

Disability Services Standards, performance indicators and evidence guidelines.

Standard 1: Service Access

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

Policy and program context for disability employment services

Service access is about how a person can enter a disability employment service and the circumstances in which they may exit from, or may no longer have access to, the service.

In terms of entry, the service will need to define their:

- § target group - the group of people whose needs the service is designed or funded to meet, potentially specifying characteristics, such as age, geographical location and the type of needs which can be met;
- § eligibility criteria - the criteria for determining whether a person is part of the service=s target group and therefore eligible to apply to entry the service;
- § entry process - the basis for deciding between applicants when there are more people who want to use the service than there are vacancies available.

Services must be able to demonstrate that their entry processes are non-discriminatory in respect of age, gender, race, culture, religion or disability. This means that the service=s eligibility criteria must not contain any restrictions on entry other than those defined by the service=s target group and contractual obligations. Similarly, the service=s process for allocating priority between eligible applicants should only be based on the relative needs of applicants and the service=s available resources.

In terms of exit processes, your service might need to consider:

- § the circumstances in which consumers may voluntarily leave the service, for example, when they have gained employment or their needs have changed;
- § the circumstances in which consumers may be required to leave the service and the basis on which such decisions may be made, for example when the service can no longer meet their needs;
- § your service=s approach to referrals to other services;
- § what happens to personal information about a consumer when he/she leaves the service; and
- § how the consumer will be involved in decisions about any of these steps.

Standard 1 aims to ensure that entry and exit procedures are fair and equitable and consistently applied.

| <i>Core evidence questions</i> | <i>Signposts</i> | <i>Some examples of evidence</i> |
|---|---|--|
| KPI 1.1 The Service adopts and applies non-discriminatory entry rules in respect of age, gender, race, culture, religion or disability, consistent with the contractual obligations and purpose of the service | | |
| Is the service proactive in ensuring the rules for entry to the Service do not discriminate against any consumers who meet the eligibility criteria | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$ eligibility criteria \$ consumer and referral agency awareness of the rules for entry to the Service \$ application forms / applicant interviews \$ proactive strategies to avoid indirect discrimination | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$ documented eligibility criteria which do not contain any restrictions other than those defined by the service=s target group and contractual obligations \$ examples of publicly available information about the service which contains details of the eligibility criteria \$ information sheets available in a variety of formats suited to the needs of consumers and referral agencies (eg information in different community languages) \$ information sheets which contain explicit statements about non-discrimination \$ forms / interviews only collect information relevant to the eligibility criteria \$ records of assessments include factors considered, reasons for the decision \$ minutes of meetings with referral agencies / consumer groups to discuss the representativeness of the service=s mix of clients and to identify under-represented groups \$ Business Plan contains strategies for targeting >difficult to reach= or under-represented groups |
| KPI 1.2 The Service=s entry and exit procedures are fair and equitable and consistently applied | | |
| Are the service=s entry and exit procedures fair and equitable, and consistently applied? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$ entry procedure \$ exit procedure \$ proactive strategies for promoting entry and exit procedures to consumers \$ staff understanding of entry and exit procedures \$ management monitoring of implementation of entry and exit procedures \$ consumer perceptions of entry and exit procedures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$ documented procedure for entry to the service (application, assessment, offer) \$ documented rules for deciding between applicants when there are more people who want to use the service than there are vacancies available \$ documented procedure for exiting the service (permanent or temporary withdrawal of service, cessation) including the process for dealing with exit decisions made without consumer agreement or consent \$ case notes document exit decisions including factors considered, reasons for the decision, and the actions arising from the decision \$ Consumer Handbook \$ articles in newsletter \$ consumer / advocate feedback on clarity of entry and exit procedures \$ staff can accurately describe entry and exit procedures and how they are used \$ internal audit report \$ minutes of planning meetings to review procedures \$ consumer feedback on the fairness and consistency of entry and exit procedures |

Standard 4: Privacy, dignity and confidentiality

Each service recipient=s right to privacy, dignity and confidentiality in all aspects of his or her life is recognised and respected

Policy and program context for disability employment services

Each service is expected to promote tolerance and respect for consumers= personal needs and circumstances. This relates not just to a service=s legal obligations in the area of privacy, but more fundamentally to the values demonstrated by the service in interacting and communicating with consumers. This includes:

- \$ use of language and terminology within the organisation
- \$ how staff communicate with consumers
- \$ how staff conduct their dealings with consumers (for example, where physical assistance is required, it is provided in such a way as to respect and promote the individual=s dignity)
- \$ how consumers collaborate in service planning and delivery (see Standard 3)

In terms of legal compliance, consumers have a right to privacy and confidentiality consistent with the National Privacy Principles contained in the Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000.

Service providers should be familiar with the National Privacy Principles which cover, among other things, requirements in relation to:

- \$ collection - the service should only collect personal information if that information is necessary for one or more of its functions or activities. The service must take reasonable steps to ensure that the individual is aware of the fact that he or she is able to gain access to the information and the purposes for which the information is collected
- \$ use or disclosure - the service must not use or disclose personal information about an individual for a purpose other than the primary purpose of collection unless the individual has consented to the use or disclosure
- \$ data quality - the service must take reasonable steps to make sure that the personal information it uses or discloses is accurate, complete and up-to-date.
- \$ data security - the service must take reasonable steps to protect the personal information it holds from misuse and loss and from unauthorised access, modification or disclosure
- \$ openness - the service must set out in a document clearly expressed policies on its management of personal information
- \$ disposal - the service must destroy or permanently de-identify personal information if it is no longer needed for any purpose for which it was collected. Destruction of personal information must be conducted under secure conditions.

| <i>Core evidence questions</i> | <i>Signposts</i> | <i>Some examples of evidence</i> |
|--|--|--|
| KPI 4.1 The Service complies with the Privacy Principles of the Commonwealth Privacy Act in order to protect and respect the rights of individual service recipients. The Service does not disclose personal information about service recipients without their informed consent. | | |
| Does the Service ensure that personal information is handled in a manner consistent with the Commonwealth Privacy Principles | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> § privacy and confidentiality policies and procedures § proactive strategies for promoting privacy and confidentiality policies to consumers § staff understanding of privacy and confidentiality procedures § practical implementation of privacy and confidentiality procedures § consumer perceptions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> § documented privacy and confidentiality policies that address, as a minimum, data collection, use/disclosure, security, quality and disposal § records of data disclosure and disposal § management can describe the steps taken to promote consumer awareness of privacy and confidentiality (eg explaining why information is collected and how it may be used) § consumer/advocate feedback on clarity of privacy and confidentiality procedures § staff can accurately describe procedures and how they are used (eg how they obtain informed consent) § records of attendance at training / staff development sessions on privacy § observation during audit that personal information is stored securely (eg client files securely bound, files stored in locked cabinets, no files left on desks) § signed consent / authority to release forms § consumer feedback on the extent to which they feel the service respects and protects their rights to privacy and confidentiality |
| KPI 4.2 The Service promotes tolerance and respect for each service recipients= personal needs and circumstances | | |
| Does the service accept and promote tolerance and respect for each consumers= personal needs and circumstances | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> § management and staff commitment to tolerance and respect § proactive strategies to promote tolerance and respect for individual needs and circumstances § proactive strategies to promote cultural / ethnic / religious sensitivity § consumer perceptions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> § examples of publicly available information about the service which contains statements of the services commitment to tolerance and respect § staff >Code of Conduct= § observations during audit of how staff talk and relate to consumers § records of attendance at training / staff development sessions on handling challenging / difficult behaviour § records of staff attendance at Indigenous cultural awareness training § observations during audit of culturally-diverse posters and literature § consumer feedback on whether they feel respected and treat with dignity |

Standard 12: Protection of human rights and freedom from abuse

The agency acts to prevent abuse and neglect and to uphold the legal and human rights of service recipients

Policy and program context for disability employment services

Firstly, this Standard requires service providers to uphold the legal and human rights of service recipients.

Australia is party to a number of international Agreements and Conventions that require the upholding of basic legal and human rights of all Australians including people with disabilities. These sentiments are also embodied in the Principles and Objectives of the Disabilities Service Act 1986.

The basic legal and human rights that are to be upheld include:

- § respect for human dignity and freedom;
- § equality before the law;
- § privacy;
- § protection against discrimination; and
- § equal opportunity in employment.

Secondly, this Standard requires service providers to be proactive in preventing abuse of its service recipients.

In comparison to the general population, people with a disability are more likely to experience abuse and neglect. There are many forms of abuse, including physical, sexual, psychological, or emotional abuse; constraint and restrictive practices; types of neglect and deprivation. Some forms of abuse may be intentional acts while others are more likely to result from system failures or poor practice.

Services have a responsibility to have in place prevention strategies. Some considerations include:

- § The workplace culture within the service supports valued attitudes
- § Staff have basic competencies in abuse prevention
- § Human resource planning includes monitoring indicators and risks related to abuse
- § Policy guidelines related to abuse prevention are developed based on good practice and are evaluated.

During the certification process, if the certification body identifies evidence or allegations of an abuse risk, it is required by the JAS-ANZ auditing criteria (Procedure 18) to record the details of the disclosure, allegation or witnessed event, and to immediately notify the services manager and the department. Certification cannot proceed until the Commonwealth Department of Family and Community Services advises the certification body that the notifiable issue is resolved.

| <i>Core evidence questions</i> | <i>Signposts</i> | <i>Some examples of evidence</i> |
|--|--|--|
| KPI 12.1 The service takes all practical and appropriate steps to prevent abuse and neglect of its service recipients | | |
| What preventative action does the Service take to minimise the risk of abuse and neglect of its consumers? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$ human rights policy \$ proactive strategies to minimise the risk of abuse and neglect | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$ documented policy on the protection of human rights and freedom from abuse which is consistent with the Principles and Objects of the Disability Services Act \$ police / referee checks before staff are employed \$ service report of an occupational health and safety risk assessment \$ content for staff induction/orientation covers the three areas of abuse - recognition, reporting and assisting people who have been abused \$ staff can describe practical strategies they use to reduce the risk of abuse and neglect \$ Business Plan contains prevention strategies to minimise abuse / neglect risks \$ minutes of planning meetings show that prevention strategies are regularly reviewed |
| KPI 12.2 The service upholds the legal and human rights of people with a disability | | |
| Does the Service uphold the legal and human rights of service recipients | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$ management and staff commitment to uphold legal and human rights \$ proactive strategies for promoting information about legal and human rights to consumers \$ staff understanding of consumer=s legal and human rights \$ service responsiveness to alleged, suspected or actual abuse or neglect \$ consumer perceptions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$ examples of publicly available information about the service which contains statements about the services commitment to uphold legal and human rights \$ charter of consumer rights and responsibilities \$ records of consumer attendance at information sessions on legal/human rights \$ examples of information about legal/human rights in newsletter \$ staff can accurately describe consumer rights when presented with scenarios \$ records of staff attendance at information sessions on legal/human rights \$ records of cases of alleged / suspected / actual abuse include details of the service response, changes to service management and delivery, and follow-up checks to ensure compliance \$ consumer feedback on the responsiveness of the service to allegations or concerns about abuse or neglect \$ consumer feedback on the success of the service in preventing abuse or neglect |

Standard 6: Valued status

Each person with a disability has the opportunity to develop and maintain skills and to participate in activities that enable him or her to achieve valued roles in the community

Policy and program context for disability employment services

This Standard requires service providers to deliver their services in a way that enables a person with a disability, as far as possible, to live and work in ways that are valued by the community.

| <i>Core evidence questions</i> | <i>Signposts</i> | <i>Some examples of evidence</i> |
|---|---|--|
| KPI 6.1 The Service promotes the belief and ability of service recipients to fulfil a valued role in the community | | |
| Does the Service promote the belief and ability of consumers to fulfil a valued role in the community? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$ management and staff attitudes about the ability of consumers to fulfil valued roles in the community \$ proactive strategies for promoting a valued role in the community for people with a disability \$ consumer perceptions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$ examples of publicly available information about the service which promotes the belief and ability of consumers to fulfil valued roles in the community \$ results of a survey of staff options and attitude about people with a disability \$ staff selection criteria includes the requirement that applicants demonstrate Acritical insights about and empathy with the experience of people with a disability@ \$ staff can describe practical examples and strategies they use to promote the valued status of consumers \$ observations during audit of how staff talk and relate to consumers \$ correspondence with potential employers highlights that the service promotes a consumer=s skills rather than seeking >charity= \$ consumer feedback on whether they feel the service promotes the valued status of consumers |
| KPI 6.2 The service promotes employment opportunities for individuals to fulfil valued roles in the community | | |
| Does the service promote a wide range of employment opportunities for individuals | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$ staff and management awareness of a wide range of employment opportunities / positions \$ proactive strategies for promoting a wide range of employment opportunities to consumers \$ review of each consumer=s employment opportunities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$ staff and management can describe the range of employment opportunities they explore with consumers \$ list of organisations / positions where employment opportunities have been sought / found \$ staff can describe practical examples and strategies they use to promote a wide range of employment opportunities to consumers \$ employment plans have details of reviews of employment opportunities (opportunities discussed; consumer views; agreements reached) |
| KPI 6.3 The Service develops and maintains service recipient skills relevant to roles in the community | | |
| Does the Service develop and maintain consumers= pre-employment competencies relevant to roles in the community | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$ employment plans \$ linkages between the service and appropriate referral agencies \$ consumer perceptions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$ individual employment plans include strategies for developing or maintaining pre-employment competencies (eg self-confidence; communication skills; job search skills) \$ examples of individual employment plans where referrals have been made to other agencies to develop or maintain specific pre-employment competencies \$ consumer feedback on the contribution of the service to the development or maintenance of pre-employment competencies |

Standard 9: Employment conditions

Each person with a disability enjoys working conditions comparable to those of the general workforce

Policy and program context for disability employment services

The intention of the Standard is to pay "real wages for real work". Disability employment services should be identifying award based or similar wages for people with disabilities as part of their operational costs like any other business.

If the person is unable to work at full productive capacity due to their disability, there are a range of tools to assess pro-rata wages. While the Supported Wages System (SWS) is the accepted mechanism to assess pro-rata wages for people in open employment, identifying a fair and transparent mechanism for pro-rata wages in supported employment is not as straightforward. Audit teams that are reviewing this standard for supported employment services should refer to A Good Practice Guide to Wage Determination - the Wage Assessment Guide, which provides relevant criteria. This guide will be made available to Certification Bodies by the Department of Family and Community Services (FaCS).

While the use of a particular pro-rata assessment tool is not prescribed, management must be able to demonstrate that the assessment of pro-rata wages meets the following conditions:

- § the assessment is made in full consultation with the individual or, where the individual elects, in full consultation with a person nominated by the individual;
- § individuals or their nominees must be provided with a document that sets out the outcome of the assessment, and the basis on which it is made;
- § individuals must be given the opportunity to have their assessment reviewed at least annually.

Service must also ensure that when people with a disability are placed in employment that their conditions of employment are consistent with general workplace norms. These workplace norms include providing:

- § safe and comfortable working environment;
- § security of tenure in line with industry standard condition
- § valued and rewarding work;
- § a workplace free from harassment and discrimination
- § ongoing performance feedback and appraisal.

| Core evidence questions | Signposts | Some examples of evidence |
|---|---|--|
| <p>KPI 9.1 The service ensures that when people with a disability are placed in open or supported employment that their wages are paid according to a relevant award, order or industrial agreement consistent with legislation. These wages are not to be reduced because of incapacity to pay or similar reasons. Where a person is unable to work at full productive capacity due to a disability, the service is to ensure that a pro-rata wage based on an award, order or industrial agreement is paid. This pro-rata wage must be determined through a transparent assessment tool or process, such as Supported Wage System (SWS), or tools that comply with the criteria referred to in the <i>Guide for Good Practice Wage Determination</i> including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - compliance with relevant legislation; - validity; reliability; - wage outcome; and - practical application of the tool | | |
| <p>Does the Service pay fair wages?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> § relevant award, order or industrial agreement for each consumer § assessment tool or process for determining pro-rata wages (where relevant) § consumer involvement in pro-rata wages assessment § review of pro-rata wages assessment (at least annually) § consumer perceptions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> § copies of relevant award, order or industrial agreement § >pay slips= / case file include details of relevant award, order or industrial agreement § documented assessment tool or process for determining pro-rata wages § where a consumer is receiving a pro-rata wage, case file includes details of assessment tool used, outcome of the assessment & reasons for the assessment § where a consumer is receiving a pro-rata wage, case file includes details of how the individual was consulted about the assessment, whether they were asked if they wanted to nominate an advocate & sign-off on the outcome § case file includes details of reviews of the wage assessment (success of strategies to improve prospects of progression to full award wage; new agreements; negotiated agreements) § consumer feedback on the adequacy of opportunity for involvement in the assessment and review of pro-rata wages |
| <p>KPI 9.2 The Service ensures that when people with a disability are placed in employment that their conditions of employment are consistent with general workplace norms and relevant State and Federal legislation.</p> | | |
| <p>Does the Service ensure working conditions that are comparable to those of the general workforce?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> § working conditions § consumer perceptions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> § management / staff due diligence checks § observations of working conditions during certification assessment § consumer feedback on the working conditions |
| <p>KPI 9.3 The Service ensures that when service recipients are placed and supported in employment that they, and where appropriate their guardians and/or advocates, are informed of how wages and conditions are determined and the consequences of this</p> | | |
| <p>Are consumers appropriately informed about their wages and conditions??</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> § procedure for informing consumers about wages and conditions § consumer perceptions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> § documented procedure § case files include copies of information provided to consumers about wages and conditions § consumer feedback about the adequacy of information provided |

Standard 5: Participation and integration

Each person with a disability is supported and encouraged to participate and be involved in the community

Policy and program context for disability employment services

The Commonwealth recognises that the quality and sustainability of employment outcomes for people with a disability is enhanced by physical and social integration with other employees without a disability. While the capacity of services to facilitate such integration varies depending on the nature of their business, all services have a responsibility to respond to barriers that limit opportunities for physical and social integration.

A holistic approach to service delivery recognises the importance of both immediate employment outcomes and the barriers that limit the range of available employment opportunities. In practice, this means that individual employment plans should have references not just to the barriers that impact on immediate employment goals and opportunities, but on the sustainability of these opportunities. Regular reviews of employment goals and opportunities are needed to ensure consumers are supported in making informed choices about either continuing with existing employment opportunities or pursuing alternative employment opportunities which offer greater physical and social integration with people without a disability.

The capacity of a service to offer employment opportunities which support greater physical and social integration will vary depending on their contractual obligations and the purpose of the service. Consumers will need to have access to appropriate information about the scope of opportunities that a service is able to offer so they can make informed decisions about whether a service will meet their needs.

| <i>Core evidence questions</i> | <i>Signposts</i> | <i>Some examples of evidence</i> |
|---|---|---|
| KPI 5.1 | The service contributes to individual outcomes for service recipients that progressively builds opportunities for their participation and involvement in the community through employment | |
| Is the service successful in achieving quality employment outcomes for service recipients, which facilitates their participation and involvement in the community | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> § management and staff commitment to achieving quality employment outcomes § individual employment plans § proactive strategies for promoting a wide range of employment opportunities to consumers § review of each consumer=s employment opportunities (at least annually) § consumer perceptions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> § records of employment outcomes § examples of publicly available information about the service which contains statements about the type of employment outcomes sought for consumers § individual employment plans include strategies for addressing barriers that limit consumer=s employment opportunities (eg self-confidence; communication skills) § staff can describe practical examples and strategies they use to promote a wide range of employment opportunities to consumers § employment plans have details of reviews of employment opportunities (alternative opportunities discussed; options explored for greater physical and social integration with people without a disability; consumer views; agreements reached) § consumer feedback about the contribution of the service to the achievement of employment outcomes § consumer feedback about the quality of employment outcomes |

Standard 2: Individual needs

Each person with a disability receives a service that is designed to meet, in the least restrictive way, his or her individual needs and personal goals

Policy and program context for disability employment services

Service recipients are entitled to receive services that are tailored to their individual needs and personal goals. In the context of disability employment services, this means that each service recipients should have:

- \$ individual employment goals
- \$ an individual employment plan which detail strategies for the achievement of their goals.

The concept of the 'least restrictive alternative' represented a fundamental shift in the way services would be delivered to people with significant disabilities following the introduction of the Disability Services Act in 1986. This concept embodied within this Standard is about promoting a range of service types which allows a person to select services in ways that result in the least possible restrictions on his or her life and opportunities. Following on from this, services should ensure that support is provided in a manner sensitive to the age, sex, and the cultural, linguistic and religious background of each person with a disability.

Under Standard 2, services are expected to ensure that:

- \$ employment goals are established objectively to reflect service recipient=s needs and personal goals
- \$ employment plans are used as a basis for customised service provision and that the plans are regularly reviewed and updated
- \$ individual=s goals and plans do not have any unnecessary restrictions or constraints
- \$ service recipients have access to appropriate information about the service=s business goals and the potential or actual restrictions that this may place on individual=s goals and plans.
- \$ service recipients are adequately involved in the development and review of employment goals and plans

| <i>Core evidence questions</i> | <i>Signposts</i> | <i>Some examples of evidence</i> |
|---|--|---|
| KPI 2.1 Each individual=s employment goals are established objectively to reflect their needs and personal goals | | |
| Does the Service objectively establish each consumer=s employment goals? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$ procedure for establishing each consumer=s employment goals \$ strategies for ensuring consumers are actively involved in establishing employment goals \$ procedure for negotiating changes to employment goals \$ consumer perceptions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$ documented procedure includes a range of tools (eg vocational skills testing, career guidance tools, work trials, involvement of advocates) \$ records of employment goals show a clear link between employment goals and consumer=s stated needs and personal goals \$ >signed-off= employment goals are included in all employment plans \$ examples of advocate involvement in establishing employment goals \$ staff can describe practical examples and strategies they use to promote the active involvement of consumers in goal setting \$ employment plans have records of goal reviews (continuing relevance of goals; alternatives discussed; agreements reached) \$ consumer feedback on the extent to which negotiated employment goals reflect needs and personal goals |
| KPI 2.2 Each individual=s employment goals are used as a basis for service provision through the Service undertaking a process of planning, implementation, review and adjustment to facilitate the achievement of these goals | | |
| Does each consumer have a realistic and up-to-date plan for the achievement of their employment goals? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$ individual employment plans \$ consumer involvement in identifying employment opportunities \$ strategies for explaining the scope of available services to consumers \$ reviews of individual employment plans \$ consumer perceptions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$ individual plans reflect employment goals and include strategies for the achievement of these goals \$ individual plans include lists of employment opportunities identified / considered \$ staff can describe how they support and involve individuals in identifying employment opportunities \$ staff can describe how they explain to consumers the scope of service activities and expertise and the restrictions this places on the services which are available to facilitate the achievement of employment goals \$ records of changes to plans after reviews (success of strategies; alternatives approaches; agreements reached) \$ consumer feedback on the level of involvement in identifying employment opportunities |

| KPI 2.3 Services are delivered to meet each individual=s employment goals via pathways and plans which do not have any unnecessary restrictions or constraints | | |
|---|---|---|
| Does the Service ensure there are no unnecessary restrictions or constraints on the services delivered to meet each individual=s employment goals? | \$ management and staff commitment to ensuring there are no unnecessary restrictions or constraints on the services delivered | \$ individual employment plans are sufficiently different to provide confidence that they have been tailored to each individual=s employment goals |
| | \$ cultural diversity | \$ staff knowledge of unique issues for different consumer groups (eg Indigenous, consumers from non-English speaking backgrounds) \$ employment plans consider cultural/linguistic/religious issues where appropriate (discussion of cultural issues; agreements reached) |
| | \$ alignment between employment opportunities and individual employment goals | \$ records of changes to employment plans after reviews (discussions of the appropriateness of opportunities; possible alternatives; agreements reached) |
| | \$ consumer perceptions | \$ consumer feedback on the extent to which the services they receive are responsive to their needs and employment aspirations. \$ consumer feedback about their satisfaction with the level of choice they have about how services are delivered to meet their needs |

Standard 3: Decision making and choice

Each person with a disability has the opportunity to participate as fully as possible in making decisions about the events and activities of his or her daily life in relation to the service he or she receives

Policy and program context for disability employment services

Employment outcomes are best achieved where consumers have input into the decision and choices about the services they receive. This primarily refers to the day-to-day decisions and choices in relation to pre-employment and employment planning, but extends to input into the broader planning for the service.

Consumer participation in decision-making and choice does not mean that consumers make the decisions. Rather the emphasis is on utilising the unique skills and insights of consumers to improve the quality of these decisions and choices.

Key areas for consumer participation are:

- § planning the services they receive as an individual (eg individual choices about pre-employment and employment opportunities)
- § planning the overall priorities and direction of the service (eg corporate, business and service delivery planning)
- § quality assurance and continuous improvement processes (eg participation in the consumer consultations as part of an audit)

Within each of these areas, services are expected to:

- § ensure that service recipients have access to appropriate information about opportunities for consumer participation;
- § ensure that service recipients are encouraged and supported to access these opportunities;
- § act upon the outcomes of service recipient input into decision-making.

Specifically, in relation to the new Quality Assurance system, services will be expected to:

- § develop suitable processes for communicating with and educating all consumer about the audit process and the Quality Assurance system;
- § promote and implement measures that support the participation of consumers in the consultation activities of certification assessments with particular consideration given to supporting the participation of Adifficult to reach@ groups;
- § develop suitable mechanisms for ensuring consumer representation in audit preparation activities (eg internal audits) and certification assessment and reporting processes (eg training of a panel of consumer representative who attend the exit meeting and feedback the findings to other consumers).

| <i>Core evidence questions</i> | <i>Signposts</i> | <i>Some examples of evidence</i> |
|---|---|--|
| KPI 3.1 The Service provides appropriate and flexible opportunities for all individuals to participate in decision-making at all levels including individual choices in pre-employment and employment planning, service delivery planning and corporate and business planning | | |
| Does the Service provide appropriate and flexible opportunities for all consumers to participate in decision-making processes? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> § proactive strategies for encouraging and supporting consumer input into decision-making § consumer participation in pre-employment and employment planning § consumer participation in service and business planning § consumer participation in quality assurance and continuous improvement activities § consumer perceptions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> § management and staff can describe a broad range of formal and ad hoc opportunities for consumer input into decision-making § examples of publicly available information which contains statements about the service=s commitment to consumer input into decision-making § employment plans § minutes of planning meetings § minutes of Consumer Representative Committee § number and diversity of consumers willing to participate in the consumer consultations during certification assessments § consumer feedback on opportunities for individual choices in pre-employment and employment decisions § consumer feedback on the appropriateness and flexibility of opportunities for inputs into decision-making processes |
| KPI 3.2 The Service acts upon the outcomes of service recipient input into decision-making | | |
| Does the Service act upon the outcomes of consumer input into decision-making? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> § communication of outcomes of decision-making processes § examples of service delivery / business decisions § consumer perceptions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> § >signed-off= decisions in individual employment plan § staff can give examples of the practical steps they use to communicate the outcomes of decision-making processes to consumers § management can provide a range of examples of how consumer input influenced specific service delivery / business decisions § consumer feedback about whether the service adequately communicates the outcomes of decision-making processes § consumer feedback about whether the service adequately considers consumer input when making decisions |

Standard 10: Service recipient training and support

The employment opportunities of each person with a disability are optimised by effective and relevant training and support

Policy and program context for disability employment services

This standard has links to Standard 2 and 6. Standard 2 focuses on each consumer receiving employment support based on their personal goals in an individualised and least restrictive way. Standard 5 looks in part at developing key competencies and skills (eg confidence building) that can work towards achieving those personal goals. This Standard has a direct focus on the specific employment training and support needs and competencies that are required to achieve their employment goals.

The models used to provide training and support can vary, depending upon individual need and the type of employment support (open or supported). Some services operate on the "train and place" model, others on the "place and train" model. The focus of this Standard is not on the type of model used, but more on the outcome and relevance of the training and support for consumers.

An important aspect when assessing this Standard is to ensure that the type of training and support provided is directly relevant to employment outcomes, as required under the service's contractual obligations with FaCS. While services are in the best position to judge what constitutes the most appropriate training activities for an individual consumer, services must be able to demonstrate the link between the training provided and the intended employment outcome. Day activity or training programs focussed on recreation or independent living would not be considered to comply with the Standard, where consumers are receiving a service funded under Commonwealth employment programs.

| <i>Core evidence questions</i> | <i>Signposts</i> | <i>Some examples of evidence</i> |
|---|---|---|
| KPI 10.1 The Service provides or facilitates access to relevant training and support programs that are consistent with the employment goals and opportunities of each service recipient | | |
| Do consumers get the training and support they need to facilitate the achievement of their employment goals and take maximum advantage of employment opportunities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$ training and support policies and procedures \$ tools / procedures for identifying training and support needs \$ individual employment plans \$ training and support programs / activities \$ employment outcomes \$ consumer perceptions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$ documented policy on access to and provision of training and support \$ examples of publicly available information which contains statements about the service=s commitment to facilitating access to relevant training and support \$ job / skills competency assessment toolkit \$ individual employment plans contain training and support strategies \$ records of changes to employment plans after reviews (discussions of relevance of training and support programs / activities; possible alternatives; agreements reached) \$ records of consumer participation in training activities or support services received (either provided directly or through referral) \$ staff can describe how training and support activities are tailored to the achievement of employment outcomes \$ records of employment outcomes include details about the contribution of training provided to the achievement of the outcome \$ evaluations of training / support program performance in improving employment outcomes \$ consumer feedback about their satisfaction with the level of choice they have about training and support opportunities \$ consumer feedback on the quantity, quality and relevance of the training and support provided |

Standard 7: Complaints and disputes

Each service recipient is encouraged to raise and have resolved without fear of retribution, any complaints or disputes he or she may have regarding the agency or the service

Policy and program context for disability employment services

It is crucial to ensure that there is an accessible and effective complaint process available for people with disabilities using disability employment services. An important consideration in complaint processes is that consumers, because of their life circumstances, are a particularly dis-empowered group and therefore less likely to make a complaint.

Services should have an internal complaint mechanism that provides:

- § Commitment at all levels of the organisation. This can be demonstrated through effective dissemination of policies and procedures that recognise the positive and important role of complaints to increase the level of consumer satisfaction, enhance the consumer provider relationship and provide insights to continuously improve the service;
- § Fairness to all concerned, including the complainant, the organisation and the person complained about. This would include availability of advocacy services or other means to ensure that the complainant can make the complaint effectively and does not suffer retribution or intimidation as a result;
- § Accessibility. The information about the process should be readily accessible in a variety of appropriate formats (including plain English and other languages where appropriate) and be promoted both internally and externally. There should be flexible methods of making complaints with assistance available to complainants as necessary. This element is particularly important for a system, which is dealing with a vulnerable and dis-empowered client group;
- § Responsiveness. The process should provide full, impartial and timely investigation of all aspects of the complaint and provide fair and reasonable remedies where warranted;
- § Effectiveness. The mechanism must be able to address individual complaints and use the information collected to improve overall service delivery and to address systemic and recurring problems. It should be reviewed regularly to ensure that it is meeting consumers' needs;
- § Openness and accountability. So consumers can judge for themselves whether the system is working effectively;
- § Privacy, dignity and confidentiality. Complaint handling must maintain the values and principles outlined in Standard 4.
- § External referral where a complaint can not be resolved by the internal process. This may involve: an alternative dispute resolution procedure such as mediation; or referral to another appropriate avenue for resolving the complaint, such as an appeal procedure or other legal remedy.

It should be noted that an independent complaint resolution and referral service should be available from July 2002. Once this mechanism is available, services will be expected to refer unresolved complaints to the service, assist the service in its investigations and act upon recommendations made by the service.

| <i>Core evidence questions</i> | <i>Signposts</i> | <i>Some examples of evidence</i> |
|--|--|--|
| KPI 7.1 The Service encourages the raising of complaints by service recipients regarding any areas of dissatisfaction with the agency or their services | | |
| Does the Service encourage the raising of complaints by service recipients regarding any areas of dissatisfaction with the agency or their services? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> § complaints and disputes policy and procedures § proactive strategies for promoting the complaints procedures to consumers and encouraging its use § consumer perceptions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> § documented policy on complaints and disputes covering raising, examining and resolving the issue § observations / documentation on range of mechanisms for raising complaints § examples of complaints procedures being promoted in newsletter § curricula for consumer induction / orientation includes information about the complaints procedures § staff can provide examples of independent advocacy services or advocates assisting consumer to raise a complaint § management can describe how they ensure that the complaint raising procedure is suitable for the diverse needs of consumers (eg women of NESB) § consumer feedback about whether they feel encouraged and supported to raise complaints about areas of dissatisfaction |
| KPI 7.2 Service recipients have no fear of retribution in raising complaints | | |
| Can service recipients raise complaints without fear of retribution? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> § management and staff commitment to constructive complaints handling § consumer perceptions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> § service documentation on complaints procedures highlights the >positives= of getting feedback on areas for improvement § management and staff can describe the steps it takes to ensure complaints and disputes are handled in a manner the respects service recipients= privacy and confidentiality § consumer feedback about whether they feel confident to raise complaints |
| KPI 7.3 The Service facilitates the resolution of complaints or disputes regarding the agency or the service by service recipients | | |
| Does the Service facilitate the resolution of complaints or disputes? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> § complaints resolution procedure § proactive strategies for promoting consumer involvement in the resolution of complaints § consumer perceptions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> § records of complaints raised which include details of actions undertaken to mediate or resolve the complaint and the outcome of the complaint § service delivery plan records details of appropriate corrective, remedial or preventive action following any complaint § records of the participation of independent advocacy services or advocates in the resolution of a complaint § consumer feedback about their satisfaction with the resolution of complaints or disputes that have been raised |

Standard 8: Service management

Each agency adopts quality management systems and practices that optimises outcomes for service recipients

Policy and program context for disability employment services

Effective and efficient service management is essential for optimising outcomes for consumers. These outcomes may include job placements, job durability and satisfaction, support satisfaction, skill and career development, wage rates and integration in the workforce and community.

A management system simply refers to all the things that a service does to establish the outcomes it wants to achieve and the policies and procedures it uses to ensure these outcomes are attained. However the type and complexity of the management systems used by services are expected to vary greatly, depending on the size of the organisation and the type of work undertaken. Clearly, a small rural service is not expected to have the same management system as a large multi-site service. In addition, where a service is part of a larger organisation, it will need to consider what management systems are needed at the local level and how these link to management systems across the organisation as a whole. In all cases, what is important is that each service has a management system that best enables it to optimise outcomes for consumers.

Key signposts for a quality management system are:

- § a clear organisational structure and corporate governance arrangements that promote consumer confidence in the probity and accountability for the management of the service;
- § processes for setting and working towards business priorities and consumer outcomes (eg corporate or business planning processes);
- § continuous improvement (processes for identifying service strengths and weaknesses and working towards service improvements);
- § documented policies and procedures relevant to the Disability Services Standards.

It is also important to note that Procedure 18 requires services to support the quality assurance process by

- § providing a Certification Body with copies of all policies and procedures relevant to the Disability Services Standards, prior to on-site audits. To assist with this process, many services have collated their policies and procedures into a Quality Manual
- § undertaking an internal audit, at least annually, against the Disability Services Standards. This process ensures that when Certification Bodies undertake a certification or surveillance audit, the service has a record of work they have undertaken to address potential areas of non-compliance and to ensure ongoing compliance with the Standards. A FaCS *Continuous Improvement Handbook* will be distributed to all disability employment services, to provide further information on continuous improvement tools and strategies you may wish to consider.

Over time, it is expected that auditors will place more and more emphasis on the commitment and success of continuous improvement processes within the service - in other words, not just what the service does to ensure compliance with the Standards, but how they will continue to achieve better outcomes for consumers.

| <i>Core evidence question</i> | <i>Signposts</i> | <i>Some examples of evidence</i> |
|--|---|---|
| KPI 8.1 The Service has management systems in place that facilitate quality management practices and continuous improvement. | | |
| Does the Service facilitate quality management practices and continuous improvement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$ corporate governance arrangements that promote consumer confidence in the probity and accountability of the management of the service \$ business / corporate planning (processes for setting and working towards business priorities and consumer outcomes) \$ annual internal audit process \$ continuous improvement (planning processes for identifying service strengths and weaknesses and working towards service improvements) \$ current policies and procedures relevant to all Disability Services Standards \$ appropriate document control \$ monitoring and reporting of consumer outcomes \$ monitoring and reporting of consumer perceptions of the quality of services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$ minutes of meetings of the Board of Directors \$ article in newsletter about Board members and meetings \$ consumer representation on Board \$ Board membership known to consumers \$ minutes of corporate planning meetings \$ current Business Plan that includes strategies and targets for achieving consumer outcomes \$ report of annual internal audit against the Standards / KPIs \$ minutes of consumer consultations \$ management can describe the continuous improvement process used by the service (eg meetings, consumer consultation) \$ minutes of consumer consultations \$ mechanisms for encouraging and receiving consumer feedback \$ current internal audit report includes continuous improvement priorities and strategies \$ Quality Manual addressing each of the 12 Standards \$ policies and procedures are regularly updated - records of reviews and updates are available \$ current version of key documents are readily identifiable and accessible during audit \$ records of who holds copies of key documents \$ database with records of outcomes for all consumers \$ Annual Report includes information about service performance \$ consumer satisfaction survey which covers relevant elements of the Disability Services Standards \$ minutes of consumer consultations |

sub 8 FaCS Atch 6Standards and KPIs approved at June 2001 WP meeting

Standard 11: Staff recruitment, employment and training

Each person employed to deliver services to the service recipient has relevant skills and competencies

Policy and program context for disability employment services

Individual professional development and training and organisational learning are critical to the safety and well-being of consumers. Much of the research in this area suggests that untrained workers should be considered an unacceptable management practice due to the high vulnerability of consumers in disability services.

In order to provide effective support, staff require skills in areas such as communication, respect and dignity, confidentiality, effective supports, appropriate conduct, positive attitudes and responding to individual need. There would be also a range of specialist knowledge and skills require for specific positions.

The service management will need to clearly identify the skills and competencies required for achieving service outcomes, methods for assessing these skills and competencies, and addressing any gaps through staff training and recruitment. These processes and practices should be consistent with expected industry norms.

The service management should also have strategies to support organisation-wide learning - which acknowledge to changing needs of the organisation and its staff and continues to develop responses to new challenges.

| <i>Core evidence questions</i> | <i>Signposts</i> | <i>Some examples of evidence</i> |
|---|--|--|
| KPI 11.1 The Service identifies the skills and competencies of each staff member | | |
| Does the Service identify the skills and competencies required for each position / staff member? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$ job descriptions for each position / staff member \$ periodic reviews of the relevance and comprehensiveness of job descriptions \$ staff understanding of skill / competency requirements contained in their job description \$ staff perceptions of the appropriateness of skill / competency requirements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$ documented job descriptions which include clear statements of the skills and competencies required for the position \$ records of reviews and updates of job descriptions \$ staff can accurately describe, in their own terms, the skill / competency requirements of their job \$ staff feedback on the relevance and comprehensiveness of their job description \$ staff can describe how they are involved in reviewing skill / competency requirements |
| KPI 11.2 The Service ensures that its staff have relevant skills and competencies | | |
| Does the service ensure its staff have the relevant skills and competencies? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$ merit-based recruitment and selection policies \$ staff appraisal procedures \$ consumer perceptions of staff skills and competencies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$ documented recruitment and selection policies \$ referee checks \$ copies of staff qualifications (eg TAFE certificate) held on file \$ staff files indicate performance appraisals are conducted regularly \$ staff can describe how they are involved in performance appraisals \$ performance appraisal reports show that corrective action is taken if skill/competencies deficiencies or staff under-performance are identified \$ consumer feedback on staff |
| KPI 11.3 The Service ensures the provision of appropriate and relevant training and skills development for each staff member | | |
| Does the Service provide appropriate training and skills development for staff? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$ processes for identifying staff training needs \$ staff training / skill development plans which are reviewed at least annually \$ staff satisfaction with training / skills development opportunities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$ training need assessment tool \$ performance appraisal reports describe training needs / opportunities \$ results of staff appraisals taken into account when assessing training needs \$ documented individual / group training plans that cover all staff \$ observation that plans have been reviewed (at least annually) \$ staff describe how they are involved in developing and reviewing training plans \$ staff feedback on the appropriateness of available training opportunities \$ staff feedback on the quantity and quality of training |