

NDS Quality and Safeguards Sector Readiness Project

Factsheet: Accessible and inclusive information provision and communications.

This factsheet provides an overview and some resources which relate to providing information and creating communications which are accessible and inclusive. This includes:

- **Communication – A Human Right**
- **Communication and information provision in NDIS supports and services**
- **Creating accessible and inclusive communications**
- **Language Interpreting Supports.**

Communication – A Human Right

All members of society have the same Human Rights. One right is the [Freedom of information, opinion and expression](#).

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) specifies measures which are needed to ensure people with disability are able to enjoy these rights.

Article 21 of the CRPD outlines measures which relate to communication, these include:

- Providing information to persons with disabilities in accessible formats and technologies appropriate to different kinds of disabilities in a timely manner and without additional cost.
- Accepting and facilitating the use of sign languages, Braille, augmentative and alternative communication, and all other accessible means, modes and formats of communication of their choice by persons with disabilities.
- Recognising and promoting the use of sign languages.



The CRPD defines communication as including:

“...languages, display of text, Braille, tactile communication, large print, accessible multimedia as well as written, audio, plain-language, human-reader and augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication, including accessible information and communication technology.” [Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities \(un.org\)](#)

What is augmentative and alternative modes?

Augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) is when a person uses something other than speech to communicate. For more information see [Speech Pathology Australia - Augmentative and Alternative Communication \(AAC\)](#).

Communication and information provision in NDIS supports and services.

The [NDIS Practice Standards and Quality Indicators](#) provide clear guidance to registered providers delivering supports and services. They state that communication with people with disability, should be responsive to their needs and information should be provided in the language, mode of communication and terms which the person is most likely to understand.

The [NDIS Commission Code of Conduct](#), which applies to all providers of NDIS supports and services, requires providers to 'communicate in a form, language and manner that enables people with disability to understand the information and make known their will and preferences'.



Questions to consider.

Does your organisation:

- Identify communication needs and preferences with people with disability and review these preferences regularly?
- Have information that relates to provision of supports and services or have a process to have materials developed if needed, in alternative formats such as Easy Read, Braille, videos or other alternative formats.
- Support workers with resources and training to build their capacity, to use a range of communication tools such as assistive technology, email, text and symbols.
- Provide the same workers consistently to people with disability wherever possible, to support relationship building and understanding the person with needs?

Creating accessible and inclusive internal and external communications.

Communication is an essential human need as well as a human right. It is a shared responsibility for us all to ensure that the information we communicate is accessible and inclusive.

The Australian Human Rights Commission states “Accessible and inclusive communication means ensuring that messaging and information meets the communication needs of everyone within the community so that the target audience, whether workers or customers can access, understand and engage with the information you are sharing”.

Additionally, for an organisation to be confident that the information they provide, both formally and informally, is reaching its intended audience, different formats, channels, and resources need to be considered.



Resources to assist with developing accessible and inclusive communications.

There are many resources available to provide guidance in subjects such as using plain and inclusive language, establishing communication needs in the workplace, different channels for communications and developing accessible and inclusive content. The resources below are a good starting point. They offer guidance, useful tools and checklists for you to use and share with your teams.

- [Creating accessible and inclusive communications - IncludeAbility](#)
- [How do we ensure our meetings are inclusive? Video and Tip sheet - Voice at the Table](#)
- [Disability-Inclusive Communications Guidelines - United Nations](#)
- [What do I say? A guide to language about disability - PWDA](#)
- [Communicate Clearly - A Guide to Plain English - 26 TEN](#)
- [Person-Centred Practice Across Cultures resources - NDS](#)



Questions to consider.

- Is the organisation’s website accessible?
- Are the organisation’s feedback mechanisms for people who access services, readily available and accessible?
- Are the systems and technology used in the workplace accessible to all people with disability who work for the organisation - now or in the future?
- Do resources, policies and procedures meet the guidelines for accessible and inclusive communications? Do they provide clear guidance for workers who develop communications on the expectations of the organisation?
- Are there policies and processes in place to ensure that our recruitment process is accessible to people with disability?

Language Interpreting Supports

Under the NDIS Code of Conduct and NDIS Practice Standards, NDIS Providers and support workers have an obligation to support effective communication, this includes offering and facilitating language interpreting supports where required. The NDIA [Language interpreting services for providers](#) details information on how providers can register for and access language interpreting services for providers.

The Translating and Interpreting Services (TIS) National is an interpreting service provided by Department of Home Affairs. They have produced some useful tips of working with interpreters which can be found here: [Working with TIS National interpreters](#).

The Victorian Government have produced [Working with interpreters](#) which includes guidance for working with Auslan Interpreters.

NDS have developed [Working effectively with Interpreters](#) as part of the Person-Centred Practice Across Cultures resources which can be used as a self-paced training resource for your workforce.





Questions to consider.

- How does the organisation support workers for whom English is a second language?
- If there are any additional needs, are they discussed as part of their ongoing support and supervision?
- Do managers discuss preferences with their team members – for example how they would like to receive feedback?

References and resources

NDIS Commission

NDIS Commission - [NDIS Commission Code of Conduct webpage](#)

NDIS Commission - [NDIS Practice Standards and Quality Indicators](#)

NDIS Commission - [Supporting effective communication](#)

Accessible and Inclusive Communications

26 Ten - [Communicate Clearly - A Guide to Plain English - 26 TEN](#)

Australian Human Rights Commission, IncludeAbility - [Creating accessible and inclusive communications](#)

Voice at the Table - [How do we ensure our meetings are inclusive? Video and Tip sheet](#)

United Nations - [Disability-Inclusive Communications Guidelines](#)

PWDA - [PWDA - What do I say? A guide to language about disability](#)

Language and interpreting resources

NDS - [Person-Centred Practice Across Cultures resources](#)

NDIA - [Language interpreting services for providers](#)

Translating and Interpreting Services (TIS) - [Working with TIS National interpreters](#)

Victorian Government - [Working with interpreters](#)

NDS - [Working effectively with Interpreters](#)



Please note: This resource was developed in May 2023 by the NDS Quality and Safeguards Sector Readiness Project. The resource is general in nature and is provided as a guide only. NDS believes that the information contained in this publication is correct at the time of publishing, however, NDS reserves the right to vary any of this publication without further notice. The information provided in this publication should not be relied upon instead of other legal, medical, financial, or professional advice. Please always refer to online documents for the latest versions including the NDIS Practice Standards and advice to providers on the Code of Conduct.

