



Attachment 1: Response to Question on Notice and best practice examples of health information, resources and professional education courses.

Question on notice:

“Are you concerned that people, because their first language may not be English or because they don't have the digital access, are missing out on this core information that they need?”

Family Planning NSW provides information, programs and services to culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities, including those with lower literacy. We have continued to provide these services throughout the pandemic to ensure that people who have lower levels of literacy do not miss out on essential reproductive and sexual health information, education and services.

To assist with responding to this question, we consulted Family Planning NSW's CALD Health Promotion team to provide an overview of the services they have been providing throughout the pandemic.

We have received requests from community organisations we work with that are still operating and providing information to their groups online, often through zoom sessions or Facebook. Online sessions are organized by the requesting groups or organisations using online platforms their members are familiar with and those groups generally provide support to their members to access the online events or recordings. Our educators use a range of strategies to ensure information is presented in a way that will support effective communication, such as using visual aids, plain English and bilingual resources where available.

Some examples of these requests and how we have provided accessible information during the COVID-19 period are:

- An online Women's Health Week event – we have been invited to present as a guest speaker to provide essential reproductive and sexual health information and services.
- An upcoming education session on cervical screening and breast health with a CALD mothers group will be done over zoom.
- During the pandemic in 2020, we did a recorded zoom interview with a CALD youth organisation and provided information on how young people could still access reproductive and sexual health information and services. This was then shared through their social media network.
- In partnership with a community migrant and refugee organisation, we did a series of Facebook live broadcasts that were featured in a private parents group. The group had reach to over 90 people and we covered general information around healthy relationships, contraception and cervical screening.

Additionally, Family Planning NSW clinics remain open for clients who are in need of reproductive and sexual health information and clinical services to access in multiple ways:





- **Appointments in person:** Clients are able to book a face-to-face appointment with our highly skilled doctors and nurses who are trained in communicating with people with low literacy and may access interpreting services when needed for clients with limited English
- **Telehealth appointments** can be arranged through our clinics for people who are unable to attend a clinic in person. Family Planning NSW offers a range of reproductive and sexual health services and pregnancy counselling through telehealth, staffed by experienced doctors, nurses and social workers. Our Sexuality and Disability Service is also available to clients across NSW via telehealth, staffed by allied health workers who can provide specialised assessments and therapeutic support for clients with intellectual disability, autism or acquired brain injury.
- **Talkline service** is available for free via telephone and email, providing confidential health information and advice, staffed by experienced reproductive and sexual health nurses who have skills in communicating with people from a range of language backgrounds and levels of literacy.
- **Family Planning NSW website** provides a wide range of information resources to view online or download. This includes information that has been translated into a variety of local community languages, such as the 'Know Your Health' suite of resources described below.

Best practice examples of health information, resources and professional education courses:

Please utilise hyperlinked titles to view these online resources.

[Supporting decision making tool](#)

Family Planning NSW developed a tool for clinicians to provide guidelines for supporting people with intellectual disability, including those with low literacy and health literacy, to make their own decisions relating to their reproductive and sexual health. Supported decision making is a way to uphold a person's rights. It is a process of assisting a person to understand, consider and communicate their choices. The tool is available as a printed resource and a digital version can also be downloaded from the Family Planning NSW website for clinicians to use during appointments.

[Just Checking](#)

Funded by Cancer Institute NSW and designed by Family Planning NSW, the *Just Checking* project aimed to increase the uptake of cervical, breast and bowel screening by addressing the underlying barriers that prevent people with disability, and those with lower literacy levels, from accessing these services at levels equal to others

This was primarily done by designing resources, including social stories and videos, using easy read. An update of the 'Supporting decision making' tool (above) was also developed to assist health professionals to support people with disability understand, utilise and access preventive cancer screening services, all of which aims to improve the health literacy of people with intellectual disability and those who support them

The project also included development of training for disability support workers and clinicians in accessing preventive cancer screening.



[Planet Puberty](#)

Family Planning NSW works with people with disability to identify current gaps in reproductive and sexual health information, education and service provision, and to ensure our services and programs are inclusive, accessible and relevant to all people.

With the support of the Department of Social Services, we have recently launched [Planet Puberty](#), a website designed in consultation with people with disability and parents and carers of people with disability and autism.

Planet Puberty is a website that provides parents and carers of children with intellectual disability and autism with information, advice and resources to help them support their children through puberty. The website has information on a wide variety of puberty related topics, including hygiene, periods, masturbation, relationships, consent and emotions. The website is also accompanied by a webinar series and a podcast series that enables learning via an alternative to printed resources and information sheets.

[Know Your Health](#) is a suite of resources in easy English and translated into community languages. Family Planning NSW has designed these resources for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds who may speak English as a second language, or have lower levels of health literacy than the wider Australian population. The resources are designed in plain English language and translated into local community languages. They also utilise images to depict health messaging. Our CALD Health Promotion team also designed a bilingual community educator project in which Family Planning NSW provides capacity building training and support to enable bilingual community educators to provide reliable, accurate health education and information to local community members.

[All About Sex resource suite](#)

All About Sex is a series of fact sheets for people with intellectual disability, and those with lower literacy levels, and the people who support them. The fact sheets are easy to read and include illustrations to help people with intellectual disability learn about sexuality and relationships. The fact sheets cover a range of topics including bodies, relationships, sex, pregnancy and reproduction, sexual health and sexual assault.

Professional development programs

Family Planning NSW offers a range of education programs for health professionals, disability workers, youth workers, school teachers and other service providers. These provide professionals with the skills to support their clients and students in the area of reproductive and sexual health and education delivery. All of our courses include strategies for health professionals to build the health literacy of their clients and students, which include people with low literacy. For example, our [Reproductive and Sexual Health-Clinical Accreditation Program](#) course for nurses and midwives includes a section on working effectively with people with disability, informs them about relevant legal and social issues to consider in their practice and ways to use resources listed above, including the 'Supporting decision making' tool, with clients.

Another example is our course for youth sector workers, [The Nitty Gritty Online: Specialised Reproductive and Sexual Health Training for Youth Workers](#), which includes a core module incorporating strategies for effective communication and building health literacy, along with



dedicated modules for working effectively with young people with disability and young people from CALD backgrounds informing course participants of a range of considerations and strategies for people with a range of literacy levels.