

# Queensland Disability Service Standards

Partners in Quality



10 standards for improving the quality of services in the disability sector

# Queensland Disability Service Standards

## Partners in Quality



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## Message from the Minister



The Queensland Disability Service Standards will enhance the quality of services for people with a disability and give them a greater say in the services they receive.

The standards are the cornerstone of the Beattie Government's *Future Directions for Disability Services* reform process to strengthen safeguards for people with a disability.

The service standards detail the rights of people with a disability in relation to the services they receive.

Each standard has a series of indicators against which services will be independently assessed as part of a certification process. A key element of this process is that the assessment will also include the input of those who receive services.

The quality system will apply to all services funded by Disability Services Queensland as well as those provided by the department.

Under this system quality will be assured in two ways. Firstly, service providers must implement and maintain effective policies and practices that meet service standard indicators for each standard. Secondly, they will undertake an external assessment, which, for the majority of services will be conducted by an independent certification body registered under the Joint Accreditation System of Australia and New Zealand.

An audit-trained service user will be involved in each assessment.

Financial and other assistance is available to service providers to implement the system. In the future, government funding for disability services will be linked to certification.

I acknowledge that most organisations providing care for people with a disability deliver a high quality of service. By working together, service users and providers will ensure consistency of service across the State and a better deal for people with a disability, their families and carers.

*FWPitt*

The Honourable Warren Pitt MP  
**Minister for Communities and Disability Services**

## Service access

**Each person with a disability seeking a service has access to the service on the basis of relative need and within available resources.**

This standard is intended to ensure the service provider implements policies and practices that:

- provide an open and accountable process for prioritising the eligibility and entry needs of potential service users and the service providers' capacity to meet these needs
- define the circumstances in which service users can exit from or no longer have access to the service.

### Service Standard Indicators

- 1.1** The service provider has eligibility criteria and entry rules in place for potential users to access the service based on capacity, available resources and funding.
- 1.2** The service provider adopts and applies non-discriminatory eligibility criteria and entry rules with respect to age, gender, race, culture, religion, and disability, consistent with funding obligations, applicable legislation and purpose of the service.
- 1.3** The service providers entry and exit procedures are fair, equitable and consistently applied.
- 1.4** Service users are provided with information and support to access a family member, independent advocate or other support person of their choice to assist them when entering or exiting a service.
- 1.5** The service provider, in situations where they cannot provide a service to people with a disability, provide information and/or a referral to alternative services - where these exist and might be accessed.

### Individual needs and personal goals are met in the least restrictive way possible and within available resources.

This standard is intended to ensure the service provider implements policies and practices that:

- assist people with a disability in the least restrictive way, to plan, monitor, achieve and review their individual needs and personal goals
- provide flexible support in order to meet the changing needs, goals and aspirations of people with a disability.

#### Service Standard Indicators

- 2.1** A personalised plan is developed with each service user.
- 2.2** The personalised plan for each service user includes a clear articulation of what support will be provided and how the support will be delivered.
- 2.3** The service provider provides opportunities for service users to engage the support of people of their choice in the development of personalised plans.
- 2.4** Each service user and or their nominated support person are provided with a copy of his/her personalised plan in appropriate formats.
- 2.5** The personalised plan of each service user is reviewed within an agreed timeframe.
- 2.6** The health and wellbeing needs of each person is considered in the development of their personalised plans.

### Participation as fully as possible, in decision-making, choice of activities and events in daily life in relation to the services received.

This standard is intended to ensure the service provider implements policies and practices that:

- provide opportunities for service users to make informed decisions and choices on a day-to-day basis according to their individual needs
- incorporate flexible service delivery options, which reflect the ever-changing needs and choices of service users
- aim at a balance between the principles of duty of care and least restrictive alternatives that don't unduly limit the ability of service users to make decisions or take responsibility for their actions
- facilitate access to other support required by service users to adequately represent their needs, views, interests, choices and rights.

#### Service Standard Indicators

- 3.1** The service provider demonstrates responsiveness to the changing needs, aspirations and choices of service users.
- 3.2** The service provider communicates with service users in appropriate formats, to facilitate their informed decision-making and choice.
- 3.3** Service users are provided with information and support to access an independent support person of their choice, to assist them in their decisions, choices and aspirations.
- 3.4** The service provider demonstrates that reasonable care is taken to avoid risks, without unduly limiting the ability of service users to take responsibility for their own decisions and choices.
- 3.5** The service provider demonstrates that when limiting a service user's ability to act on an individual decision or choice, the least restrictive alternative is adopted whenever practicable.

### Recognition of the right to privacy, dignity and confidentiality in all aspects of life.

This standard is intended to ensure the service provider implements policies and practices that:

- comply with the privacy principles contained within relevant legislation
- ensure that service users are treated with dignity and respect in all aspects of their lives
- maintain the confidentiality of all personal information relating to service users.

#### Service Standard Indicators

- 4.1** The service provider has a privacy and confidentiality policy that is consistent with relevant privacy legislation and principles.
- 4.2** The service provider has proactive practices to ensure that the dignity of service users, in relation to their individual needs and circumstances, are respected.
- 4.3** Service users are provided with information regarding the collection, storage, disposal and accessibility of personal information. Refer to service standard 8 Service Management (page 10).
- 4.4** Service users are provided with access to an independent support person of their choice to assist them in all matters relating to the collection, storage, disposal and accessibility of personal information.
- 4.5** The service provider does not disclose personal information about service users without their informed consent. Refer to service standard 8 Service Management.
- 4.6** The service provider has safeguards to ensure that only information, which is relevant to the service/s provided, is collected and stored. Refer to service standard 8 Service Management.

### Support and encouragement to participate and be included in the life of the community.

This standard is intended to ensure the service provider implements policies and practices that:

- provide services and support that facilitates the inclusion of people with a disability into the life of the community.

#### Service Standard Indicators

- 5.1** The service provider develops, implements and reviews support services that progressively build opportunities for inclusion into the local community.
- 5.2** The service provider promotes the use of social networks and informal supports for service users.
- 5.3** The service provider promotes service users' use of local or alternative community services.

## Valued status

### Providing opportunities to develop skills to participate in and achieve valued roles within the community.

This standard is intended to ensure the service provider implements policies and practices that:

- enhance the abilities, skills and opportunities of people with a disability to make valued contributions to the community
- promote a positive image of people with a disability both within the service and the community.

#### Service Standard Indicators

- 6.1** The service provider promotes a belief in the ability of people with a disability to fulfil valued roles in the community.
- 6.2** The service provider develops and maintains the skills of service users relevant to their roles in the community.
- 6.3** The service provider promotes opportunities for service users to fulfil valued community roles.

## Complaints and disputes

### A proactive approach to complaints and disputes management that safeguards service users/supports from retributive action when raising complaints.

This standard is intended to ensure the service provider implements policies and practices that:

- encourage the raising of complaints regarding any area of dissatisfaction with service delivery, without any fear of reprisal
- create an atmosphere whereby complaints are viewed positively as an opportunity for improvement
- provide an accessible and accountable process for the effective resolution of complaints that service users/supports and other stakeholders understand and have confidence in
- enable service users/supports and other stakeholders, to access appropriate support during a complaint or dispute process to ensure the satisfactory closure of the complaint through an open and transparent process.

#### Service Standard Indicators

- 7.1** The service provider encourages the raising of complaints by service users/supports regarding any areas of dissatisfaction with service delivery.
- 7.2** Service users/supports have no fear of retributive action in raising complaints.
- 7.3** The service provider has a complaints management process provided in appropriate formats that is accessible and transparent.
- 7.4** Service users are provided with information and support to access an independent person of their choice to assist them through a complaint process.
- 7.5** The service provider facilitates the resolution of complaints in a timely manner and in accordance with current policies and procedures.
- 7.6** The service provider demonstrates that the process for complaints handling leads to consideration of improvements within the service.

### Effective corporate governance through sound and visible management systems and practices.

This standard is intended to ensure that the service provider implements policies and practices that demonstrate:

- accountability and responsibility are clearly aligned to legislative requirements and described in relevant policies and procedures
- a sound and visible management system based on the Queensland Disability Service Standards is established, implemented and maintained at all times for the benefit of all service users and stakeholders
- adequate resources are provided to ensure high standards of service performance and delivery to all users and stakeholders.

#### Service Standard Indicators

- 8.1** The service outlet's corporate governance structure, values, strategies, objectives and practices demonstrate effective compliance with all relevant legislative, financial, administrative, service performance and delivery requirements.
- 8.2** The service outlet demonstrates effective compliance with human resource management systems and practices that includes, but may not be limited to: relevant industrial relations and workplace health and safety legislation, agreements, or awards.
- 8.3** The service outlet's information management system for documents and records in both electronic and hard copy form is established, implemented and maintained in a manner that meets legislative and Australian Standards requirements.
- 8.4** The service outlet demonstrates effective service compliance, performance and delivery outcomes based on decisions from internal monitoring, review and assessment practices.
- 8.5** The service outlet demonstrates effective service performance and delivery through a continuous improvement model.

### Upholding the legal and human rights of each person with a disability and taking action to prevent and/or respond to allegations of abuse and neglect.

This standard is intended to ensure the service provider implements policies and practices that:

- are underpinned by the principles contained in relevant Commonwealth and State Legislative and Human Rights instruments
- empower and support service users to exercise their human rights enshrined within the principles of the Disability Services Act Queensland 1992
- take a pro-active duty-of-care approach to the prevention of abuse and neglect of service users.

#### Service Standard Indicators

- 9.1** The service provider has current policies and practices protecting the rights of service users that are consistent with Commonwealth and State legislation and relevant human rights instruments.
- 9.2** The service provider supports service users/supports in exercising their legal and human rights.
- 9.3** The service provider has effective policies and practices in place that demonstrate prevention of any form of sexual, financial, physical, mental and verbal abuse or neglect.
- 9.4** The service provider has procedures in place for critical incident reporting, that respond in a timely and effective manner to allegations of abuse and neglect.
- 9.5** The service provider has a documented improvement plan detailing strategies for protecting service users from abuse or neglect.

# Staff recruitment, employment and development

**Recruitment, selection and development of paid and unpaid staff that ensures they have the relevant values, skills, knowledge and competencies to support service delivery to service users.**

This standard is intended to ensure the service provider implements policies and practices that ensure:

- suitably qualified staff are recruited, selected and appointed through the implementation of transparent, accountable and robust processes
- staff have the training, competencies, skills and knowledge to provide service users with positive service support and delivery.

### Service Standard Indicators

- 10.1** The service provider carries out transparent, accountable and robust recruitment and selection policies and procedures for all applicants (permanent, temporary, and voluntary) that meet any specified regulatory requirements.
- 10.2** The service provider ensures there are documented position descriptions that are current and consistent with the roles and responsibilities of all paid and unpaid staff.
- 10.3** The service provider provides appropriate and relevant induction to all staff (paid, volunteer, temporary or permanent) to ensure service delivery meets required standards.
- 10.4** The service provider has an ongoing program that identifies the values, skills, knowledge and competencies of each staff member and provides ongoing development opportunities.

# Further information

If you would like further information about the Queensland Disability Service Standards or how the system affects you, please contact:

### Disability Services Queensland

Freecall: 1800 177 120  
 Phone: (07) 3224 8444  
 TTY: 1800 010 222 (free)  
 TTY (telephone typewriter): (07) 3224 8021  
 Fax: (07) 3239 0355  
 Email: dial@disability.qld.gov.au.  
 Web: www.disability.qld.gov.au/quality  
 Postal Address: GPO Box 806  
 Brisbane Qld 4001



### Service providers can also contact:

#### ACROD

Phone: (07) 3366 4366  
 Fax: (07) 3366 4736  
 Email: acrodqld@acrod.org.au  
 Web: www.acrod.org.au  
 Postal Address: PO Box 364  
 Ashgrove Qld 4060



#### Queensland Alliance

Phone: 07 3254 4366  
 Fax: 07 3254 4299  
 Email: info@qldalliance.org.au  
 Web: www.qldalliance.org.au  
 Postal Address: PO Box 1206  
 New Farm QLD 4005

