NDIS Commission Sector Readiness Project



POLICY & PROCEDURE DEVELOPMENT

Psychosocial Disability Service Providers

Under the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission (NDIS Commission), registered providers are expected to maintain continuous quality improvement (CQI) processes. A policy development and review cycle forms one part of this CQI process. Good policies and procedures offer clarity, help the organisation operate more effectively and contributes to meeting regulatory and legislative requirements. Good policy also sets expectations and helps induct staff and other stakeholders into the organisational culture.

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Effective Policy and Procedure should be:

- Written in clear language using simple terms, and be accessible to all those it relates to
- Developed collaboratively with Participants, staff and other stakeholders
- Regularly reviewed as part of the organisation's internal audit cycle and form one component of CQI
- Aligned with procedure that clearly indicates how the policy should be implemented, monitored and evaluated

Components of Policy and Procedure:

Take a systematic, organization-wide approach to policy development. Use a template suited to the size, scale and scope of your organisation. Below is one example of how your organisational template header might be organised, followed by potential template section headings.

Policy/Procedure Title	Author	Version
Policy/Procedure Number		Scheduled review date
Associated documents	Approved by	Approval date

- > Introduction and Policy Statement: Describe the reason for the policy or procedure and your organisation's position on the issue. This may include identified risk management aims of the policy or procedure
- **Policy Scope**: Describe the areas of operation and the expected roles that the policy or procedure applies to
- > Definitions: Industry terms and uncommon words should be defined
- **Procedure:** Describe the step-by-step instructions of how the policy is embedded into everyday practice. This could be combined with a policy document or sit alongside it
- Evaluation and Monitoring: Outline how implementation will be monitored and how effectiveness of the policy or procedure will be evaluated
- ➤ Relevant standards: For example, highlight the specific Outcome and/or Indicator of the NDIS Practice Standards the document applies to
- ➤ References/Useful Resources: State any other documents that were used in the policy document development, for example, frameworks, industry guidelines and legislation (National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 (NDIS Act))

A note about adapting policy:

If you use samples or templates found online or through a policy bank, read and edit carefully to be sure they are an accurate description of your organisation's position, and are appropriate for the size, scale and scope of your organisation.

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Continuous Quality Improvement Cycle for Policy

- Identify an issue or gap and define the need for policy or procedure to address it
- Research best practice, relevant legislation, industry standards and frameworks
- Identify stakeholders to contribute to development
- Design the consultation process
- This part of the cycle provides an opportunity to reflect on effectiveness and identify any ongoing issues
- Consult with users and other stakeholders
- Review best practice, relevant legislation, industry standards and frameworks to identify any necessary changes
- Amend through recommencing the planning process, or continue to implement and monitor through to another review point in this cycle



- The board, staff and Participants are examples of stakeholders and should be included in consultation throughout this cycle
- Decide scope and content of the policy
- Allocate and document roles and responsibilities within the policy
- Include a review date: laws and professional practices change; regular review ensures policy and associated procedure are never outdated or lose relevance
- Circulate draft documents to relevant stakeholders for feedback
- Incorporate feedback where appropriate
- Seek internal approval for publication

- To monitor the effectiveness of the policy or procedure, ensure meaningful data from the associated process is collected. Registers and feedback may form part of this data collection process
- The evaluation of associated procedures is an important aspect of policy evaluation, consider whether your procedures achieve the intended goal of the policy
- Communicate and distribute the new document
- Training on policy, procedure and associated processes including the recording of data, is critical to evaluation
- Where necessary, review job descriptions of those with responsibilities under the new/changed policy or procedure

A note about continuous quality improvement:

For registered NDIS providers, the audit cycle is 3-years with an 18-month midterm surveillance audit. The frequency of organisational internal audits should correspond to the level of risk associated with the item being audited. Consider aligning your external audit, internal audit and policy review cycles to improve efficiency.

Further Resources available on https://waamh.org.au/sector-development-and-training/ndis-quality-and-safeguards-commission-sector-readiness-project/ndis-qsc-sector-readiness-project-resources-and-events

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