

**AlfredHealth**

**speak**  
better health, together

 **South West  
Healthcare**



# What is the SPEAK project?

The SPEAK Project aims to improve healthcare for autistic people, people with intellectual disability, and communication disability. The project is run by Alfred Health and South West Healthcare with funding from the Department of Social Services. The funding is through a 3-year ILC program grant. ILC stands for Information, Linkages and Capacity Building.





# Why is this project important?

Research shows that the experience of people with disability in hospital is not as good as the experience of people without disability. The SPEAK Project is trying to support staff and improve systems so that people with disability have better healthcare outcomes in our hospitals.

Every person who comes to the hospital should be able to:

- Communicate in a way that works for them
- Be understood by healthcare staff
- Feel safe when they are in hospital
- Be a part of making their own decisions about their healthcare

# What are our main objectives?

Design and test a service that assists autistic people, people with intellectual disability and people with communication disability while they are in hospital, as well as their healthcare staff and support people.

Develop training for staff to support them in meeting the needs of people with different sensory and communication needs. Developing a range of resources to improve communication between staff and people with disability.

Improve ways for people to give feedback, and for the hospital to respond to feedback to improve healthcare services.

Ensure accessible and relevant information resources are available to people with disability to improve their experience before, during and after visiting our hospitals.

Develop data systems to improve how people with disability are supported throughout their healthcare journey.

# Who are we focusing on?

The SPEAK project aims to overcome sensory and communication barriers when getting healthcare at our hospitals. These barriers are often experienced by autistic people, people with intellectual disability, and communication disability. The SPEAK project focuses on this group and the carers, family members, friends and staff who support them along their healthcare journey.



# What is our approach?

## Lived experience of disability in our team

The SPEAK project team has team members who are multi-skilled, passionate and have lived experience of disability.

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## Listening and learning before making decisions

Before making changes, research is being done to learn from people with disability, their support people and healthcare staff.

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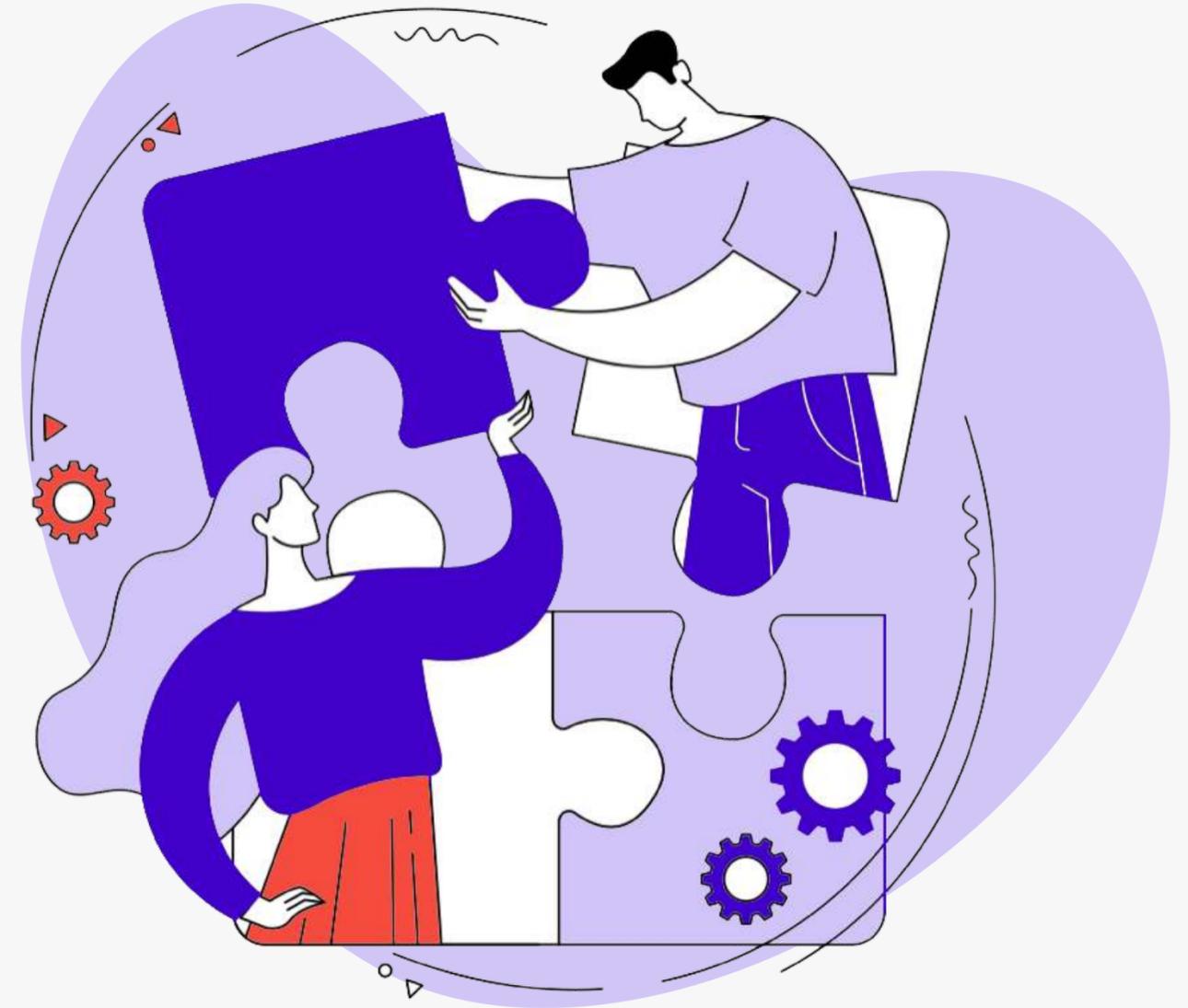
## Partnering with healthcare staff, people with disability, carers, and the community

Co-designing with people who have first-hand knowledge of disability and accessing healthcare increases our chances of improving the right things. It also recognises that people with disability have a right to make decisions about how healthcare is designed and delivered.

# Our team

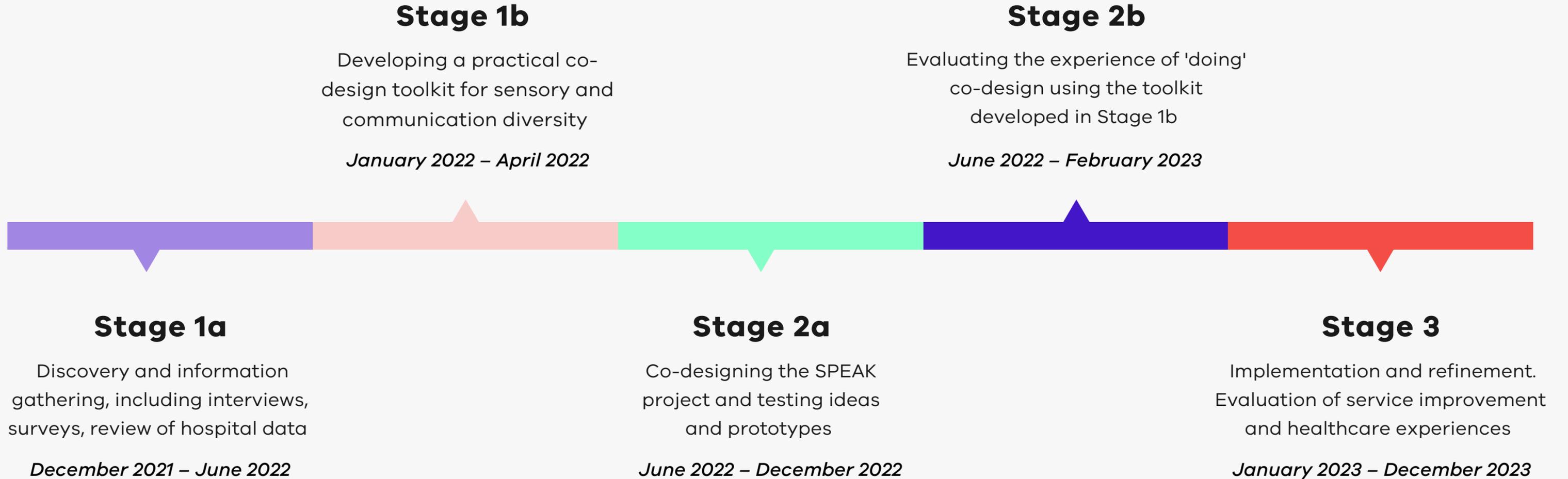
The SPEAK project team is made up of:

- A film-maker, peer worker, and artist with lived experience of disability
- A social worker and disability advocate with lived experience of disability
- Healthcare staff that support people with disability from Alfred Health and South West Healthcare
- Designers, clinicians, researchers, and admin people who are passionate about the healthcare experience of people with disability.





# Our timeline





## Do you want to help improve the experiences of people with disability and their support people when accessing healthcare?

Are you a **staff member** working at **Alfred Health** or **South West Healthcare**?

We would like to understand your experiences of service provision for people with disability and their support people.

### About the SPEAK Project

The aim of the SPEAK Project is to build capacity in the health workforce and improve processes and systems to meet the healthcare needs and improve healthcare experiences for individuals with intellectual disability, communication support needs and autistic people.

This research is being conducted by Alfred Health with funding through the Department of Social Services Information, Linkages and Capacity Building Program (ILC Program) grant. The research will be conducted by Alfred Health and South West Healthcare.

### How can you get involved?

- Complete our SPEAK project staff survey
- Participate in a one-on-one interview with a member of the research team.

### Want more details?

[www.alfred.org.au/SPEAK](http://www.alfred.org.au/SPEAK)

For additional information about the research, please contact **Dr Karen Roberts**  
[k.roberts@alfred.org.au](mailto:k.roberts@alfred.org.au) (Alfred Health)  
or **Claire Nailon**,  
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### Go to the staff survey

<https://redcap.link/hospitalstaffsurvey>





# Would you like to find out more?

If you want to talk about the SPEAK project or share the work you are doing in healthcare and disability, please get in touch:

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**Thank you**