

Candidate Information Pack

UnitingCare Australia

National Director

September 2025

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About UnitingCare Australia

The UnitingCare network is powered by over 55,000 staff and 17,000 volunteers, and we have proudly been there for all Australians for more than 100 years. Together, we believe that everyone should live life to its fullest and with dignity, no matter their circumstances. We're innovative, ambitious and passionate about inspiring a better world.

UnitingCare Australia is a national advocate for social justice, working across party lines to give a voice to the most vulnerable in our community. Our insights into social justice are informed by the UnitingCare network of community service providers and the experience of those people who use those services.

We maintain bipartisan working relationships across all political parties and with key politicians, public servants and thought leaders at the national level. Within this environment, UnitingCare offers expertise, credibility, independence and integrity.



Our people

The UnitingCare network is made up of over 55,000 staff and 17,000 volunteers. We have proudly been there for all Australians for more than 100 years.



Our network

UnitingCare Australia is the national body for the UnitingCare network, one of the largest providers of community services in Australia.



Our church

UnitingCare Australia is an Agency of the Assembly of the Uniting Church in Australia, the third largest Christian denomination in Australia.

UnitingCare Australia is the national body for the Uniting Church's community services network, one of the largest providers of community services in Australia.

The UnitingCare Network is made up of 20 organisations who are on the frontline of community service delivery, supporting 5.8 million interactions across Australia every year.

Context To This Appointment

Due to the retirement of our current National Director, Claerwen Little, after nine successful years in the role, we are now seeking an exceptional leader to build on the work of the team and help drive the organisation on its next stage of development. [Please click here](#) for a link to the press release regarding Claerwen's retirement.

This represents a wonderful opportunity for a values-led executive leader to join UnitingCare Australia at a pivotal time in our evolution, helping to shape the future of the organisation, the team and the broader ecosystem, and ultimately supporting the delivery of world class services for individuals, families and communities.

How We Work Together

The Uniting Church is one of the largest Christian denominations in Australia. Across the country more than 1,500 congregations worship at a Uniting Church including many congregations that worship in languages other than English. Our churches can be found deep in the heart of our cities, rural towns and regional and extended regions of Australia.

The Uniting Church is organised not by a hierarchy, but by groups of people, lay and ordained, meeting together, usually making decisions by consensus, in each area of the Church's life. Alongside this we have a network of community services across 1,600 sites nationwide.





















The Assembly is the national council of the Church, led by the President of the Uniting Church, with a General Secretary as Chief Executive Officer. UnitingCare Australia is an agency of the Assembly along with two other agencies, UnitingWorld which leads our relief and development work, particularly in Asia and the Pacific and Frontier Services which supports our ministry in remote Australia.

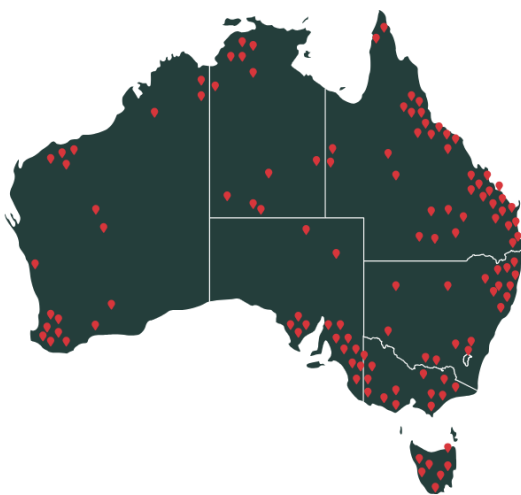
The Assembly leads the national work of the Uniting Church in areas of theology, public advocacy, international and ecumenical relationships, governance and regulations and promoting the mission of the Church. It also works closely with the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress as part of our covenant relationship.

Our Network

UnitingCare Australia is the national body for the Uniting Church's community services network, one of the largest providers of community services in Australia.

We have a vast national footprint and a rich history spanning more than 100 years. The UnitingCare Network is made up of 20 organisations who are on the frontline of community service delivery, supporting 5.8 million interactions across Australia every year.

 Clayton Church Homes	 Eldercare	 Good Samaritan Industries
 Helping Hand	 Juniper	 Parramatta Mission
 Resthaven	 Somerville Community Services	 Uniting AgeWell
 Uniting Communities	 Uniting Country SA	 Uniting NSW.ACT
 Uniting Vic.Tas	 Uniting WA	 UnitingCare Queensland
 UnitingCare Wesley Bowden	 UnitingSA	 Wesley Mission
 Wesley Mission Qld		 Australian Regional and Remote Community Services



CARE FOR CHANGE

STRATEGIC PLAN

2023-2026

WHO WE ARE

UnitingCare Australia is the national body for the Uniting Church's community services network and an agency of the Assembly of the Uniting Church in Australia.

UnitingCare Australia has a mandate to advocate within the Uniting Church, to Government and the broader community on policies and practices which enhance the dignity of people, especially those who are most vulnerable.

We work towards a community in which every person meets their full potential.

Our strategic plan focuses on community service issues within the theological framework of the Uniting Church, particularly the Church's social justice imperatives. We will develop and reflect on the policies and practices of the Uniting Church in community services, while pursuing appropriate issues within the Church, with Government and the community sector and with the Australian community.

OUR NETWORK



50,000
staff



30,000
volunteers



1,600
sites



1.4 million
people supported
across Australia

OUR VALUES



Hope



Respect



Justice



Compassion



Integrity



Innovation

FOUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

MISSION

To give voice to the Uniting Church's commitment to social justice through advocacy and by strengthening community service provision

1. IMPACT

To position UnitingCare Australia as a high impact organisation

2. IDENTITY

Be recognised as a leading advocate with a clear profile and strong identity

3. RELATIONSHIPS

Nurture and extend critical internal and external relationships with key stakeholders for impact and influence

4. RESOURCES AND CAPABILITY

Ensure we have adequate resources and capability to deliver on our Mandate

THREE ADVOCACY PRIORITIES

1. JUSTICE FOR FIRST PEOPLES

That the unique place of our First Peoples in the life of our nation is acknowledged and upheld

2. AGEING TO OUR FULL POTENTIAL

That all people experience compassion and dignity as they age and exercise their rights as full members of society

3. ECONOMIC EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

That all people are able to fully participate across all domains of life



UnitingCare Australia Leadership Team



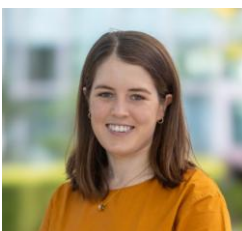
Claerwen Little
National Director (Retiring)



Fay Mound
Deputy National Director



Tanya Von Ahlefeldt
Head of Advocacy



Georgina Watson
Head of Policy



Mary Quinlan
**Director, Aged Care Workforce
Remote Accord**

Appointments have recently been made for: Head of Communications and Media; Head of Government Relations.



UnitingCare Australia Board



Heather Watson
Chair, UnitingCare Australia



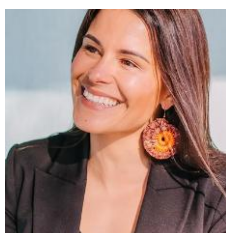
Andrew Kinnersly
CEO, Uniting AgeWell
Vic.Tas Synod Nominee



Cathy Thomas
Acting CEO, UnitingCare Qld
Qld Synod Nominee



Andrew Johnson
General Secretary, Uniting Church
Assembly



Kristal Kinsela
Kristel Kinsela Consulting Pty Ltd
Independent Member



Jen Park
Co-CEO, Uniting WA
WA Synod Nominee



Tracey Burton
Executive Director, Uniting NSW.ACT
NSW.ACT Synod Nominee



Adam Connolly
CEO, Apollo Communications
Independent Member



Mark Dingle
Independent Member



Ian O'Reilly
Northern Synod Nominee



Alison Overeem
Manager, Leprena UAICC
Iutruwita/Tasmania



Mark Waters
Director, UnitingCare SA
SA Synod Nominee



UNITINGCARE AUSTRALIA

POSITION DESCRIPTION

POSITION TITLE:	National Director
APPOINTED BY:	Assembly Standing Committee
RESPONSIBLE TO:	Chair, UnitingCare Australia: through the Chair to the Board; General Secretary: through the General Secretary to the Assembly Standing Committee
DIRECT REPORTS:	Deputy National Director Head of Advocacy Head of Policy Director, Aged Care Workforce Remote Accord Head of Communications and Media Head of Government Relations
TERM OF APPOINTMENT:	5 Year Fixed Term

ORGANISATION PROFILE:

UnitingCare Australia is an agency of the National Assembly of the Uniting Church in Australia. It is the national body for the Uniting Church's community services, one of the largest providers of community services in Australia. With over 1,600 sites, the network employs 50,000 staff and is supported by the work of over 30,000 volunteers.

UnitingCare Australia's vision is that all people can thrive in a healed and reconciled world and our purpose is to give voice to the Uniting Church's commitment to social justice through advocacy and by strengthening community service provision.

UnitingCare Australia works with and on behalf of the UnitingCare Network to advocate for policies and programs that will improve people's quality of life. UnitingCare Australia is committed to speaking with and on behalf of those who are the most vulnerable and disadvantaged, for the common good.

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION:

To provide strategic leadership and oversight of the work of UnitingCare Australia in fulfilling its Mandate and achieving the strategic objectives as set from time to time by the Board.



KEY AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY INCLUDE:

Strategic Leadership

Provide overall strategic leadership to the National office team, across the network and wider church to deliver on our Strategic Priorities and in line with Assembly values and vision.

Advocacy

Advocate on issues of significance to the network and church as identified within the strategic priorities.

Be the primary spokesperson on behalf of the network and the church on relevant issues.

Develop strong and trusted relationships of influence across all political parties and become widely regarded as an honest broker; known for independence and integrity, and commitment to the mission of the church.

Build and maintain relationships of influence with relevant Secretaries, Deputy Secretaries and Departmental staff

Be recognised as a thought leader and key sector leader.

Build and maintain strong alliances and relationships with other peak bodies and relevant organisations.

Build strong relationships and collaborations with the other like faith based bodies.

Demonstrate leadership in collaboration on key advocacy issues.

Service Development

Provide leadership in developing a strong network which is connected to itself across organisational and Synod boundaries, and to the life and mission of the wider Uniting Church.

Identify and develop expertise from across the network to further the national Mandate

Identify key opportunities for national activities and a strong national brand.

Good Stewardship

Ensure UnitingCare Australia has adequate resources, capability and good governance to deliver on its Mandate.

Manage any risks appropriately and keep a risk register up to date and relevant.

Lead and manage the National office team within all work health and safety responsibilities and develop and maintain a high functioning motivating environment.



Broader Uniting Church

Engage with Assembly and Assembly Standing Committee in relation to the work of the agency in delivering on its mandate in meaningful ways.

Maintain strong, productive collegiate working relationships with Assembly colleagues and actively contribute positively to the Assembly Executive team.

Ensure theological reflection on the work of community services within the Uniting Church.

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA:

Demonstrated leadership capability and ability to motivate others.

Demonstrated ability to think and act strategically.

Commitment to the Uniting Church, its beliefs and its values and an understanding of its network of community services.

Demonstrated understanding of and capacity to manage a national body.

Tertiary qualifications or equivalent in policy and/or human services.

Demonstrated superior written and oral communication skills.

Proven high level public relations/marketing, public speaking, presentation, networking, advocacy and lobbying skills.

Superior networking skills and experience, with a demonstrated ability to utilise all facets of communication networks.

Ability to work under pressure, to prioritise and manage a high volume workload.

Ability to effectively manage a multi-skilled team with multi-faceted interrelated workloads.

DESIRABLE CRITERIA:

Demonstrated knowledge of community service policy areas and associated program delivery.

Demonstrated knowledge and understanding of the Federal Parliament and political processes.

Demonstrated outstanding analytical and conceptual skills, policy analysis, formulation and implementation skills.

Appreciation of relationship between policy development and organisational public profile and advocacy commitment.

Useful Links and Contact Information

For additional information about the organisation, please see links below:

UnitingCare Australia

- <https://unitingcare.org.au/>
- <https://unitingcare.org.au/news/>
- <https://unitingcare.org.au/news/media-releases/>
- <https://unitingcare.org.au/advocacy/>
- <https://unitingcare.org.au/about/who-we-are/>
- <https://unitingcare.org.au/about/our-church/>
- <https://uniting.church/>



The Application and Selection Process



Rob Macmillan – Partner Health and Human Services, Derwent

Rob is a Partner in our Health and Human Services practice and works with public, not for profit and private hospital, health, aged care, disability and associated organisations in the sourcing of their executive leadership talent.

He has developed extensive networks, both nationally and internationally, and works closely with his clients to deeply understand their requirements; he then works with his team to engage with and attract the very best talent.

He balances a busy work life with his young family and his passion for competitive yacht racing, having competed in five recent Sydney to Hobart yacht races.

Rob graduated from Warwick University in the UK with a BA (Hons) Politics and International Relations.

Candidate Care

We are committed to ensuring that potential applicants and candidates are treated respectfully and fairly. Derwent consultants are available to manage inquiries and ensure that applicants are informed about developments as they become available. Candidates who are shortlisted and complete assessments including interviews will be offered a feedback session to discuss their experience and the assessment results.

Salary Package

An attractive remuneration package will be negotiated with the successful applicant.

Location

The person appointed will spend time across Australia. The UnitingCare Australia head office and team are in Canberra, and this will be a key location for the role. There is potential flexibility as to where the National Director is based.

How to apply

Please submit your CV and a brief cover letter addressing the following 3 areas:

- Your interest in the role?
- What you bring to the role and to UnitingCare Australia?
- Your vision for the role?

If you have any questions about this opportunity, please contact Rob Macmillan, Partner Health, Derwent Search at healthservices@derwentsearch.com.au or call on 0421 593 535.

Reference checks, pre-employment verification and background checks

For candidates in final consideration, at least two referees will be contacted with permission before a formal written offer is made. Any written references provided will also be checked and additional referees may be sought to further understand a candidate's merits for the role. Additionally, any offer will be subject to some or all of the following checks: Academic Qualification Check; Professional Membership Check; Criminal History and Working with Children Check.

Timeline

- Interviews with Derwent will take place mid September – mid October.
- Interviews with UnitingCare Australia will take place end October – early November.
- Offer and acceptance anticipated late November

Thank you for your interest UnitingCare Australia