

NDS Quality and Safeguards Sector Readiness Project

Factsheet: What is Policy to Practice and Why is it Important?

Policy to Practice is a term used to describe the steps involved in turning policies, procedures and other guidelines into the work practices and behaviours demonstrated by your workers.

This factsheet provides information on:

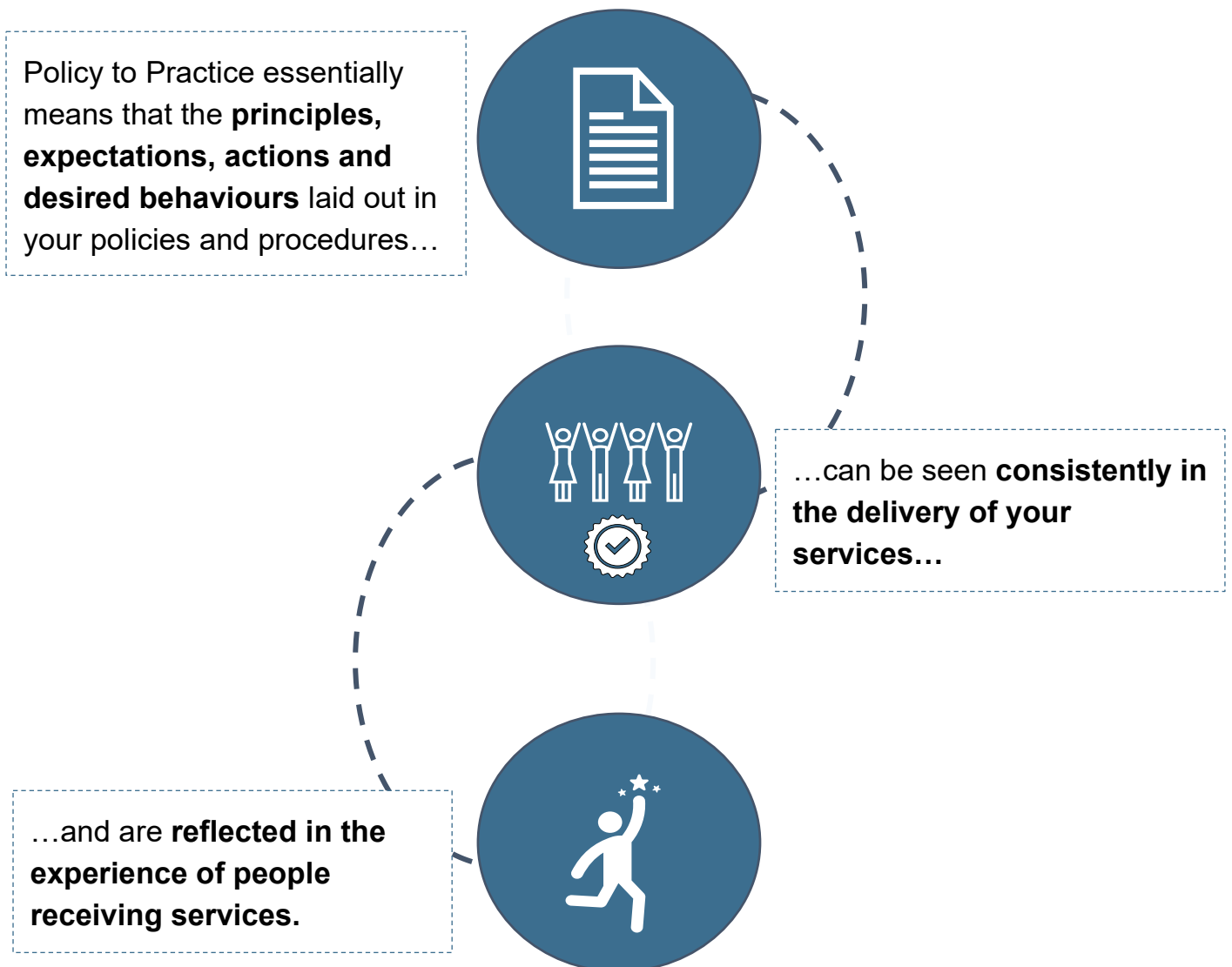
- **What is Policy to Practice and Why is it Important?**
- **Policy, Practice and the NDIS Code of Conduct**
- **Documentation – Is it clear, complete and easy to access?**

The information is general in nature and is a starting point and should be used and adapted to meet the size and scope of your organisation and the supports you provide.

What is Policy to Practice and Why is it Important?

Policy to practice is a term used to describe the steps involved in turning policies, procedures and other guidelines into the work practices and behaviours demonstrated by your workers.

Registered providers are required to develop policies and procedures, that reflect the NDIS Practice Standards and the NDIS Code of Conduct. Unregistered providers are also accountable to the NDIS Code of Conduct.



This can be a difficult thing to achieve and maintain oversight of.

It requires constant action, support, monitoring and a considerable ongoing investment.

Key Terms

Policies set the guiding principles of based on the values of the organisation. They provide and overarching outline of what is expected and aim to guide the organisations decision making.

Procedures are more specific about action than policies. They are work instructions which outline the actions and steps that need to be taken in different situations or tasks. They identify roles, responsibilities and expectations around behaviour.

Guidelines, processes and forms support procedures. They are work tools usually aimed at streamlining a task or providing consistency.

Practice refers to the activities workers at all levels carry out when delivering services both **internally** and **externally**.

Internal services	External services
<p>These can be between workers or from departments or relate to workers experience of the way they are managed and the leadership of the organisation.</p> <p>Examples of departments who provide internal services in an organisation could be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human Resources, • Work Health and Safety or • Payroll. 	<p>These, for example, are the ones you provide to people with disability and their networks, they include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how you deliver these services, • the actions that are taken and the behaviours displayed by your workers and • the experience people with disability have when engaging with your supports and services.

Policy, Practice and the NDIS Code of Conduct

The [NDIS Code of Conduct](#) (the Code) is a key part of the NDIS Commission Quality and Safeguarding framework, and it applies to all providers of NDIS supports and services.

This includes:

- Registered NDIS providers
- Unregistered NDIS providers
- NDIS partners in the community, such as Local Area Coordinators
- Any other person or organisation who would be recognised as a NDIS provider under the National Disability Insurance Scheme Rules 2018.

The Code is designed to promote a safe and skilled workforce by setting out acceptable conduct and providing guidance for NDIS providers and their workers.

It requires NDIS providers and their workers to respect the rights of people with disability, to prevent harm and respond appropriately if harm occurs.

In doing this, the NDIS Commission expect all providers to consider **how** they deliver supports and services. To comply with the Code of Conduct means not only to have the **right capabilities** but also the **right attitudes**.

The [NDIS Code of Conduct - Guidance for Providers](#) outlines examples to assist providers to consider how the code applies in practice and actions to take when breaches in the code occur.

“Providers should use their existing employee engagement, human resource and governance arrangements to ensure their compliance with the Code. This will include considering whether operational policies and procedures, and training activities reflect the Code. Workers are expected to use these policies, procedures and training, in addition to their own professional experience and judgment, to comply with the Code.”

In addition to the NDIS Code of Conduct, [NDIS Practice Standards](#) consistently mention policies and procedures that NDIS registered providers should have in place to govern and

guide their workers, and expectations around assisting the workforce to comply with the Code and Standards through appropriate training and support.

Documentation – Is it clear, complete and easy to access?

A common hurdle with policies and procedures being implemented in practice, can often be the documents themselves.

Having documents which are unclear, do not set the expectations and are not accessible and inclusive can create barriers to implementation.

Review your policies and procedures

Use reflective questions to review the content of your policies and procedures. Examples could be:

1. Are our policies and procedures clear, in plain language, and succinct?
2. Do they reflect the organisations values, purpose, culture and structure?
3. Do they meet the compliance requirements?
4. Do they include clear roles and responsibilities?
5. Do they reflect the people who access our supports and services?
6. Are our policies and procedures standardised, accessible and in formats which can be accessed and understood by all of our workforce?
7. Do we distribute and store our policies and procedures in a way that is accessible to the people who need to access them?



It's important to get feedback from people with disability and their networks, and your workers as part of your review of your policies and procedures. This can help you to understand the experience of the people receiving your services and the people delivering them.

For ideas and more information, see NDS Sector Readiness Policy to Practice resources:

- [Supporting your workforce](#)
- [Involving people with disability and their networks](#)

Please note: This resource was reviewed in August 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.

