

NDS Quality and Safeguards Sector Readiness Project

Continuous Improvement Tools

This resource has been developed to assist providers to meet the requirements of the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission Practice Standards (Practice Standards) with regards to continuous improvement.

It includes information and links to other resources which could be helpful to gather and collate continuous improvement ideas, including information on:

- **Continuous Improvement Registers**
- **Continuous Improvement Ideas Forms**
- **Continuous Improvement Working Groups including a Terms of Reference Checklist.**

Continuous Improvement Registers

A Continuous Improvement (CI) Register is used to record the actions that an organisation needs to take to improve their services. It forms part of an organisations commitment to develop and maintain a learning and adaptive culture, that aims for best practice. The register helps track and monitor intended actions and will assist an organisation to meet its obligations under the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission.

Organisations should use a range of information sources to identify opportunities for continuous improvement including:

- ✓ Feedback from participant and support networks
- ✓ Feedback from workers or other stakeholders
- ✓ Complaints about your organisation's services
- ✓ Incidents/allegations related to your organisation's services.
- ✓ Self-assessments and gaps analysis activities
- ✓ Internal audits
- ✓ External audits
- ✓ Changes to legislation or government policy

A continuous improvement register can help determine what an organisation's improvement priorities are and allocate resources for improvement activities. It also helps to identify whether the mechanisms for identifying improvement opportunities are effective.

The register also provides useful evidence in support of internal and external audits.

Continuous Improvement (CI) Register – Sample

A continuous improvement register is used to identify all continuous improvement activities and their outcomes in a single location. A simple example of a register could be:

Date	Type of feedback	File location	Opportunity for improvement	Action required	By whom	By when	Progress / Outcome
Identify when an idea/issue was raised	Who / where did the idea come from?	Where is original information stored?	What do you need to improve? Describe what needs to change.	What are you going to do? Describe the actions.	Who is responsible for implementing the changes?	When will this happen by?	What is the progress or final outcome?
5 Oct. 21	Client complaint	Complaints register	Staff awareness about financial abuse and its implications.	Review policies and procedures related to participant’s money. Review staff training to check that financial abuse and its implications are covered.	Policy subcommittee Training officer Support workers	5 Dec. 22	3 Nov. 22 Policy amended and rolled out. 1 Dec. 22 Refresher training facilitated for support staff.



Other columns could include **Status** and **Outcomes**; this will help with reviewing progress with changes which take time or have multiple stakeholders. For an example of a complete CI register, see NDS Quality and Safeguards CI Register and Instructions - [NDS Toolkit Continuous Improvement Register](#).



Continuous Improvement Ideas Forms

Continuous Improvement Ideas Forms are not the same as complaints forms. They are a way to encourage people with disability, their support networks, workers and change leaders to submit improvement ideas.

Depending on the size and scope of your organisation and the supports you provide, it is important to tailor your form to meet your needs.

Think about how you will capture:

- WHAT is the issue and why does it need to change?
- WHO does the issue impact?
- WHAT is the desired outcome?
- WHO is likely to benefit?
- WHAT needs to be done to achieve the desired outcome?
- WHO needs to be involved?
- WHAT are the timeframes?
- HOW will the outcomes be communicated?
- WHAT additional evidence will be required?
- WHO will record the issue on the CI register?

An example of an improvement idea form can be found here: [NDS Safer Services Continuous Improvement Ideas Submission Form.](#)



Remember to consider how you will get ideas from people with different communication styles and alternative communication. There are many resources available however the resources below are a good starting point if you are looking for guidance, useful tools and checklists to use and share with your teams.

- [Creating accessible and inclusive communications - IncludeAbility](#)
- [Disability-Inclusive Communications Guidelines - United Nations](#)
- [What do I say? A guide to language about disability - PWDA](#)
- [Communicate Clearly - A Guide to Plain English - 26 TEN](#)
- [Person-Centred Practice Across Cultures resources - NDS](#)

Continuous Improvement Working Groups (CIWG)

Establishing a panel or working group of people with disability, their support networks and workers can give organisations another opportunity to gain insight into areas of improvement and develop innovative solutions to identified issues within their services.

Consider developing Terms of Reference for the CIWG to identify the scope and purpose of the working group.



Terms of Reference are useful documents for different groups who come together to work on shared or common interest.

Australian Public Service Commission have produced some useful resources: [Develop a terms of reference | Australian Public Service Commission \(apsc.gov.au\)](#).

Voice at the Table – VATT – have produced practical resources, information and ideas for supporting participation of people with disability - [Resources - Voice at the Table](#). This includes information and tips on [How do we ensure our meetings are inclusive?](#)

CIWG Terms of Reference – What to include

Write a statement which outlines the CIWG overall purpose.

This could include:

- Outline the purpose.** This might include information about why the group was established and how it aims to provide opportunities to improve the quality of services the organisation delivers.
- Outline the overall role of the group members.** This might include for example, to consult, to contribute ideas and to provide feedback based on their experience.
- Outline the overall function of the group.** This might include information on the group mechanism for feedback and evaluation, provide advice to the organisation and to help to the organisation on the services they provide and to prioritise continuous improvement activities.

Include information on the structure of the group, who the group includes and how they will be sourced.

- Include a diverse range of people,** people with disability who receive services from the organisation, their support networks, workers from different levels (consider operational and non-operational team members) and volunteers.
- Include information about the process; how people will be recruited** and appointed to the group.
- Include information about who is responsible for shortlisting** and decisions for final appointment.
- Include information about group members' length of time in the group.**
- Include information about the chair,** length of time of the chair holds this role.



This factsheet provides information and elements to consider for involving participants in governance operations and leadership. [NDS Involvement of participants in the governance operations and leadership of your organisation.](#)

Include information about the types of activities that the group will undertake.

Examples could include:

- Consulting on specific issues** which are brought to the group by the organisation.
- Identifying shared issues of concern** from the group's experiences.
- Initiating ideas on how to solve a problem** a shared issue or concern.
- Provide feedback on solutions** that have already been identified.

Consider including:

- Information on activities or issues which might be out of scope** for this group.
- Information about how decisions will be made.**

Include a code of conduct which outlines expectations for participation and communication within the group.

Examples could include:

- Constructive, respectful and inclusive communication.**
- Not participating in issues where there is a conflict of interest** and notifying the Chair upon becoming aware of the conflict.
- Maintaining confidentiality** of information shared during the group.

Include information about logistics.

This could include:

- Timeframes** – Frequency and duration of the meetings
- Venues** for meetings
- Information and parameters on any costs** that will be covered by the organisation such as transport costs for CIWG members to attend meetings
- Arrangements for supporting the accessibility** of meetings, such as interpreters.
- Record keeping** – Recording, storage and distribution or minutes of meetings.

Identify the intended outputs and outcomes.

- Will reports be written and provided to the board** or senior leadership? Include frequency and what information should be provided.
- How will outcomes be fed back to the group?** This might mean outcomes for an individual, or for workers of the organisation.

Please note: This resource was reviewed in May 2023 by the NDS Quality and Safeguards Sector Readiness Project. The resource is general in nature and is provided as a guide only. NDS believes that the information contained in this publication is correct at the time of publishing, however, NDS reserves the right to vary any of this publication without further notice. The information provided in this publication should not be relied upon instead of other legal, medical, financial, or professional advice. Please always refer to online documents for the latest versions including the NDIS Practice Standards and advice to providers on the Code of Conduct.

