

Disability Services Commission

Policy for Recreation for People with Disability

1. Keywords

Recreation, person-centred approach, inclusion, individual outcomes, individualised funding.

2. Policy statement

The Commission recognises that recreation is a highly valued and important factor that contributes to the quality of life of all people. Recreation activities can assist individuals to achieve their goals.

Reasonable and necessary funding is provided for individuals to purchase strategies that help achieve their documented goals. Individualised funding will be used wherever possible.

The Commission aims to achieve equitable access to recreation strategies that support an individual's goal attainment.

The policy framework describes and guides how the Commission supports recreation for people with disability by facilitating, developing, providing and purchasing recreation services.

The policy:

- assists in meeting the principles and objectives of the Western Australian Disability Services Act 1993
- aligns to the National Standards for Disability Services provides a guide for purchasing and service / sector development
- supports the strategic directions of the Commission
- provides a definition and statement of purpose for recreation for people with disability.

3. Definitions

Recreation

Recreation is broadly defined as what people choose to do in their free time. The definition encompasses a wide range of recreation and leisure pursuits including sport, art and cultural activities, passive and active pastimes. The principal characteristics are that activities are freely chosen and undertaken by the individual in their free / leisure time.

Through the person-based planning approach, recreation related strategies are often linked with broader individual goals and outcomes. For example, to increase community participation, develop new skills or strengthen an individual's relationships with those around them.

Person centred approach

A person centred approach puts the person with disability first, placing them at the centre of decision making, across planning, funding and support and service arrangements. Supports provided to each person are based on their own wishes, interests, talents, goals and needs which are documented in an individual plan.

Inclusion

Inclusion is defined as belonging, sharing responsibility, contributing and being of value regardless of one's circumstance. For people with disability, inclusion is generally linked to participation within community life.

Individual outcome

The difference or differences for an individual as a result of engaging with a strategy or strategies identified in their plan.

Individualised funding

Individualised funding, for the Commission's purposes, is defined as a package of funding allocated specifically to a person in response to his or her disability related needs. Individualised funding can be managed by an individual or their family / carer; by a disability sector organisation; or management may be shared by the person with disability, their family and carers and a disability sector organisation (also known as shared management).

4. Background and context

The Commission has provided funding to support recreation for people with disability for many years. A policy framework for recreation services was endorsed in June 2001.

The introduction of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) in July 2013 reinforced the move to individualised planning and funding. New National Standards for Disability Services also came into effect from 1 July 2014.

In Western Australia, a state based approach to the NDIS is also being trialled in addition to the national model. From 1 July 2014, WA NDIS My Way has implemented an individualised planning approach that identifies a person's goals and strategies to achieve them using natural, community supports and funded supports where required. Anyone seeking funding is required to have an individualised plan. Funded supports identified in the plan must meet a range of criteria, including being reasonable and necessary¹. Individualised funding packages are reviewed regularly and renewable.

The previous version of the policy framework was endorsed in December 2013. A review of recreation services undertaken in 2013-2014 resulted in changes being adopted in February 2015 with regard to individualised funding, choice and control and improving and supporting individual outcomes.

5. Principles

The following principles are in addition to the principles contained in the Disability Services Act 1993 and the National Standards for Disability Services and the Commission's Individualised Funding Policy.

- **Inclusion**
 - People with disability are valued members of society and have the right to be included and participate fully in community life
 - The Commission maintains that recreation activities must hold a primary purpose of enhancing the lives of people with disability through increased community participation and inclusion, increased wellbeing and the development of new skills
 - Specific focus will be assigned to supporting inclusion where an individual's functional ability or location forms a barrier to becoming included into mainstream services and activities.

- **Person-centred Approach**
 - Recreation services need to recognise people as individuals with unique and diverse abilities, beliefs, culture, preferences, aspirations and changing needs
 - All people with disability and their families and carers can contribute to, and participate in, the planning and delivery of recreation activities and pursuits of their choice
 - A person centred approach is required of any Commission supported or funded recreation activity.

- **Funding for recreation strategies**
 - Funding for individualised recreation will be considered in the context of the holistic support needs of the individual
 - Recreation activities will be purchased using individualised funding wherever possible
 - Funding for recreation strategies will be reasonable and necessary. It will also be reviewable and renewable
 - In alignment with the NDIS and WA NDIS My Way, funding for recreation strategies should not duplicate sources of funding and support normally provided by other mainstream agencies.

- **Commission support for improving inclusion outcomes**
 - The Commission recognises the Department of Sport and Recreation as the lead government agency in promoting, developing and supporting inclusive sport and active recreation at all levels².
 - The Commission will provide advice and support wherever possible to assist the Department of Sport and Recreation in this role. This may include specific purpose payments to providers by the Commission for the development of sustainable inclusive practices in the recreation or disability sector. These will not be limited to a specific type of recreation.
 - The Commission encourages partnerships at all levels which support the role of mainstream services in meeting the demands for inclusive recreation into the future.

6. Eligibility

This policy framework applies to people with disability who meet the criteria in the Commission's Eligibility Policy.

6. NDIS Alignment

This policy is reflective of the objectives, principles and service standards referred to in the Western Australian Disability Services Act 1993.

The principles for individualised funding are consistent with NDIA NDIS and the WA NDIS My Way trial. In particular, this policy supplements, and is consistent with, the broader WA NDIS My Way – Operational Policy – Funded Supports in a Plan and Responsibilities for Supports – WA NDIS My Way and Mainstream Government Agencies. The funding principles of ‘reasonable and necessary’ criteria apply.

7. Objectives

The objectives of the Commission in supporting and funding recreation for people with disability are to:

- facilitate greater choice and control for people with disability to participate in meaningful recreation activities of their choice
- align the Commission’s approach to disability recreation with the NDIS and WA NDIS My Way models
- progress outcomes relating to the National Disability Strategy by working collaboratively with mainstream agencies that fund activities for all community members.

8. Outcomes

The Commission believes that the following should apply to any service type that involves recreation services as a support strategy:

- People with disability as users of recreation services are facilitated to access and participate in recreation activities of their choice. People with disability are included in their local neighbourhoods and communities.
- Services facilitate the development of natural support networks, relationships and friendships.
- Disability recreation providers are encouraged to develop strong relationships and partnerships with mainstream services to support improved inclusion outcomes for those services.
- Disability recreation providers have contemporary service delivery models.
- Commission funding is used to support, develop or build the capacity of individuals to participate in mainstream recreation activities.
- Commission funding for recreation is based on meeting reasonable and necessary disability related needs.

9. Consultation

The review of recreation services conducted across 2013 and 2014 included consultations with funded recreation providers and the Department of Sport and Recreation. These have informed the development of the Commission’s policy approach.

10. Implementation Strategies

Under this policy framework, service providers wanting to provide recreation services after June 2016 require appointment to the Commission’s Individually Funded Services Panel.

This policy framework operates in a transition period, and following the conclusion of the NDIS trial and WA NDIS My Way trials, further review may be required.

The development of Information, Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC) supports and funding within the NDIS will inform the approach to recreation funding once the trials are complete.

The Commission will continue to support people with disability to participate in recreation through:

- Access and inclusion- Under the Disability Services Act 1993, State Government agencies and local governments have a responsibility to develop and implement Disability Access and Inclusion Plans which aim to ensure that people with disability are able to access community recreation services and facilities which are available to other community members.
- Community support and education- Community support and education strategies aim to enhance community understanding and acceptance of people with disability as equal members of Western Australian society. The Commission's community support and education activities include:
 - public promotional campaigns in support of the Count Me In strategy
 - occasional grants to community organisations and local government to increase participation and inclusion
 - working with the media to ensure that positive images of people with disability are promoted.

Local Area Coordinators will continue to provide advice on recreation services within local areas and highlight opportunities for community participation. The Localised Decision Making process also offers a flexible way to support an individual, which in some circumstances may apply to recreation goals.

11. Related Policies and Guidelines

- Western Australian Disability Services Act (DSA) 1993 and Regulations
- National Standards for Disability Services (cited in DSA)
- WA NDIS My Way Planning Framework
- WA NDIS My Way Operational Policy – Funded Supports in the Plan
- Delivering Community Services in Partnership Policy 2011
- Fair Play Strategic Framework for Inclusive Sport and Recreation

12. Funding or Resource Implications

There is no additional funding or resource implications attached to this policy.

13. Communication

This policy will be:

- communicated to Commission staff through directorate communication processes
- accessible through the Commission's intranet and internet.

14. Evaluation and Review

This policy operates in a transition period, and there will be a need to revise the policy to confirm the approach to recreation services following the conclusion of the NDIS trials and the finalisation of the ILC scope under the NDIS.

For further information contact:
Wendy Murray
Executive Director, Strategy

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¹ 'Reasonable and necessary' are defined in Section 26I in the Disability Services Act 1993. Refer to WA NDIS My Way – Operational Policy – Funded Supports in the Plan – Reasonable and Necessary for further information about the WA NDIS My Way planning and funding process.

² See www.dsr.wa.gov.au The Department of Sport and Recreation Fair Play Strategic Framework, Government of Western Australia 2006 p5