

Family and Community Services

Disability Action Plan Update

2014-15

Update of FACS Disability Action Plan (DAP)

A disability action plan allows an organisation to plan how to eliminate disability discrimination from their activities. Disability action planning is beneficial for FACS as it has the capacity to increase diversity, allow more people to access our services, and include more voices in the decisions we make.

Disability action planning is a requirement of all NSW Government departments under the *NSW Disability Services Act 1993* (DSA). The requirement for disability action planning will strengthen under the *Disability Inclusion Act 2014* (DIA) which is expected to come into effect in 2015.

In 2010, when FACS was the Department of Human Services, we released a Disability Action Plan. For 2016, under the DIA, FACS will create a new plan called a Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP). In the interim, FACS is updating its older Disability Action Plan through this document.

In this update document FACS has also sought to provide a brief update as to how we are progressing under the National Disability Strategy. The National Disability Strategy is a 10 year COAG obligation which is designed to commit NSW to implement the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*.

FACS has also recently undertaken research that provides an evidence based framework for the development of Disability Inclusion Action Planning Guidelines. This will support the introduction of the NSW Disability Inclusion Plan and Inclusion Planning requirements across government.

Disability Action Plan (2010-2013): What FACS has achieved

The Disability Action Plan (DAP) (2010 – 2013) under the Department of Human Services was committed to six outcomes, outlined below.

1. Identifying and removing barriers to services for people with disability

Under our completed DAP actions FACS has:

- revised and implemented a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Community Services (CS) and Ageing, Disability and Home Care (ADHC) for clients with disability
- adapted complaints management systems to accept complaints from housing tenants and applicants in a range of formats
- conducted disability awareness training for client contact staff to improve awareness of needs of clients and staff with disabilities.

Under our ongoing DAP actions FACS will:

- conduct an Aboriginal community housing tenant satisfaction survey through the Aboriginal Housing Office (AHO). The last survey was held in 2012. The survey asks tenants, including those with disability, questions on housing services including modifications and use/awareness of tenant support services including allied, mental support, life skills and community living support
- assist the AHO to align itself with the FACS-wide policy stance on Disability Awareness and to adopt FACS policies, procedures and applicable strategies relating to Disability Awareness
- continue to improve the capacity of current service models to deliver appropriate services to Aboriginal and CALD clients with disability
- develop information systems that identify assets with disability modifications
- improve the quality of out-of-home care KiDS and NGO Minimum Data Set data to ensure data on children with disability is accurate and reliable
- increase out-of-home care (OOHC) options for placement of children and young people with disability
- conduct disability awareness training for client contact staff.

2. Providing information and services in a range of formats that are accessible to people with disability

Under our completed DAP actions FACS has:

- developed and updated fact sheets and brochures on a range of housing assistance issues, including electronic documents, for people with a range of disabilities
- ensured that the mechanisms for making complaints or lodging grievances are accessible in a range of formats and that appropriate support is made available to complainants
- updated information on the AHO website and ensured it is presented in a format relevant to people with disabilities
- maintained a current database of suppliers who can provide resources in accessible format, so this service can be offered to clients across FACS for all projects
- provided the tenant newsletter *Your Home* in a large print electronic format.

Under our ongoing DAP actions FACS will:

- strive to comply with the W3C's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0
- use accredited interpreters to communicate with a person with disability who speaks a language other than English
- undertake assessments of identified staff that require computer based adjustments
- partner with organisations such as Vision Australia in order to implement web based requirements such as those in the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0
- review all existing publications across FACS to identify publications that may require reprints or conversion to accessible formats.

3. Making government buildings and facilities physically accessible to people with disability

Under our completed DAP actions FACS has:

- audited AHO offices to assess accessibility for people with disability and modify accordingly
- reviewed Fire and Emergency Evacuation Procedures to ensure processes are in place for people with disability. Provided the necessary education and training to relevant persons
- included disabled access and facilities in criteria for selection of new premises both for FACS and our client agencies
- developed a Reasonable Adjustment Policy
- ensured that the certain FACS property portfolios comply with relevant disability legislation and building codes
- issued 'leasing principles' that stipulate new sites must be disability compliant
- ensured all ADHC premises comply with relevant standards such as the Building Code of Australia and the disability standards in the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth)
- provided reception counters that enable disability access
- completed a program of 'Individual Asset Plans' that consider the service need and fit for purpose of FACS assets
- completed a 'Global Risk Assessment' of some FACS premises.

Under our ongoing DAP actions FACS will:

- work with our Districts to better align building assets with service needs.

4. Assisting people with disability to participate in public consultations and to apply for and participate in government advisory boards and committees.

FACS is looking forward to working towards increasing the number of people with disability involved with FACS boards and committees with new actions under our 2016 Disability Inclusion Action Plan.

5. Increasing employment participation of people with disability in the NSW public sector.

Under our completed DAP actions FACS has:

- worked with training organisations and other government agencies to facilitate apprenticeship opportunities for people with disability
- completed a staff survey to identify staff with disabilities
- through *Ready, Willing and Able* included a target for traineeships for all government departments. The *Ready, Willing and Able* final report noted that opportunities for traineeships were provided to 18 people with disability from a target of 50 placements.

Under our ongoing DAP actions FACS will:

- wherever reasonable make workplace adjustments to accommodate preferred applicants with disabilities
- monitor the proportion of staff with disability through the compilation and reporting of regular workforce profile equal employment opportunity data
- use the Reasonable Adjustment Policy when assessing work stations and staff needs for staff with disability
- implement policies and procedures such as reasonable adjustment, flexible work practices policy and face-to-face Disability Awareness training for staff.

6. Using government decision-making, programs and operations to influence other agencies and sectors to improve community participation and quality of life for people with disability

Under our completed DAP actions FACS has:

- worked with Australian Network on Disability to deliver 34 training workshops to Transition to Work providers in engaging and supporting employer partnerships.

Under our ongoing DAP actions FACS will:

- assist Aboriginal Community Housing Providers provide training to assist staff working with people who may have a range of disabilities
- develop and promote partnerships with other government agencies to share resources and expertise
- make modifications to AHO owned properties through the FACS tenancy management teams on a needs basis. New supply modifications are targeted to meet the needs of the community and identify occupants with disability modification requirements
- Assist the AHO restructure to better align with FACS districts to provide better integrated and localised support for Aboriginal people with disability.

7. Providing quality specialist and adapted services where mainstream services are not responsive or adequate to meet the needs of people with disability.

Under our completed DAP actions FACS has:

- adopted a person centred approach to support people with disability in all program areas through *Ready Together*. *Ready Together* implements the *Living Life My Way* framework and includes other important reforms such as *Disability Inclusion Act 2014*
- funded disability modifications on AHO owned properties managed by Aboriginal community housing providers.

National Disability Strategy (NDS)

The National Disability Strategy uses a whole of government, whole of life approach to inclusion planning and service delivery. The plan includes 136 actions or activities ranging in scale from targeted grant programs to major reforms. Under the Strategy, FACS has committed to being the lead agency for 42 of these actions.

There are six National Disability Strategy outcome areas under the NDS NSW implementation plan.

1. Inclusive and accessible communities

Highlights

- FACS has changed its operating procedures to ensure that flexible housing options are better able to meet the support needs of people with disability.
- In July 2014, members of the Sector and Reform Forum met with representatives of Local Government NSW to identify how FACS Districts and councils can improve links. This includes linking planning cycles and sharing demographic knowledge of local communities. This meeting was a starting point to begin to explore a partnership approach and will be further explored under the Service Delivery Planning component of the NGO Strategy.

2. Rights protection, justice and legislation

Highlights

- FACS contracted WestWood Spice to undertake an independent evaluation of the Supported Decision Making Pilot in 2013-14. It was completed in June 2014. The pilot included 26 people with disability and their supporters and looked at different ways people with disability could be supported to make their own decisions. Early findings from the pilot indicated that the use of supported decision making processes enabled people to make more of their own decisions and to make these in new areas.

3. Economic security

Highlights

- FACS has funded the *Transition Support Project* state-wide in targeted schools for students with disability. The project helps students develop personal transition plans designed to achieve post school employment, further education and training goals. This project is delivered in joint partnership between FACS and the NSW education sector; NSW Department of Education and Communities, the Catholic Education Commission, and the NSW Association of Independent Schools. An independent evaluation took place in November and December 2013 and highlights the significant achievements made by the project and the continued potential it has to enhance students' lives through better transition planning.

- Under *Ready Together*, FACS is committed to delivering 1,850 supported accommodation packages, which include individualised funding arrangements.
- The *Leaving Care Program* has been reviewed to align with the individualised funding arrangements set out under *Living Life My Way* and *Ready Together*, promoting more flexible approaches to purchasing a mix of services.
- FACS is continuing discussions with the Commonwealth Department of Social Services to promote smooth transitions for people with disability between employment supports provided through NSW and the Commonwealth. Transition to work and Commonwealth supports young people with disability to develop skills necessary to secure employment. In 2013/14, 68.6% of Transition to work graduates achieved employment or further education

4. Personal and community support

Highlights

- Through *Ready Together* approximately 11,500 new individualised support places will be provided by 2016.
- The use of individualised funding arrangements is being expanded in three ways:
 - moving programs sustainably towards a more individualised approach
 - providing a significant proportion of growth using individualised funding models
 - responding to the requests of people with disability who wish to individualise their arrangements.
- The *Employment Enablement Strategy* includes 50 packages of support for skill development and on the job training, to be provided to adults with disability across metropolitan Sydney from the end of 2014.
- Each package will be for 12 months and will be funded at the current *Transition to Work* program annual rate (\$20,426 pa).
- FACS supports older Australian Disability Enterprise workers who are ready to retire, to engage in age appropriate community living through the provision of Active Ageing support packages. To date FACS has provided Active Ageing supports to facilitate the retirement of 25 individuals to age appropriate community living.
- The Strengthening Supports for Children 0-8 Years and their Families Strategy was published by FACS in September 2013. This Strategy provides the framework for a significant shift in the way that early intervention supports are delivered. FACS is undertaking this work in consultation with the NSW Ministry of Health, the NSW Department of Education and Communities and non-government and private providers. The outcomes of the Strategy to date include:
 - increased access to supports for children with disability and their families in their local area
 - more innovative use of scarce resources such as therapists and other early intervention experts
 - children with disability and their families are less segregated and able to participate more in their local community
 - community awareness of disability is increased.

- Increased investment through Ready Together to support the age group.
- The implementation of the National Child Protection Framework's Second Action Plan continues under the auspices of the Families and Children's Secretaries Group.
- A number of national collaborative projects that impact children and young people with disabilities, such as reporting on National Standards in OOHC are on track.
- In 2013/14, through *Ready Together*, 300 new Flexible Respite – Recreation places were rolled out across NSW FACS Districts.

5. Learning and skills

Highlights

- The *Community Participation*, *Life Choices*, and *Active Ageing* programs ensure that people with disability receive support to participate in activities related to their individual goals within their communities. Through *Ready Together*, FACS will continue to invest in additional individualised packages of support for people with disability through the programs up to 2015-16.
- In 2013-14, over 15,500 people were supported by FACS, to participate in a range of community engagement initiatives at a cost of over \$290 million. This is expected to grow to almost 16,500 people and \$326.2 million in 2014-15.
- In 2013-14, over 5,000 young people have been supported in the Community Participation program at a cost of \$153.2 million (this includes 429 funded school leavers).
- Support packages have been allocated in line with the *Living Life My Way* framework, allowing people with disability increased choice and control over their supports.

6. Health and wellbeing

Highlights

- Developing enhanced models of care for people with intellectual disability through clarifying clinical roles and responsibilities.
- Improving referral pathways with particular emphasis on aspects of care related to challenging behaviours.
- Investigating the establishment of state-wide patient/client database to improve client outcomes.
- Mapping health services catering for people with intellectual disability, across the different age ranges, and linking with services provided by other agencies.
- Working with key education providers to enhance the curriculum and teaching resources related to healthcare for people with intellectual disability.
- Following the introduction of localisation one year ago, and more recently OneFACS, District and local staff work together to provide integrated services for this client group. Going forward FACS will need to establish a service level agreement with NDIS.