



# STRATEGIC PLAN



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2013-2017

# INTRODUCTION

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The vestibular system includes the parts of the inner ear and brain that process the sensory information involved with controlling balance and eye movements. If disease or injury damages these processing areas, vestibular disorders can result. Vestibular disorders can also result from or be worsened by genetic or environmental conditions, or occur for unknown reasons.

Although vestibular disorders are not widely recognized, they are surprisingly common. Recent medical research has shown that almost 40% of the US population over 40 will experience a vestibular disorder in their lifetime. More than 12 million people over 65 experience a dizziness or balance problem that significantly interferes with their life. Behind these statistics lie real people with real problems. Individuals with vestibular disorders lose significant work time as a result of their disability. Patients are also impacted by decreased ability to participate in family and social activities. Societal costs – such as disability, lost productivity and hospital time due to falls – have been largely overlooked.

A further complication for vestibular patients is the difficulty of diagnosing vestibular disorders. As a result vestibular patients often spend 3-5 years seeking a diagnosis. It is not uncommon to see 7-9 doctors in different specialties before receiving a diagnosis. Once patients do receive a diagnosis, treatment is frequently not effective.

There is an urgent need to address the needs of vestibular patients for information and improvement in diagnosis and treatment. VEDA is responding to this need with three coordinated efforts.

1. VEDA is building a community of vestibular patients and professionals to become dedicated activists for our cause.
2. VEDA is developing a multi-year public awareness and advocacy program targeted to meet the needs of the vestibular community and designed to remove the barriers to vestibular diagnosis and treatment.
3. VEDA is building mutually beneficial partnerships with other groups to enhance our community and increase our impact.

We will measure our success using the following metrics:

- ◆ Reducing diagnosis times.
- ◆ Increasing treatment effectiveness.
- ◆ Increased medical training focus on vestibular disorders.
- ◆ Increased membership and participation in VEDA programs and events.
- ◆ Expanded diagnostic and treatment protocols for vestibular disorders.

# OVERVIEW

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VEDA was founded in 1983 and initially filled an urgent need for vestibular information as a publisher of books on vestibular disorders, as well as an ad hoc national support group for patients. As the demand for printed publications has diminished, the demand for online information has grown. VEDA has developed a significant web presence with a website (over 600,000 visitors per year) and Facebook page (over 4,400 followers and an average monthly reach of 40,000).

Two important factors recently caused VEDA to re-examine our strategy. First, new information on vestibular demographics has revealed the magnitude of vestibular problems and increased VEDA's motivation to meet this significant need. Further, while VEDA's membership remains small there is ample evidence of untapped potential for increased interest and involvement. We face a choice: Remain a small organization with a limited view of our role providing information for vestibular patients and practitioners, or step up to the larger challenge of drawing attention to the magnitude of the problem and advocating for potential solutions. We choose to step up.

As VEDA has evaluated our strengths and the urgent needs of the vestibular community, we decided that the best way to accomplish our mission is to commit to a unifying purpose that would make a significant difference in the lives of people suffering with vestibular disorders: ***To reduce diagnosis times and pre-diagnosis doctor visits for vestibular patients while improving treatment effectiveness.*** This unifying purpose demands a shift and expansion in focus for VEDA.

VEDA recognizes a need to shift our focus from static information on vestibular disorders to a dynamic interactive vestibular community that captures the energy and enthusiasm of our patient and medical members. With our new website, VEDA continues to provide all the valuable information we know is important and has added opportunities for website visitors and members to interact – to fill in surveys, comment on news feeds and volunteer – in short to take action and interact with VEDA and others in the vestibular community. Perhaps most important to the sense of community, VEDA is also asking members to participate through Balance Awareness Week with awareness activities and fundraisers of their own, supported and publicized on the VEDA website and Facebook page. VEDA seeks to engage and grow our members as activists for our common cause.

While there are other organizations providing medical information on the Web, there are no other organizations advocating for the urgent needs of vestibular patients. VEDA sees a specific niche where we have expertise and can add significant value – information and advocacy focused on the vestibular patient experience. The major factors in this patient experience are the lengthy diagnosis times and current lack of consensus on effective medical treatment. VEDA will partner with others to develop the necessary baseline information and advocate on these and other critical issues. VEDA seeks to expand our program focus to advocate for reduced diagnosis times and doctor visits and increased treatment effectiveness alongside our strategic partners.

VEDA enters this new phase with great excitement at the potential to serve our members and achieve our mission.

# VISION & MISSION

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## VISION

**We envision a global community where vestibular patients are rapidly diagnosed and effectively treated, and where the debilitating effects of vestibular disorders are recognized by social, government and workplace institutions.**

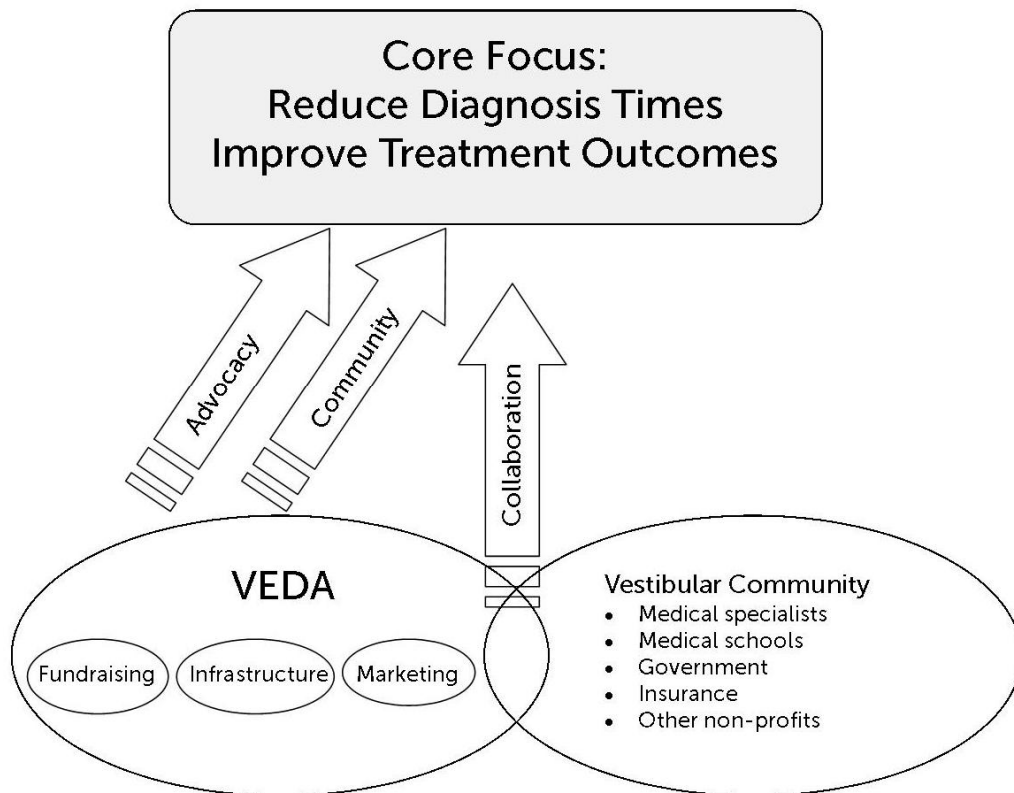


## MISSION

**VEDA's mission is to serve people with vestibular disorders by providing access to information, offering a support network, and elevating awareness of the challenges associated with these disorders.**

# GOALS & OBJECTIVES

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| GOAL I | <b>COMMUNITY: Build a large &amp; influential community of patient and professional members, family and caregivers, who are engaged and motivated to help remove barriers to reducing diagnosis times and increasing treatment effectiveness.</b> |
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| OBJECTIVES | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Attract and motivate purpose driven members who are activists for the cause through events, programs and support networks.</li><li>2) Support professional members in serving vestibular patients through tools and information that connect providers to patients, colleagues, research, and training opportunities.</li><li>3) Expand membership by understanding the needs of the vestibular community and identifying un/under-served populations.</li></ol> |
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| MEASURES OF SUCCESS | 10% annual growth rate of community members (VEDA members, donors, support group participants, event participants, social media followers, etc.) |
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| <b>GOAL II</b> | <b>ADVOCACY: Become an influential advocate for improved vestibular patient diagnosis, treatment &amp; support.</b> |
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| <b>OBJECTIVES</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Remain the trusted source of information on vestibular disorders and treatment alternatives by providing up-to-date (on and offline) content on relevant topics.</li><li>2) Increase general awareness of vestibular disorders through targeted outreach to people with vestibular dysfunction (pre and post-diagnosis).</li><li>3) Develop baseline data on key patient experience measures &amp; measurement systems through polls and independent research.</li><li>4) Engage medical partners &amp; the medical system to become advocates for the cause.</li></ul> |
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| <b>MEASURES OF SUCCESS</b> | Increased medical training, expanded diagnostic and treatment protocols, and increased insurance & disability coverage for vestibular disorders. |
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| <b>GOAL III</b> | <b>PARTNERSHIPS: Form alliances with a range of organizations to increase VEDA's impact, speed results &amp; expand resources.</b> |
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| <b>OBJECTIVES</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Act as a key facilitator of interested parties (patient &amp; practitioner organizations) in addressing vestibular challenges.</li><li>2) Partner with medical organizations to develop educational &amp; research support.</li><li>3) Foster reciprocal relationships with government, regulatory &amp; educational/academic agencies &amp; institutions to increase awareness of vestibular disorders and improve policies affecting vestibular patients.</li><li>4) Secure and leverage marketing alliances/partnerships.</li></ul> |
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| <b>MEASURES OF SUCCESS</b> | Increased impact on societal support for vestibular patients. |
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| <b>GOAL IV</b> | <b>FUNDRAISING: Increase and diversify funding to support VEDA's programs &amp; operations.</b> |
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| OBJECTIVES | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Increase membership revenue through active marketing to potential new member groups.</li><li>2) Cultivate current members and donors through improved communications and targeted campaigns.</li><li>3) Convert passive members to donors who are actively supporting the organization's mission.</li><li>4) Develop grassroots fundraising by growing Balance Awareness Week into major fundraiser, with 10% annual revenue growth.</li><li>5) Diversify funding sources through corporate sponsors, grants and fee-for-service programs.</li></ul> |
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| MEASURES OF SUCCESS | 10-20% annual growth in revenue. |
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| <b>GOAL V</b> | <b>INFRASTRUCTURE: Align board and staff capabilities to VEDA needs. Anticipate growth with expanded business systems.</b> |
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| OBJECTIVES | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Have sufficient staff to support key program needs.</li><li>2) Have an enthusiastic and well-trained board with diverse skills and sufficient resources to meet VEDA's needs through board recruitment and training.</li><li>3) Automate and update business systems.</li><li>4) Tap into the skills within the vestibular community by developing a volunteer program.</li></ul> |
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| MEASURES OF SUCCESS | Infrastructure supports being able to effectively implement programs and achieve stated goals. |
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**GOAL VI****MARKETING: Implement marketing strategies that support and accomplish VEDA's goals and objectives.****OBJECTIVES**

- 1) Generate awareness of VEDA to a national audience through targeted medical trade journals, newspapers, magazines, broadcast and online outlets.
- 2) Grow social media interactions & followers by providing patients a forum to communicate, support, and provide valuable experiences and referrals with each other or in a group.
- 3) Increase user visits to the VEDA website through email outreach and digital marketing.
- 4) Improve printed collateral design and sponsorship/grant/donor materials.
- 5) Continue to identify and grow the VEDA brand through consistent and powerful messaging.
- 6) Advertise in targeted print publications.

**MEASURES  
OF SUCCESS**

Increased awareness of VEDA and vestibular disorders.