



Disability Services Commission

Western Australian National Disability Insurance Scheme (WA NDIS) Operational Policy

General Conduct of Staff in WA NDIS

1. Keywords

Conduct, staff, ethics, integrity, equality, inclusive, decision making, communication

2. Policy statement

This policy outlines the principles for general conduct of WA NDIS staff working in the WA NDIS trial.

3. Principles

People with disability are individuals who have the inherent right to respect for their human worth and dignity, without discrimination and with equality of opportunity.

Activities and services are to be designed and administered so as to be sensitive and responsive to the individual and the diverse needs of all people with disability taking into account age, gender, religion, Aboriginality, cultural or linguistically diverse backgrounds, developmental needs, and geographic location.

WA NDIS will be administered in a timely manner and communication will be sensitive and accurate.

4. Introduction

People with disability participating in WA NDIS may require support and assistance, appropriate to their needs, to achieve positive outcomes. A Local Coordinator can provide this support and assistance. In all their interactions with people with disability, their families and carers, Local Coordinators will:

- demonstrate respect;
- recognise the person's valued role in the community; and
- support individual choice, control and decision making.

All employees of the Disability Services Commission, including Local Coordinators, are bound by the Code of Personal Conduct and the Public Sector Commission Code of Ethics. These Codes set out the standards of conduct and personal integrity that are expected.

6. Implementation

Implementation will be by Local Coordinators through their support of individuals, their families and/or carers by providing assistance to access information, plan for the future, participate in their community and identify local supports and services.

Communication

Local Coordinators will communicate clearly to people with disability, their families, carers and other relevant individuals or agencies in a way that is accessible and appropriate to individual needs.

Communication with the individual will be conducted in a respectful, sensitive and inclusive manner and be appropriate for the person's needs. Local Coordinators will be mindful of age, gender, religion, Aboriginality, cultural and linguistic diversity, developmental needs, and/or geographical location of the individual and will interact accordingly. For example, Local Coordinators will consider if Auslan or other language services, or assistive technology, is required to support communication with WA NDIS.

The mode of communication needs to be sensitive to the particular needs of the person. Communication may be provided in both verbal and written or visual form. Local Coordinators will explain the communication formats and other information and ensure these are clearly understood. Information or decisions, including reviewable decisions, will generally be provided in writing, as well as communicated verbally to the person.

The role of families, carers and other support people is valued and encouraged, as the natural supports of a person with disability enhances achievement of positive outcomes. Local Coordinators will maintain effective communication with the person with disability and their supporters.

Central to WA NDIS is the facilitation of an individual's meaningful choice, control and decision making. As such, Local Coordinators will work in partnership with the person, not on their behalf. Processes exist for children, and adults with reduced decision making capacity, to enable others to make decisions on their behalf and in their best interests. See also WA NDIS Operational Policy – Supported Decision-Making.

Process of decision making

In making decisions, Local Coordinators will apply the relevant policies and comply with all legal requirements. Some procedural direction is included in the Disability Services Act and Regulations such as timeframes and criteria. A Local Coordinator can only make a decision if they have the delegated authority to do so and have no conflict of interest (refer to the Delegation Framework for Approval of WA NDIS Plan Funding).

Local Coordinators will comply with Commission and WA NDIS policies. Policies are designed to ensure the effective implementation of legislation and inter-government agreements. Any proposed departure from policy must be fully discussed and agreed with

the line manager. The decision and rationale must be documented. The Executive Director, Local Operations has the authority to approve out-of-policy requests in relation to WA NDIS individualised funding matters. Approval for out of policy requests in relation to other matters will be referred in the first instance to the Executive Director, Policy and Planning.

In addition to the above, and before proceeding to making the decision, the Local Coordinator:

- identifies and ensures compliance with the prerequisites for the decision;
- obtains the relevant material, information and evidence required in order for the decision to be made; and
- ensures natural justice and procedural fairness is applied in decision making.

The Local Coordinator will consider all the information in reaching their decision given the circumstances of that particular case. This requires the Local Coordinator to apply their skills and experience to make an informed decision.

The decision making process must be documented for all decisions, including the evidence or other material on which those decisions are based and the reasons for the decision, in keeping with the Commission's requirements for record keeping. Documented rationale will be provided to the individual upon request.

7. Related documentation

Code of Personal Conduct 2014, Disability Services Commission

National Standards for Disability Services 2013

WA NDIS Operational Policy – Reviewing and Appealing WA NDIS Decisions

WA NDIS Operational Policy – Supported Decision Making

Guardian and Administration – Principles and Procedures 2013

Policy on Decision Making and Choice 2013

Policy on Privacy, Dignity and Confidentiality 2013

Western Australian Language Services Policy and Guidelines 2014

Improving the Provision of Supports and Services for Aboriginal People with Disability: Policy and Guidelines 2013

Operational Guidelines for Effective Engagement, Communication and Consultation with Families and/or Stakeholders 2013

Public Service Commission - Code of Ethics 2012

WA NDIS Coordination Framework, October 2012

8. Evaluation and review date

30 June 2017, or earlier if required.

For further information contact

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