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The National Standards for Disability Services Consultation

Further Comment from JFA Purple Orange

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INTRODUCTION

JFA Purple Orange welcomes the opportunity to provide further comment on the proposed version of the draft National Standards for Disability Services (NSDS).

Though a relatively young organisation, the Julia Farr Association is the latest entity in an organisational history of disability support spanning over 130 years. It is a self-funded, social profit (not for profit), non-government organisation. No longer a conventional service provider, the Julia Farr Association delivers research, policy development, consultancy and information services anchored upon the perspectives and experiences of people living with

disability, family members and other supporters. Freed from the constraints of government-contracted service provision or advocacy, the Julia Farr Association is well placed to provide informed and balanced commentary on a range of issues relevant to people living with heightened vulnerability.

JFA Purple Orange is the shopfront for this work. Anchored on the theoretical principles of Personhood and Citizenship¹, and via research and dialogue with people living with disability, JFA Purple Orange develops policy and practice in support of people living with disability getting a fair go at everything that life has to offer.

The agency also administers a number of trust funds, and awards grants to individuals and entities for initiatives that promise practical or innovative ways to support people into ordinary valued lives.

Its sister entity, the Julia Farr Housing Association is the landlord for a range of accessible community houses, and works with its tenants and their support agencies on accommodation matters. Its work is guided by exploration of next practice in the design and construction of accessible affordable housing and its proximity to community life. The agency is also deepening its understanding of the role of 'Social Landlord'.

The agency also hosts the movement known as In Control Australia, an unincorporated collective of individuals and agencies interested in the advancement of individualised budgets and personalised supports in people's lives.

Rationale for the importance of aligning standards with current conceptualisations of disability

Current initiatives such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) and the National Disability Insurance Scheme locate people living with disability as a participant in life according to their preferred lifestyle. To this end it is intended that people living with disability receive support to make decisions and choices about how they will seek personal fulfilment, experience the joy of participative contribution and enjoy a sense of belonging. Necessarily this entails conceptualising people living with disability as citizens first and foremost with the same rights as other people living in the community.

¹ "Citizenship refers to an active lifestyle that has the prospect of fulfillment for the person concerned. Such a lifestyle is one where, as part of a personally defined set of lifestyle choices, the person is in and part of their local community, contributing and growing through involvement in meaningful valued activities, and participating in a network of relationships characterized by acceptance, belonging and love". (Williams R 2010, *Model of Citizenship Support: Discussion Paper*, Julia Farr Association, p. 3)

In keeping with contemporary understandings JFA Purple Orange believes that a critical contribution to any discussion about support arrangements must be the authentic perspective of the person living with disability who receives the support. As with all people who purchase services, the service is accountable to the person living with disability for the quality and nature of the service provided. The NSDS offer an important opportunity to reinforce current understandings about what people living with disability should be able to expect from a service.

Evidence that people living with disability want to be consulted about their choices and decisions in shaping their support arrangements is provided by a project currently being run at JFA Purple Orange called the 100 Leaders Project. The project collects the stories of people living with disability who have taken leadership to create a life of their choosing. These stories can be accessed at www.100leaders.org.au. The 100 Leader stories are a potent testimony to the determination of people in setting and achieving their goals which often entail making a significant contribution to their community.

Drawing on our experience, we have endeavoured in the present document to offer a version of the NSDS which embodies our perspective about optimal wording and content.

COMMENTS

Background

On 30 June 2010 JFA Purple Orange provided a written submission outlining our views and perspectives regarding the National Standards for Disability Services as part of the national consultation. Our comments related to the focus being on people living with disability as citizens first and foremost and as having the right to live a decent, valued life. In support of this feedback we recommended a fuller expression of promoting and protecting fundamental rights and a stronger focus on placing the person living with disability at the centre of their support arrangements. Recommendations for changes to language supported this approach. It appears that some of our recommendations have influenced in part the development of the draft standards however JFA Purple Orange seeks to take a further opportunity to highlight our perspective.

In this submission JFA Purple Orange seeks to go beyond the previous recommendations in an attempt to provide a more detailed version of what we mean for the standards. This

version reflects our understandings and perspectives on what the standards would look like if they are to provide a benchmark against which services are required to be effective and accountable. We have shown our proposed changes in red on the attached document.

We draw attention to the following issues which reflect our intentions in recommending changes to the document. These include:

- *Language*: The use of contemporary language which upholds the conceptualisation of people living with disability as valued citizens who are able to make choices about their preferred lifestyle and have control in how that occurs for them. This may entail the provision of appropriate personalised support;
 - *The importance of the full expression of human rights*: With regard to services human rights involve much more than safety from abuse and privacy of an individual's information. In order for each human right to be taken seriously and to be acted on by services we consider that it is important to describe the full responsibilities regarding upholding the human rights of individuals living with disability;
 - *Person-led support arrangements means re-orienting the standards so that they are written from the perspective of the person's decisions and wishes*: We have re-focused the standards to reflect that people living with disability have a preferred lifestyle which reflects their individuality, life goals and opportunities to participate in the community. Living a preferred lifestyle involves people living with disability exercising choice and control. They can provide feedback and act on it in the same way that other individuals do. We believe it is important to reflect this in the standards. Therefore any goal or support activity must start with the person's preferences and wishes;
 - *Access involves more than physical access*: Physical access alone does not guarantee that a person living with disability will be able to take up active citizenship. The likelihood of a person being able to benefit from opportunities of active citizenship are significantly increased when inclusive practices are embraced. Inclusion is an integral part of access and involves capacities of access, welcome and personal considerations being in place. Consequently we have renamed the Access section to be Access and Inclusion;
 - *Access also includes having information in a variety of formats to meet the needs of people with different sensory disability*: We have reflected this in our version of the standards;
 - *Service accountability is an important feature of JFA-Purple Orange's proposed version of the standards as it provides a framework within which people living with*
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disability are able to have a say about the services they receive: JFA Purple Orange believes that it is critical that support services are made accountable to people living with disability for outcomes in their lives. Throughout the revised version we have incorporated a stronger requirement for service accountability.

A main concern with the development of the NSDS is that they are able to penetrate the daily lives of people living with disability and make a difference. JFA Purple Orange believes that the NSDS have the potential to powerfully impact the lives of people living with disability. However we believe that the standards in their current form do not truly reflect the status of people living with disability as valued citizens with choice and control about how they use support services.

JFA purple Orange's proposed version of the NSDS offers an explanation for what we mean and intend for the standards in order for them to be effective and in keeping with the most recent perspectives about what we should aim for in supporting people living with disability to have choice and control in their lives. Only when documents such as The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the National Disability Insurance Scheme and the NSDS are aligned can we expect to see a real difference in the lives of people living with disability.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide further comment about the National Standards for Disability Services and are happy to provide further input and clarification about our perspective.

Yours sincerely

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ATTACHMENT:

JFA Purple Orange Submission – draft National Standards for Disability Services

Draft National Standards for Disability Services

Errata note

Due to a typographical error on page five of the previous version of this document, this amended version of the draft National Standards for Disability Services has been released. A copy of the amended version is also available on the [National Quality Framework project website](#).

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Introduction

The National Standards for Disability Services (National Standards) will help to promote and drive a nationally consistent approach to improving the quality of services with a focus on outcomes for people with disability.

The current National Standards were produced in 1993. They are being revised to better reflect current language, philosophies and service models, **particularly the move towards locating the person living with disability at the centre of support arrangements and maximising choice and control in all interactions with support services.**

Victoria is leading national work to revise the National Standards, on behalf of, and with the participation of all Australian jurisdictions.

In 2010, service users, their family members and carers, service providers and advocates provided feedback on the existing National Standards, with comprehensive consultation led by the Disability Studies and Research Centre of the University of New South Wales (DSRC UNSW). Consultation focused on awareness and use of the standards, and language, meaning, relevance and utility of the standards.

This document

The draft National Standards contained in this document were developed in 2011, and are based on the findings of the DSRC UNSW research project. The draft National Standards are:

- Rights
- Participation
- Individual Outcomes
- Feedback and Complaints
- Service Access
- Service Management.

The draft National Standards were endorsed by Select Council on Disability Reform in February 2012, and will be subject to validation and user testing throughout 2012.

Before the draft National Standards are finalised, a validation study will be conducted to confirm that they are a practical tool to improve outcomes for people living with disability. A key process underpinning the validation study is national consultation with key stakeholders. Consultation will be held from April – June 2012.

The consultation is an opportunity for users to test and provide feedback on the draft National Standards. This feedback will be used to inform a final set of draft National Standards. Consultation processes will include focus groups, workshops, an online survey and a written submission process.

A report on findings and recommendations arising from the validation study will be made available on the National Quality Framework project website by December 2012. For more information on the revision of the National Standards visit the project website at

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-service-providers/disability/service-quality-and-improvement/national-quality-framework-for-disability-services-in-australia>

What makes up the Standards?

Our understanding of disability

These standards are underpinned by an understanding that disability is an evolving concept and that disability results from the interaction between persons living with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

(UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2006)

Definitions

The Standards use the term “individual” to mean the person who uses a service or support. This is typically a person with disability, but may also mean a family member or carer, for example, in the case of respite services.

Human Rights Principles

These NQF principles promote respect, dignity and opportunity across all standards and were drawn from the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. A new Principle has been added to strengthen the focus on partnerships, consistent with the National Disability Strategy, which emphasises the importance of people with disability having opportunities to participate in decisions that affect their lives, along with family, carers and advocates. The National Disability Strategy promotes active participation in decision making to safeguard and advance the human rights, wellbeing and interests of people with disability. The new Principle is highlighted in italics below.

Quality Management Principles

These NQF principles reinforce the approach to quality management across all standards.

Outcomes for people

This is a new element of the National Standards and describes the experience a person using a disability service would have through the achievement of each particular Standard.

Standards for service

The Standards for service give an introductory statement of the requirements involved for services.

Indicators of practice

The Indicators of practice describe what is happening in the lives of people living with disability as a result of the implementation of these standards.

The overarching Principles

The overarching Human Rights Principles are important across all standards and the Quality Management Principles underpin all standards and indicators.

Human Rights Principles

- Respect for the inherent dignity, independence of persons and individual autonomy, including the freedom to make one's own choices
- Non-discrimination
- Full and effective participation and inclusion in society
- Respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity
- Equality of opportunity
- Accessibility
- Equality between men and women
- Active partnerships between services and people with disability, and where appropriate, their families, carers and/or advocates
- Respect for the evolving capacities of children with disability and respect for the right of children with disability to preserve their identities.
- (Adapted from the UN convention on the rights of persons with disability, 2006)

Quality Management Principles

- Focus on outcomes for people who use services and supports
- Provide leadership
- Involve service users and staff
- Use a process approach
- Take a systems approach
- Encourage continual improvement
- Make evidence-informed decisions
- Engage in collaborative partnerships

	Rights	Participation	Individual Outcomes	Feedback and Complaints	Service Access & Inclusion	Service Management
Outcomes for People	<p>I am aware of and understand my rights as a human being</p> <p>I am supported to make informed decisions and choices in my life, and to exercise my rights</p>	<p>I am actively supported and encouraged to make decisions and choices about how I will participate in the community of my choice, on my own terms.</p>	<p>I have genuine opportunities to have and retain choice and control in my life.</p> <p>I am supported in ways that uphold my status as a citizen</p>	<p>I provide feedback to services about whether they do or do not meet my needs. This includes my suggestions about how the service can be improved</p>	<p>I am well-informed about the service network and make choices about which service fits my needs and goals.</p> <p>Every aspect of the service is accessible to me</p> <p>The service makes efforts to welcome me and meet my needs</p>	<p>When making choices about which service I will use I select services that are well coordinated and effective.</p> <p>The management consults with me and seeks my feedback</p>
Standards for Services	<p>The service promotes, protects and ensures that individuals living with disability experience their full human rights and fundamental freedoms without</p>	<p>The service promotes and provides opportunities for individuals to experience active and meaningful participation in the community of their choice, on their</p>	<p>Services and supports are informed by and based on the particular needs, wishes and interests of individuals living with disability in</p>	<p>The voice and experience of the individuals is privileged in evaluating and improving the service.</p>	<p>Accessibility and inclusion is paramount in setting service priorities. Individuals are welcomed and are able to participate in all aspects of the</p>	<p>Service management review service outcomes regularly and is accountable to individuals for whether or not desired outcomes are achieved in</p>

	discrimination	terms.	achieving their desired lifestyle and goals		service with ease and dignity.	their lives.
Indicators for Practice	<p>Individuals are asked about their goals and wishes.</p> <p>The service keeps personal information confidential and private.</p> <p>The service actively ensures that individuals are free from discrimination, exploitation, harm, neglect, abuse and violence.</p> <p>The service provides timely information in appropriate formats to help</p>	<p>The service actively supports an individual's connection to their chosen community on their terms.</p> <p>Staff understand, respect and facilitate individual interests and preferences, in relation to work, learning, social activities and community connection over time.</p> <p>Where appropriate, the service works with an individual's family, carer, significant other or advocate to promote community</p>	<p>The service works with an individual to identify their needs, strengths, interests and life goals</p> <p>The service delivers and regularly reviews services and supports to meet them.</p> <p>Service planning, provision and review is collaboratively undertaken with an individual and (with consent) their family, carer or advocate.</p> <p>Service planning</p>	<p>Feedback mechanisms, including complaints processes, are clearly communicated (including Internet sites) to individuals families, carers and advocates.</p> <p>The service seeks and reviews feedback on service provision on a regular basis. Compliments, feedback and complaints inform service improvements for individuals living with disability and</p>	<p>The service provides accessible information about the type of services provided and about individual's rights while using the service, including information relating to access and inclusion..</p> <p>The service develops, applies, reviews and communicates entry and exit processes.</p> <p>The service develops, applies and reviews policies and practices related to</p>	<p>Organisational vision, mission and values are clearly communicated and influence contemporary practice within the service.</p> <p>Organisational capabilities, including human resource management, are developed, maintained and enhanced to support the achievement of individual and community outcomes.</p> <p>The service uses</p>

	<p>individuals, families and carers make informed decisions about and understand their rights.</p> <p>The service addresses any abuse of rights promptly and systemically.</p> <p>Individuals are treated with courtesy, dignity and respect. Their culture, beliefs, values and personal characteristics are respected.</p> <p>The service works proactively to safeguard individuals from sexual abuse or exploitation by changing the environment and the conditions that surround a person</p>	<p>connection, inclusion and participation.</p> <p>The service works in partnership with other organisations to support individuals to actively participate in their community.</p> <p>Individuals living with disability are able to withhold or withdraw consent to participate at any time</p> <p>Individuals receive information about opportunities/options to participate in the community</p>	<p>and delivery is responsive and sensitive to diversity (including age, gender, culture, language, faith, sexual orientation, relationship status, disability type and any other factors).</p>	<p>the community.</p> <p>Complaints are managed in a proactive, timely and collaborative manner.</p> <p>The service effectively manages disputes in a prompt and proper manner. Individuals are actively supported by a representative of their choice to provide feedback, make a complaint or resolve a dispute without retribution.</p> <p>Telephone access is available for people who are deaf, hearing impaired or speech impaired through the National Relay Service</p> <p>Staff are provided</p>	<p>eligibility criteria, priority of access and waiting lists. The service monitors and addresses potential barriers to access and inclusion.</p> <p>The service provides information and referral support when a service is not available to an individual.</p> <p>The service collaborates with other relevant organisations to establish and maintain a referral network.</p> <p>Accessible toilets are available.</p> <p>The service provides ongoing training to staff on access and</p>	<p>consultative processes with people with disability, families, carers and advocates to review policies, practices, procedures and service provision.</p> <p>Individuals receive services that comply with legal, professional, ethical and other relevant standards</p>
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	when they interact with the community			with ongoing training about access and inclusion in the service	inclusion issues	
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1. Rights

The intent of this standard is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons living with disability, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity.

Human Rights Principles

- Respect for the inherent dignity, independence of persons and individual autonomy, including the freedom to make one's own choices
- Non-discrimination
- Full and effective participation and inclusion in society
- Respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity
- Equality of opportunity
- Accessibility
- Equality between men and women
- Active partnerships between services and people with disability, and where appropriate, their families, carers and/or advocates
- Respect for the evolving capacities of children with disability and respect for the right of children with disability to preserve their identities.

What do we mean by human rights?

1. ACCESS – Right to access services. I have a right to access services that meet my identified needs.

2. SAFETY – Right to be safe from abuse. I have a right to be safe from abuse, or the risk of abuse, and to have my legal and human rights respected and upheld. I have a right to receive services free from discrimination and harassment.

3. QUALITY – Right to high quality services. I have a right to receive safe, reliable, coordinated services that are appropriate to my needs and provided with care, skill and competence. Services I receive should comply with legal, professional, ethical and other relevant standards. Any incidents involving me are managed openly to ensure improvements.

4. RESPECT – Right to be treated with respect. I have a right to be treated with courtesy, dignity and respect. I have a right to receive services that respect my culture, beliefs, values and personal characteristics.

5. INFORMATION – Right to be informed. I have a right to open, clear and timely communication about services, treatment, options and costs in a way that I can understand.

6. PARTICIPATION – Right to actively participate. I have a right to be fully involved in decisions and choices about services planned and received. I have a right to support and

advocacy so I can participate. I have a right to seek advice or information from other sources. I have a right to give, withhold or withdraw my consent at anytime.

7. PRIVACY – Right to privacy and confidentiality. I have a right to have my privacy respected and my personal information kept confidential and secure. Personal information about me may not be disclosed without my consent, unless the disclosure is required to lessen or prevent serious threat to life, wellbeing, or safety or is required by law. I have a right to request and gain access to my records, unless there is legal restriction in place. I can nominate person/s with whom information can be shared.

8. COMMENT – Right to comment and / or complain. I have a right to be listened to and to comment on, or make a complaint about services sought or provided to me. I have a right to have my complaint dealt with properly and promptly, and without retribution as a result of having made a complaint. I have a right to a representative of my choice to support and to advocate for me when making a complaint. My feedback and complaints are managed openly to ensure improvements. (UN Convention On the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2006)

Outcomes of people

I am aware of and understand my rights as a human being. I am supported to make informed decisions and choices in order to exercise my rights.

Standards of service

The service promotes, protects and ensures that people living with disability experience their full human rights and fundamental freedoms without discrimination

Indicators of Practice

- People living with disability are asked about their goals, preferences, interests and wishes
- The service, its staff and volunteers treat all individuals with **courtesy**, dignity and **respect. Their culture, beliefs, values and personal characteristics are respected**
- The service keeps individual's personal information confidential and private.
- The service ensures that all individuals are free from discrimination, exploitation, harm, neglect, abuse and violence.
- The service provides timely information in appropriate formats to assist individuals, families and carers to make informed decisions and understand their rights.
- **The service undertakes a preventative approach to safeguarding individuals from abuse and exploitation focused on changing the environment and conditions that surround a person rather than focusing solely on the individual.**
- The service addresses any abuse of rights promptly and systemically.

2. Participation

The intent of this standard is to promote the connection of people with disability with their communities, **to ensure that participation is based on the individual's choices and interests**, and to ensure that services work collaboratively with individuals to enable their genuine participation.

This standard recognises the roles that services can play in enabling the citizenship of people with disability and their participation in the community, including work and learning. In meeting this standard, services will actively support and encourage people to participate in their chosen community, and to develop and maintain community participation based on their interests, identity, heritage and changing aspirations over time.

The standard emphasises the importance of:

- **that individuals be asked about the particular interests, preferences , goals and aspirations as a basis for decisions about participation**
- The active encouragement and promotion of economic and community participation
- Participation occurs on the individual own terms
- The role of family, carers, advocates and other organisations in promoting economic and community participation.

Outcome for people

I am actively supported and encouraged to make decisions and choices about how I will participate in my chosen community on my terms.

Standard for service

The service promotes and **provides** opportunities/options for individuals to experience active and **meaningful** participation in the community **of their choice and on their terms**.

Indicators of Practice

- The service actively supports an individual's connection to their chosen community.
- Staff understand, respect and facilitate individual interests and preferences, in relation to work, learning, social activities and community connection over time.
- **Individuals receive information about opportunities/options to participate in their chosen community**
- **Individuals are able to withhold or withdraw consent to participate at any time**
- Where appropriate, the service works with an individual's family, carer, significant other or advocate to promote community connection, inclusion and participation.
- The service works in partnership with other organisations to support individuals to actively participate in their community.

3. Individual Outcomes

The intent of this standard is to **promote persons centred planning** and responsive service delivery. This will involve personalised approaches, including collaborative planning and self-management models.

Increasingly, services aim to provide tailored and flexible services and supports, which require **the individual to be located at the centre of their support arrangements**, and, where agreed, their families, carers and advocates, to plan and review delivery. This standard encourages **partnership** and active dialogue between an individual, their families, carers or advocates and a service regarding the nature of the service or supports provided.

The standard emphasises the importance of:

- **Placing the person at the centre of their support**
- **Asking the individual about their wishes, choices, preferences and interests**
- Understanding individual strengths, needs and life goals to inform individual service planning and delivery
- **working in partnership with individuals, and collaboratively with families, support workers and advocates**
- Responsiveness **and sensitivity** to diversity.

Outcome for people

I make choices about the support I will access to meet my particular needs and to achieve my goals. If I have impaired decision-making capacity then I will be supported to make decisions by people I know and trust.

Standard for service

Services and supports are **informed by and based upon the particular needs and wishes of individuals achieving their desired lifestyle and goals**

Indicators of Practice

- **The individual's particular wishes, goals and needs are prioritised in the development of a service plan**
- The service works in **partnership** with an individual to identify their needs, strengths and life goals, and **to collaboratively plan,**
- The service regularly reviews services or supports **in partnership with individuals.**
- Service planning, provision and review is collaboratively undertaken with an individual and (with consent) their family, carer or advocate.
- Service planning and delivery is responsive to diversity (including age, gender, culture, language, faith, sexual identity, relationship status, disability type and other factors).

Feedback and complaints

The intent of this standard is to ensure that positive and negative feedback, complaints and disputes are effectively handled and shape service improvement at both an individual and organisation-wide level.

This standard recognises that continuous improvement is greatly assisted by robust and timely feedback, including compliments and complaints. Services have a range of **accessible** opportunities to seek feedback from individuals, ranging from *ad hoc* feedback, planned service user engagement, satisfaction surveys or consumer groups.

In addition, this standard recognises that people with disability need to feel safe to make a complaint, provide negative feedback or seek the resolution of a dispute, without the fear of retribution or loss of service.

The standard emphasises the importance of:

- Regular and proactive feedback systems **that are provided in the appropriate accessible formats**
- The use of feedback to continuously drive service improvements
- **Proper and prompt** handling of complaints and disputes
- The value of independent **chosen** supports to ensure people with disability are able to provide feedback, make a complaint or seek the resolution of a dispute **without fear or of retribution or loss of service.**

Outcome for people

There are opportunities to regularly provide feedback to services about service delivery. This includes my suggestions about how the service can be improved.

Standard for service

The voice and experience of the individuals is privileged in evaluating and improving the service. Accessible feedback mechanisms, including complaints processes, are clearly communicated (including Internet sites) to individuals families, carers and advocates.

- The service seeks and reviews feedback on service provision **using accessible formats** on a regular basis.
- Compliments, feedback and complaints inform service improvements for individuals and the community.
- Complaints are managed in a proactive, prompt and collaborative manner.
- The service effectively manages dispute in a **prompt and proper manner.**
- Individuals are actively supported **and represented by a person of their choice** to provide feedback, make a complaint or resolve a dispute.
- **Telephone access is available for people who experience deafness, hearing impairment or speech impairment through the National Relay Service**

4. Service Access and inclusion

The intent of this standard is to ensure that individuals are able to access all aspects of the service with ease and dignity. Inclusion of individuals is considered to be an important part of access however the presence of physical access does not ensure inclusion and nor does the presence of inclusive practice ensure physical accessibility. The intent of the standard is also to ensure that accessible and inclusive service processes and procedures are in place to facilitate the full inclusion of individuals.

The Disability Discrimination act (1992) directs that all public places must be accessible to people living with disability. It is against the law for public places to be inaccessible to people living with disability. This includes government and non-government services.

All services should freely, openly and without pity accommodate any person with disability without restrictions or limitations at any time. This facilitates the right of individuals living with disability to be welcomed and access all aspects of the community including services. Social inclusion of individuals living with disability and entails viewing people as having needs, interests, rights and obligations, and not just as service recipients or dependent persons (Smith, 2008).

The standard emphasises the importance of:

- Accessible information in a variety of formats
- inclusive practices and procedures
- Transparent and consistently applied processes which are inclusive of the particular needs of individuals
- Information provision and active referral when a service is not available, and the value of partnerships with other agencies to enable referral, and
- Regular reviews to identify and eliminate any potential barriers to access and inclusion.

Outcome for people

I am well-informed about the service network and make choices about which service fits my needs and goals. I am able to access all aspects of the service with ease and dignity. I feel I am welcomed and included in the activities and processes used by the service.

Standard for service

Accessibility and inclusion are paramount in the service priorities. Individuals living with disability receive material inappropriate formats providing information about access and inclusion.

Indicators of Practice

- The service provides accessible information about the types and quality of services.
- Strategies exist for being inclusive of individuals living with disability at all stages of service delivery
- The service develops, applies, reviews and communicates entry and exit processes.
- The service develops, applies and reviews policies and practices related to eligibility criteria, priority of access and waiting lists.

- The service has developed policies on access and inclusion of individuals living with disability
- The service monitors and addresses potential barriers to access and inclusion.
- The service provides information and referral support when a service is not available to an individual.
- The service collaborates with other relevant organisations to establish and maintain a referral network.
- Accessible toilet facilities are available in the service
- The service provides ongoing education and training to staff regarding access and inclusion of individuals living with disability

Service Management

The intent of this standard is to ensure that services are effectively and efficiently managed, are able to respond to the needs of individuals and service delivery is continuously improved.

A range of activities is required to support good quality service provision and these are reflected in the standard. The involvement of individuals using services, including people with disability, their families and carers, and advocates, in service planning and review is recognised as a central element of continuous improvement.

The standard emphasises the importance of:

- Sound governance and management
- Clear communication to staff, individuals and other stakeholders
- Continuous improvement **informed by consultation with individuals living with disability**
- Human resource management, and
- **Consultation** in planning and review at both individual and service levels.

Outcome for people

I receive services that are well planned and delivered.

Standard for service

Sound service management and leadership maximise outcomes for individuals.

Indicators of Practice

The service is soundly led and managed with:

- Suitably qualified, skilled and supported staff and governing bodies
- Practice that complies with legislative, regulatory and contractual requirements
- Documented, monitored and effectively used management systems
- Monitoring, feedback, learning and reflection processes which enable continuous improvement.
- Organisational vision, mission and values are clearly communicated and influence contemporary practice within the service.
- Organisational capabilities, including human resource management, are developed, maintained and enhanced to support the achievement of individual and community outcomes.
- The service uses consultative processes with people with disability, families, carers and advocates to review policies, practices, procedures and service provision.
- **Staff are provided with ongoing training relating to disability issues**
- **Individuals receive services that comply with legal, professional, ethical and other relevant standards**

How to have a say

This document has been prepared by Synergistiq in consultation with the National Quality Framework Working Group.

There are a number of ways you can learn more about how you can participate in the consultation on the draft National Standards.

Internet	<p>An online survey will be open from 7 May – 15 June 2012.</p> <p>You can access the survey from the project website http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-service-providers/disability/service-quality-and-improvement/national-quality-framework-for-disability-services-in-australia</p>
Mail	<p>You could write to us and tell us what you think</p> <p>National Standards for Disability Services – consultation project Synergistiq 97 Drummond Street Carlton Victoria 3053</p>
Email	<p>You could send us an email about what you think</p> <p>Email nqf@dhs.vic.gov.au</p>
Telephone	<p>You can ring and ask to speak to someone from the National Quality Framework Project Team</p> <p>Telephone: 1300 366 731 (Mon- Fri 8:30am-5:00pm)</p>
If you are deaf, or have a hearing impairment or speech impairment	<p>You can contact someone from the National Quality Framework Project Team at the Department of Human Services Victoria through the National Relay Service.</p> <p>TTY users Tel: (03) 13 3677 then ask for 1300 650 172</p> <p>Speak and Listen users Tel: 1300 555 727 then ask for 1300 650 172</p> <p>(Mon- Fri 8:30am-5:00pm)</p>

