## NDS LogoStandard 1 staff development resource

## Reflecting on safeguarding

The National Disability Standards refers to reflection as activities that individuals, teams and organisations undertake to learn from practice and action.

Reflective practice encourages you to think about your actions, values and beliefs and how these impact on your interactions with others. It means:

* Learning to pay attention – listening to ourselves
* Coming face to face with our assumptions
* Noticing patterns
* Changing what we see and the way we see.

Reflective practice is an important tool to support continuous improvement in our organisation. This resource aligns with the National Standards for Disability Services and reflects the principles of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and the NDIS Quality and Safeguarding Framework.

The aim of this resource is for staff to reflect on what safeguarding looks like in practice and how best to safeguard people with disability when providing support. This reflection can be completed at any time by an individual and may be followed by a conversation with your manager. It can also be a facilitated discussion as part of formal organisational training or other development opportunities such as team meetings and supervision. It can also provide an opportunity for senior staff or team leaders to play a leadership role in coaching and mentoring others and can help cultivate a learning culture.

There are three case studies, reflection questions and key messages for each case study outlined below. Each case study is provided to a group of two or more people for reflection and consideration.

The role of the facilitator (team leader or key staff member) is to lead the group discussion, ensure that group members listen respectfully to each other and support the group to discuss ways to improve safeguarding and reduce risks to people with disability. The facilitator can prepare for this activity by reading this document and ensuring they understand their organisation’s own safeguarding policy and procedures.

**Case study 1**

Lisa and Tom have been married for 10 years. They both have an intellectual disability. The State Administrative Tribunal appointed the Public Trustee as plenary administrator of Tom and Lisa’s finances because there were concerns about Tom mismanaging their finances. Some friends of the couple thought Tom was financially abusing Lisa. Lisa and Tom are a strong couple who love and care for each other. They want to regain control over their finances.

What can you do as Lisa and Tom’s support worker and what can your organisation do to:

* Assist Lisa and Tom to achieve their goal
* Put safeguards in place
* Use this experience to implement positive changes in your organisation.

**Key messages for case study 1**

The facilitator will listen to reflections and/or ideas and link them with the following messages. We can:

* Support Lisa and Tom to achieve their goal without making any judgements of their capacity to manage their finances.
* Review their support plan to identify, goals, roles and responsibilities. Lisa and Tom will decide who they want involved in the planning process.
* Ask them if they want to be linked with an independent advocacy agency or financial counsellor.
* Support them to gain the knowledge and skills to manage their own finances.
* Assist them to gather the evidence to be presented at any future hearing with the State Administrative Tribunal.
* Develop guidelines on how to support people in similar situations and share the learnings with all staff without mentioning Tom and Lisa’s name to protect their privacy.

**Case study 2**

Sarah is a self-determined woman living in the community. Sarah is 63, cannot move her arms, communicates with gestures and has no natural safeguards. Sarah needed emergency surgery because she fell and broke her hip.

When arriving at hospital it was identified that Sarah has no next of kin or any person to make decisions on her behalf if needed. This situation lead to a distant family member appointed as next of kin. This person started making decisions on what was in Sarah’s best interest and against Sarah’s wishes. Consequently, Sarah had a Percutaneous Endoscopic Gastrostomy (PEG) tube put into her stomach to feed her and was moved into a nursing home.

Sarah feels that her freedom and the choices that she has fought for all her life have been taken away. Sarah wants the PEG removed and to return to her own home.

What can you do as Sarah’s support worker and what can your organisation do to:

* Assist Sarah to achieve her goals
* Put safeguards in place
* Use this experience to implement positive changes in your organisation.

**Key messages for case study 2**

The facilitator will listen to reflections and/or ideas and link them with the following messages. We can:

* Review Sarah’s support plan to identify goals, roles and responsibilities. sSarah will decide who she wants involved in the planning process.
* Ask Sarah if she wants to be linked with an independent advocacy agency, counselling services or the Office of the Public Advocate.
* With Sarah’s permission get in contact with the relevant government agency, such as NDIS or the Department of Communities, and let them know of Sarah’s situation and her goals.
* Develop guidelines on how to support people in similar situations and share the learnings with all staff without mentioning Sarah’s name to protect her privacy.

**Case study 3**

Alice is a young woman in her twenties who lives with her parents. Alice has cerebral palsy which affects her speech and mobility. Alice wants to be a photographer, make friends and fall in love with someone that shares in her interests. Alice parents are concerned that her goals are unrealistic and could put her in a dangerous situation.

What can you do as Alice’s support worker and what can your organisation do to:

* Assist Alice’s to achieve her goals
* Put safeguards in place
* Use this experience to implement positive changes in your organisation.

**Key messages for case study 3**

The facilitator will listen to reflections and/or ideas and link them with the following messages. We can:

* Review Alice’s support plan to identify goals, roles and responsibilities. Alice will decide who she wants involved in the planning process.
* Assist Alice to connect with photography and social groups for young adults in her community.
* Ask Alice if she wants to be linked with an independent advocacy agency, family mediation service, counselling services or peer support groups.
* Link Alice’s parents with organisations such as CarersWA for support.
* Develop guidelines on how to support people in similar situations and share the learnings with all staff without mentioning Alice name to protect her privacy.

**External resources and links**

* [National Standards for Disability Services](https://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/disability-and-carers/standards-and-quality-assurance/national-standards-for-disability-services)
* [National Quality and Safeguarding Framework](https://www.dss.gov.au/disability-and-carers/programs-services/for-people-with-disability/ndis-quality-and-safeguarding-framework)
* [Office of the Public Advocate in Western Australia](http://www.publicadvocate.wa.gov.au/)
* [NDS Zero Tolerance free resources](https://www.nds.org.au/resources/zero-tolerance)

[Organisation]

[Policy and procedure on safeguarding]

[Link to resource]