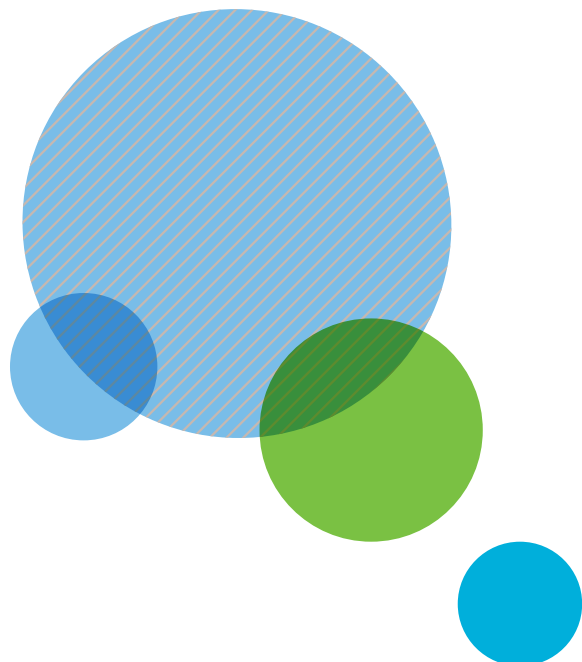


# Strategic goal 5

We will diversify and increase our funding base to sustain our activities and future growth

## Strategic priorities:

- We will increase our success rate and total income from local, national and international competitive research grants
- We will significantly boost our fundraising efforts
- We will build long term financial sustainability through growth of our capital fund
- We will increase our revenue-generation from other sources, including government funding, contract research, infrastructure funding sources, and partnerships with the corporate sector
- We will continue to nurture and celebrate our partnership with Telethon / Seven West Media
- We will effectively manage expenditure to be responsive to levels of funding
- We will build equity in our brand and identity



# Research focus



In partnership with our community and our stakeholders, we will tailor our research to areas of the greatest importance to the health and wellbeing of children, where possible building on existing strengths and strategic advantages.

We will continue to search for better ways to diagnose, treat, and cure childhood diseases, improve quality of life for those who suffer disease and disability, prevent disease and maintain good health and wellbeing.

- In many cases this will be achieved by realignment and/or reinforcing of existing program areas. This means that we will commit to major ongoing research into cancer, diabetes and obesity, respiratory diseases, infectious diseases, allergy, mental health, developmental disorders, childhood disability and the social determinants of disease. Aboriginal health will remain a priority and a second statement will be developed around this focus area.
- In other cases, this will require a strategic focus and investment to build new or considerably restructure existing programs. This means we will establish coordinated programs into educational research (linked strongly to child development), adolescent health and wellbeing, global health, environmental health and the developmental origins of health and disease.
- We will build on our strengths in data linkage and underpin our research with a specific strengthening of our capacity in two priority areas:
  - Translational methodologies
  - 'Omics' technologies and Systems Biology.
- The impending retirement of a number of senior researchers means there is a need to ensure strong research leadership by supporting the development of promising early and mid-career researchers, and by strategic recruitment of established researchers from outside the Institute.
- We will actively recognise and celebrate the leadership of our senior researchers in building the Institute to where it is today. We value their ongoing contribution, their wisdom and their generosity of spirit in this next exciting stage of our development.



# Measuring our success

We will judge our success through our ability to translate research results into action, including demonstration of how our work is helping to improve health and wellbeing, changing policy and practice and influencing local, state, national and global agendas, as well as by how we generate new knowledge in important areas that may have practical outcomes in the future.

We will adopt existing and, where necessary, develop new indicators of impact on child health and wellbeing; however any such measures must be underpinned by research excellence. Traditional “academic” metrics such as grant income, publication metrics and higher degree by research student completions are critical to the success of this strategy, but will not be considered as measures of success on their own.

The Board of Directors will take a leadership role in ensuring robust annual appraisal of our performance against this Strategic Plan and we will ensure community involvement in this process.

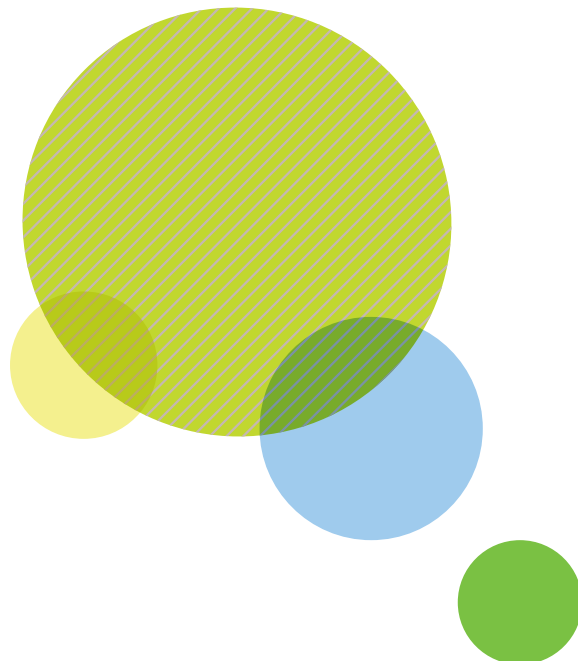
*We will judge our success through our ability to translate research results into action*

# Outcomes

Within the five year framework of this Strategic Plan, we will have made a tangible and measureable impact on child health and wellbeing.

## After the first 12 months we will have:

- Identified a limited number of Showcase Projects across different research areas, including at least one with a substantial component of “discovery” research, that will stand as examples to help the broader community, supporters and stakeholders better understand how we work and make a difference
- Developed Key Performance Indicators for each Strategic Goal and Priority and an effective performance management framework
- Implemented a new organisational structure, with accountable and transparent leadership and reporting lines, a clear process for decision making, and a strong framework for developing and implementing policies. An effective organisational structure, together with the goodwill of our staff and our stakeholders, will enable us to achieve our Strategic Goals
- Developed a new, vibrant brand and marketing plan, communicating more clearly to the community who we are and what we do



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[telethonkids.org.au](http://telethonkids.org.au)