

Let's recap.....

Welcome to the second edition of the Quality Framework Update. In the 2009 edition we described how National Disability Services Northern Territory (NDS NT) has been funded by the Department of Health and Families' Aged and Disability Program to develop a Quality Framework for disability service providers in the Northern Territory. This Framework will have a strong focus on quality improvement and support for the sector through the provision of information, support and training for service providers to ensure quality outcomes for the people that access their services.

What's been happening?

Information is now accessible through the NDS NT website; free training has been provided in both Darwin and Alice Springs and the building of a profile of service providers funded under the Aged and Disability Program has commenced.

The Quality Framework Steering Committee has met regularly since July 2009 and provides support to the project through maintaining those very important links within the sector and providing advice on critical phases of the project. Members of the Committee are:

- Kristy Carter, CEO, TEAMhealth
- Robyn Westerman, Practice Leader, Aged and Disability Program, Department of Health and Families
- Greg McMahon, CEO, Carpentaria Disability Services
- Ian Bodill, CEO, East Arnhem Shire
- Lynda Jarvis, Senior Manager – Central Australia, Aged and Disability Program, Department of Health and Families
- Penny Fleming, Assistant Director, CASA
- Joyce Deering, Chairperson, Integrated disAbility Action Inc.

Next Phase

35 non government organisations identified by the Department of Health and Families (DHF) will be contacted next week to participate in a survey of quality systems used by disability service providers in the Northern Territory. Desktop research into quality frameworks and resources that have been successfully implemented in other states will be complemented by interviews with key players, including representatives from the non-government sector, in those jurisdictions during February and March 2010.

Survey of Quality Systems

In November 2009 NDS NT sought expressions of interest from suitably qualified organisations and individuals to undertake a survey of the quality systems used by disability service providers in the Northern Territory. Matrix on Board, which has offices in Darwin and Alice Springs, was the successful applicant. Matrix on Board's Senior Project Manager, Michelle Taylor, will take the lead role in conducting the survey.

NDS NT and Matrix on Board understand that some organisations may have formal quality systems in place while others may be considering what type of quality system would suit their needs. However, we know that good practice can often be present across a range of management and operational areas without necessarily being part of a recognised quality system. Michelle is keen to hear those stories and also of your ideas on how good practice can be incorporated into a quality framework to ensure that there is a strong client centred focus.

Nick Hubbard from our office has contacted all service providers participating in the survey this week to confirm that we have the correct organisational contact person and correspondence details for the survey. Please give Nick a call on 89410634 if you need to make any changes to your contact information.

Some Food for Thought

“The very fact that service quality isn't a fixed reality but rather one that can be improved is important to consider. Its nature is malleable and this gives those that care about quality the chance to influence it for the better.”

(Kendrick, M., (1997), *'The Leadership Challenge of Service Quality'* at www.kendrickconsulting.org, 28 January 2010).

Hello Michelle!



Michelle Taylor has worked in corporate, government and not-for-profit organisations in Australia, Mexico, the United States and Thailand. She began as a trouble shooter in finance and administration and moved on to strategic planning and relationship management. In 2009 Michelle completed an 18 month assignment as a volunteer Management Advisor for an indigenous NGO in the Solomon Islands and returned to Australia with a strong commitment to helping not-for-profit organisations bring about positive change. Michelle Taylor moved to Darwin in late 2009 as Matrix on Board's Senior Project Manager for Financial and Capacity Building Services.

The National Quality Framework for Disability Services in Australia

Concurrent to the development of the Northern Territory Quality Framework Project, work is also underway at the national level on the development of a National Quality Framework for Disability Services in Australia, as required under the National Disability Agreement. The aim of a National Quality Framework is to promote and drive a nationally consistent approach to improving the quality of services, with a strong focus on improving outcomes for people who use these services. The development of the National Quality Framework will include a review of the National Disability Standards for Disability Services (1993). Consultations will be held in all states and territories during 2010. Information regarding consultations in the Northern Territory will be included in NDS NT Quality Framework Updates as it becomes available.

NDS NT Governance

In November 2009 the NDS NT Committee was restructured to more effectively meet the needs of NDS NT members and the broader Northern Territory disability sector. NDS NT now operates with a Divisional Committee of seven elected members. Members of the Divisional Committee are: Kirsty Carter (TEAMhealth); Vicki O'Halloran (Somerville Community Services); Greg McMahon (Carpentaria Disability Services); Peter Joyce (HPA Incorporated); Elizabeth Reid (National Disability Liaison Officer); Joe Smith (Step Out Community Access); Penny Fleming (CASA).

The Divisional Committee meets bi-monthly. Regional meetings will be held on alternative months in Darwin, Katherine and Alice Springs, with the first regional meeting being convened in Alice Springs on 16 March 2010. Regional meetings will be open to all disability service providers and will focus on the sharing of information on national and local initiatives, as well as providing a forum for networking and identifying areas of best practice in our sector. Guest speakers will be a feature of the regional meetings.

NDS Membership

National Disability Services is Australia's peak body for disability services. Its members include over 650 not-for-profit organisations located in all states and territories, in rural, regional and metropolitan areas. For more information on the benefits associated with NDS membership please give Jenny a call at the Darwin office or contact Emerson Riley, Membership Services Officer, in our National Office on 02 62833205.

Next Update

The next Quality Framework Update will be posted on the NDS NT website in March 2010. In the meantime please don't hesitate to call into the NDS NT office for a chat if you are in Darwin or contact Jenny by email on jenny.upton@nds.org.au or telephone on 8941 0634.

Contact Details:

Jenny Upton
Manager
National Disability Services Northern Territory
jenny.upton@nds.org.au
Ph: 08 8941 0634 Fax 08 8941 0636

Level 1, Suite 5
43 Cavenagh Street
Darwin NT 0800
GPO Box 4521
Darwin NT 0801