NDS Quality and Safeguards Sector Readiness Project

Organisational Communications - Review and Improvement Action Plan

This resource is aimed at organisations without dedicated communications staff. It can be used by leaders and departments within organisations, who may be responsible for developing internal and external communications.

The action plan in this resource, identifies some of the key components of effective communications and some suggested actions you could take to review or develop your organisation’s internal and external communications.

For further information and resources expanding on the components included, see NDS Sector Readiness resources:

- **Effective organisational communications – What does this mean and why is it important?**
- **Communication policies, procedures, strategies and plans.**
- **Accessible and inclusive information provision and communications.**

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Organisational Communications - Review and Improvement Action Plan

To create opportunities to improve your internal communication:

- Read through the actions for each component.
- Complete the 'Who' column (the position/person responsible within your organisation for the different aspects of staff communication).
- Complete the 'When' column with appropriate timeframes for your organisation.

Key Component	Actions	Who	When
Understand what communication looks like in your organisation.	• Engage with workers at all levels to gather information on who you communicate with, in what ways. • Reflect with your workers on what skills they have and how confident they are at communicating accessibly and inclusively. • Consider the different scenarios which you face in your organisation which require you to communicate. • Engage with your workers and people receiving your services to understand if your communications are successful and doing their job.		

Key Component	Actions	Who	When
Develop policies and procedures for communication which set out the organisation's expectations.	• Include the purpose and principles which align with your organisation's mission and values. • Include clear, concise instructions and any expectations of workers in how they need to act and respond to different situations and communications. • Identify different avenues and the expectations for each. For example: email, face-to-face, phone, social media. • Address concerns regarding confidentiality and privacy including how breaches will be managed. • Consider if you need separate policies and procedures for internal and external communications. • Review and align any other policies which may be linked, such as IT and HR policies.		
Create an easy-to-use Communication Plan/Strategy for communicating to workers and participants.	• Establish the **why, what, who** and **when** you will communicate. • Identify different opportunities for engagement. • Understand who are the internal and external stakeholders (what are their interests, concerns and wants). • Establish roles and responsibilities including any delegated or authorised people. • Monitor the delivery and effectiveness of communications at regular intervals. Ensure there is a primary contact for concerns.		

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Key Component	Actions	Who	When
Identify your different stakeholder groups that may have different information requirements.	• Identify your internal, external and connected stakeholders. • Identify the different people within these groups. • Identify what and how communication will be different for each group and people who might have additional requirements. • Use different channels to ensure you reach everyone who needs the information.		
Establish trusted channels of communication.	• Formal channels – policies, procedures, strategic plans, supervision. • Informal channels – conversations, team collaborations. • Use different avenues such as digital, face-to-face, written.		
Write and distribute various templates for different communications and for different situations.	• Create templates for posters, memos, emails, events, briefings, social posts, depending on the needs of your organisation and stakeholders. • Adapt communications to meet each group's needs. For example: Board, front line workers, direct support workers. • Ensure messages are consistent across all channels.		
Check information is accessible and easy to understand.	• Use everyday language that is free of complex words or technical language. • Make additional accessible / Easy Read versions available. • Ensure information is available on website and intranet. • Establish roles and responsibilities of who will monitor, and check content remains accessible and inclusive.		

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Key Component	Actions	Who	When
Monitor and review - Seek feedback from key workers and participants to keep improving what, how, where and when you communicate.	• Use different opportunities and avenues for feedback. For example: staff meetings, in staff email updates, face to face, client contacts, formal and informal evaluations. • **Act on the feedback provided as part of your continuous improvement.**		

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NDIS Commission resources

- NDIS Commission Code of Conduct webpage
- NDIS Practice Standards and Quality Indicators
- Supporting effective communication

Supporting the workforce

- NDS - Employee Engagement Fact Sheet
- Communication and Engagement videos - NDS Optimising your workforce
- Australian Federation of Disability Organisations - Communication with people with disabilities
- Fairwork Ombudsman - Communication in the workplace and Consultation and cooperation in the workplace

Communication planning

- NDS Risks Incidents and Complaints - NDS Communication Plan Handout
- Australian Government, Australian Public Service Commission - Getting stakeholder engagement right
- NDS Safer Services Toolkit - Change Communication Plan

Accessible and inclusive communication

- 26 Ten - Communicate Clearly - A Guide to Plain English - 26 TEN
- Australian Human Rights Commission, IncludeAbility - Creating accessible and inclusive communications
- Voice at the Table - How do we ensure our meetings are inclusive? Video and Tip sheet
- United Nations - Disability-Inclusive Communications Guidelines
- PWDA - PWDA - What do I say? A guide to language about disability
- WA Government - Accessibility and Inclusivity Guidelines

Language and interpreting resources

- NDS - Person-Centred Practice Across Cultures resources
- NDIA - Language interpreting services for providers
- Translating and Interpreting Services (TIS) - Working with TIS National interpreters
- Victorian Government - Working with interpreters
- NDS - Working effectively with Interpreters
- NSW Government - NSW Public Service Commission - Accessible documents
- NDS webinar - Communication Intelligence Across Cultures - Business Excellence Webinars

Please note: This tool was last updated in May 2023. National Disability Services Limited (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. This resource will need to be adapted to meet the specific needs of your organisation and the people who use your services. 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 latest versions including the NDIS Practice Standards.

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