

Office of Disability - Engagement Framework

Contents

1. What is the Office of Disability?.....	2
2. What is the Office of Disability Engagement Framework?.....	2
3. Why does the Office of Disability need to engage?	2
4. Who will the Office of Disability engage with?	3
5. How will the Office of Disability engage?	5
6. How will we know when we have engaged well?.....	5

1. What is the Office of Disability?

The Office of Disability (the Office) is a part of the Northern Territory Government's Department of Territory Families Housing and Communities.

The Office is responsible for:

- advising the Northern Territory Minister for Disabilities, the Northern Territory (NT) Government and the Australian Government about what is important to people with disability in the NT
- NT Government disability policy, developing programs and monitoring and reporting on the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)
- supporting the NT Government to meet:
 - the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disability
 - Australia's Disability Strategy
 - the Northern Territory Disability Strategy, including developing, monitoring and reporting.

2. What is the Office of Disability Engagement Framework?

The Office of Disability Engagement Framework (the Framework) guides us in how we consult with stakeholders. It also shows stakeholders what they can expect when we consult with them.

The Framework:

- provides practical information about who we will engage with and how
- provides principles and measures to show if we have engaged successfully.

3. Why does the Office of Disability need to engage?

To do our role effectively we need to engage and work with people who have lived experience of disability. This includes:

- people with disability
- their families and kinship groups
- carers
- significant others
- guardians
- other stakeholders.

The Framework explains how the NT Government will engage with stakeholders to ask for their expertise and views.

Through engaging we can build positive relationships with people with disability and other stakeholders. This helps to make sure that people with disability can take part in, and can contribute to, decisions that affect them.

Engaging helps us to:

- have a better understanding of the experiences of people with disability, carers and supporters in the NT and the things that are important to them
- make sure we take into account the different experiences people have. Particularly the experiences of people who don't normally have the chance to engage with the NT Government
- be informed and have evidence to support the advice we give on policy
- respond to risks and opportunities as they come up
- make sure advice and decisions are appropriate and can be used in the NT
- monitor and assess how programs for people with disability are going.

4. Who will the Office of Disability engage with?

We will engage with:

- people with lived experience of disability – this includes people with disability and their supporters
- specialist disability service providers and representative organisations
- mainstream services
- the community.

People with lived experience

The lived experience of people with disability is important and we value it. We will engage with the diverse range of people that make-up people with disability, their families, kinship groups and supporters in the NT. This includes the less often heard voices of:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- young people
- people with cognitive and psychosocial disability
- people who live in remote areas.

The [Northern Territory Disability Advisory Committee](#) (the Committee) advises the Northern Territory Minister for Disabilities. The Committee is made of people with lived experience of disability. It represents the diversity of people with disability in the NT. The Committee advises the Minister about issues that are important to people with disability in the NT.

Did you know?

- There are around 20,500 people with disability in the NT.
- There are 4,000 NDIS participants in the NT.
- Half of NDIS participants in the NT identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.
- 45 per cent of NDIS participants are under 14 years of age.
- Some of the most common reported disabilities in the NT are autism, intellectual disability, developmental delay and psychosocial disability.

Our engagement partners

We will engage with representative organisations. This will include disability peak bodies, advocates and advocacy organisations. We will also engage with:

- specialist disability service providers
- specialist disability schools
- local government authorities
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and service providers.

These stakeholders have strong relationships with people with lived experience of disability. They are experts in engaging with their members and service users. They also have an in-depth understanding of the community they represent and service.

As well as talking directly with specialist service providers and organisations for their expertise and views, we will work with them as engagement partners. This means we will:

- ask for their advice to make sure our engagement is accessible and inclusive for the people they represent and provide services to
- ask for their help to engage with their members and the people that use their services.

Mainstream services

Mainstream services are services that all members of the community use. Mainstream services include:

- health services
- transport
- sport and recreational activities
- justice systems
- housing.

The government, non-government and the private sector provide mainstream services. We value the expertise of these services and their experience providing services to the community. We will engage with services to understand the services they provide to people with disability. We will also talk to them about the barriers people with disability face and how we can improve access.

The Northern Territory community

The National Disability Strategy has a vision for an inclusive Australian society. A society that supports people with disability to live full and equal lives. Community attitudes, awareness and understanding of disability are important to achieving this vision.

We will engage with the NT community so people have a better understanding of the role the community can play in improving access and inclusion for people with disability.

5. How will the Office of Disability engage?

The NT Disability Advisory Committee (the Committee) gave us the following advice to help us engage with stakeholders.

How to let people know about consultation (for the NT Disability Strategy)	What things can stop people giving their input and the best way to solve these
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social media campaigns: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ videos and photos ○ in plain English ○ in languages other than English including languages that are spoken all throughout the Territory • Letterbox drops for people who can't access the forums • Through the town council. Councils have good ways to get things out of the community. • School newsletters • Community groups – getting out and speaking with community groups and having them pass information on to their group of people • On radio, including Yolgnu radio and other community radio • Meetings • Free food • The Committee members talking about it with colleagues and peers • Holding input sessions with parents and carers at schools • Asking local GPs or clinics who talk with people with disability all the time, to pass on information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of internet and poor internet connection. A lot of information these days is being passed through the internet and internet only, this can cause quite a bit of miscommunication. We need to make sure that the internet is not the main source that people get the information through. People based information rather than internet based information. • Government speak. Make things easy to read and in plain English. • Stigma is a significant issue affecting people providing input. When people speak up they need to be supported and empowered to speak up. Support is needed for self-advocacy. There is sometimes a negative perception of people who speak up, of being a troublemaker. People need to feel safe to speak up and give their input. • People need to feel validated and that their voice is heard. We need to ensure people's input is recorded and people can see what actions have been taken in response to the input. • We need to make sure that we don't create false expectations with our consultation. We need to be clear not to make promises that we can't keep.

6. How will we know when we have engaged well?

We will know when we have engaged well when we can see that we have had input from all of our key groups. This includes:

- people with lived experience of disability
- our engagement partners
- mainstream service providers
- the community.

The most important part of our engagement work is getting input from people with lived experience of disability. The people we get input from should cover the diversity of people with disability in the NT. To make sure we get input from a wide range of people and back grounds we will consider:

What we will consider	Who this includes
Cultural identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal Territorians including people from key language groups and different regions and communities • Torres Strait Islanders • Culturally and linguistically diverse Territorians • Non-Indigenous Territorians
Disability	<p>People with experience of disability that has stopped them from taking part in society in an equal way. These disabilities or impairments include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments • developmental disability • chronic, or long lasting, conditions • mild to moderate disability.
Age	All the ages of people with disability in the NT. Keeping in mind that there are a high number of children and young people with disability in the NT.
Gender	Equal input from people of different genders.
Regions	All regions of the NT and include input from people from all Local Government Areas.
Remoteness	<p>We will classify regions in the NT as either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cities • towns, villages, town camps • remote communities (minor or major) • homelands or family outstations (less than 100 people). <p>These classifications come from the BushTel User Guide.</p>
People whose lived experience is because of a relationship with someone with disability	<p>These people include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • carers • guardians • family • kinship family • significant others • service providers.