

# NDS Quality and Safeguards Sector Readiness Project

## Policy to Practice: Leadership Roles, Responsibilities and Resources

Policy to Practice essentially means that the **principles, expectations, actions and desired behaviours** laid out in your policies and procedures, can be seen consistently in the delivery of your services and are reflected in the experience of people receiving services.

This resource includes information and resources for leaders, including:

- **Leadership Roles, Responsibilities and Resources**
- **Resources for Boards**
- **Resources for Leaders**
- **Monitoring – Developing a culture of constant action**






The information is general in nature and is a starting point and should be used and adapted to meet the size and scope of your organisation and the supports you provide.

## Policy to Practice: Leadership Roles, Responsibilities and Resources

How an organisation is led and managed, will have a direct impact on and how an organisations values are communicated and how policies and procedures are implemented.

Leaders drive culture and play an important role in both developing and implementing policies and procedures, whether it's through formal management activities in the decisions and actions they take or through their behaviour.

Leaders at all levels need to:

-  know the role they play in policy development and implementation, in order to ensure they carry out their role effectively
-  be committed to the values of an organisation and its policies and procedures
-  demonstrate the values and behaviours expected
-  strengthen the knowledge of the workforce through consistently referring to policies and procedures, as part of ensuring ongoing engagement
-  monitor that practices and behaviours continue to be at the standards expected by the organisation.

Think about the different levels and structures in your organisation and the roles they play in developing and implementing policy and procedures. **Are these clear in your organisation?** It is important to make sure these roles and responsibilities are defined and communicated.

How roles and responsibilities are defined will be different for each organisation depending on size and structure, one example could be:



**Our Board:**

- **Make decisions** about the strategic direction of the organisation and its activities.
- **Set the tone** for culture and expected behaviours.
- **Demonstrate** and promote a positive culture through behaviour.
- **Endorse policies** that the organisation develops.



**Our Senior Leadership including roles in areas such as Quality and Safeguarding:**

- **Consult** with workforce and people with disability around policies and procedures.
- **Develop** policies and procedures in line with compliance and the organisations values and expectations.
- **Communicate** policies and procedures and manage changes.
- **Monitor** compliance through internal audit and report on issues with compliance or risk.
- **Demonstrate** and promote a positive culture through behaviour and compliance with policies and procedures.



**Our Operational Leaders in collaboration with the workforce:**

- **Implement** organisations policies and procedures with workforce through training and supervision.
- **Embed** policies and procedures with the workforce through review and discussion.
- **Identify** and report issues with policies and procedures where they do not reflect the supports and services.
- **Monitor compliance** through observations and conversations with workforce.
- **Demonstrate** and promote a positive culture through behaviour and compliance with policies and procedures.

## Resources for Boards

Boards play an important part of setting the tone when it comes to values and expected behaviours. The NDIS Practice Standard Provider Governance and Operational Management states:

“The skills and knowledge required for the governing body to govern effectively are identified, and relevant training is undertaken by members of the governing body to address any gaps.”

Some areas to consider could be:

- **Recruiting** for people with lived experience in addition to the skills required on your Board.
- **Evaluating** skills and knowledge assessment of the whole Board. (proportionate to size and scope of services) to see where you might have gaps or areas of development.
- **Ongoing training** in NDIS related training particularly on risk, complaints, incidents, safeguarding and rights.
- **Connecting** with other directors at other organisations, board training, communities of practice and other sector events to provide peer support, or continued professional development.



The [NDS Fundamentals for Boards PDF](#) provides an overview of the roles and responsibilities of Board members for disability providers and links to resources and training that could be used in assessing and upskilling your Board members.

## Resources for Leaders

Leaders hold a vast range of roles, including consulting with the workers and people with disability, developing and communicating policies and ensuring they are implemented.



This [NDS Disability Workforce Resources Interactive PDF](#) provides an overview of the many workforce resources NDS has developed; as well as some other key links to assist with all aspects of your workforce strategy and planning. This includes links to resources on leadership and change management.

### Practice Leader Resources

NDS has produced [Supporting Practice Leadership](#) a collection of practice guides, factsheets, film-based training resources, e-learning programs,

template and other resources, to support Practice Leaders who supervise direct support staff in the disability sector.

## Monitoring – Developing a culture of constant action

Monitoring how your policies and procedures are implemented will help you to identify where practice is incorrect, inappropriate or represents a risk to other people. Consider:

- Using an Internal Audit schedule** to systematically address your policies and procedures. Check them against the Practice Standards and any updates in compliance. For more information on Internal Audits see [Internal Audits](#) factsheet for more information.
- Monitoring your existing feedback mechanisms** such as complaints, incidents, reviews and other touchpoints with people with disability to identify where a policy or procedure might need to change. Keep registers for these systems to assist you identify issues or trends.
- Gather feedback from people with disability** through your consultation with them and their networks. Options could be through surveys, reviews or in response to feedback, issues and concerns. Ask if your policies and procedures reflect their experience of your services.
- Gather feedback from your workforce.** Options can be to use a centralised feedback email address to gather staff feedback, staff focus groups, surveys or [Continuous Improvement Ideas Submission Forms](#) to understand staff attitude, capabilities, skills and knowledge on specific issues.
- Have a continuous improvement register** to capture where your policies and procedures have gaps or need changes, including identifying roles, responsibilities and timeframes for change. For details and more information see [Continuous improvement register](#)
- Lead by example.** Demonstrate your policies and procedures through your leadership teams and their behaviours.
- Act when you see that your policies and procedures aren't being implemented.**
  - Consider what you are expecting to see from your workforce when you go out to your services.
  - Where the practice does not align is this related to consultation, communication, education, or monitoring and support? If so, how are you going to support your teams to improve.

- Where there are consistent or ongoing issues, consider what your approach is going to be.
- Performance management can provide a structured improvement program with set timeframes to ensure compliance with organisational requirements. For more information on performance management see NDS [Person-centred Performance Management](#).

**Please note:** This resource was reviewed in August 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.