

Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) is committed to continuous improvement to achieve better outcomes for the people we support and their families and to help Aspect achieve its vision, mission and values. Continuous improvement in Aspect focuses on putting the people we support at the centre of everything we do - relationships, services and systems and improving our person-centred and family focussed practice.

Aspect has developed the Quality Management Framework with the overarching aim that the people we support are at the centre of everything Aspect does, with schools and services that are Person Centred, Family Focused and Customer Driven.

Aspect recognises that a commitment to its Quality Management Framework is essential for its long term success as a leading service provider for people on the autism spectrum and their families. The Aspect Board, all levels of leadership, management and staff are committed to a shared responsibility for ensuring this quality framework is embedded in, and integral to our organisational culture.

Aspect Quality Management Framework Principles

Principle 1: Aspect provides leadership through its vision, mission and values, which are based on its constitutional objects, provide the reasons for its existence and its way forward.

Principle 2: Aspect maintains a focus on outcomes and positive long term impact for the people we support.

Principle 3: Aspect actively seeks and welcomes feedback, positive or negative, from people who use Aspect services and the public. Aspect values feedback about the quality of its service and communications to monitor and analyse trends under the philosophy that "complaints are good" for supporting the continuous improvement of services and management. Aspect engages in collecting stakeholder feedback through a variety of sources, including:

- use of the Net Promotor Score System;
- government & funding body advice;
- research and continuous improvement projects which are all collated for analysis and implementation of continuous improvement action plans;

- ensuring that a variety of stakeholders are engaged in the organisation's strategic planning process to assist in the formulation of its next strategic plan, to ensure maximum feedback is received and utilised in the process;
- biennial staff surveys.

Principle 4: Aspect treats complaints seriously, sensitively and in a timely manner, having due regard to procedural fairness, confidentiality, and privacy. Aspect is committed to resolving the matter for the particular person or people concerned where practicable. Aspect will learn from such experiences and accordingly will further develop and refine its practices for continuous improvement.

All feedback and complaints are treated with confidentiality and are stored subject to applicable privacy laws.

Principle 5: Aspect embraces collaborative partnerships with stakeholders and community organisations to enhance how each service or support can contribute to the lives of the people we support.

Principle 6: Continuous improvement is always possible and encouraged at all levels of leadership and service provision.

Aspect maintains a culture to give a more comprehensive overview of what is involved in continuous improvement beyond the quality assurance approach of simply meeting standards. Rather, external standards are taken at minimum for the base from which Aspect strives to achieve more.

Principle 7: Decisions in Aspect are based on an agreed evidence-informed policy framework.

Principle 8: Aspect recognises and manages risk through a systems and process approach.

Principle 9: Aspect recognises that the most important resource of the organisation is its staff and invests in staff work health & safety, wellbeing and professional learning and development.

Principle 10: Internal, external and peer reviews and audits are planned, monitored and evaluated on a regular basis.

Any external quality assurance programs required of Aspect is maintained through regular auditing by third parties with welcome feedback for all areas of improvement.

Principle 11: The Quality Management Framework is reviewed for its effectiveness and outcomes quarterly at minimum by the Quality Management Review (QMR).

Aspect has adopted the National Standards for Disability Services and Disability Standards for Education 2005 as the overarching external quality management frameworks organisation wide. Where another relevant national, state or territory standard which Aspect services comply with has a higher level of service outcomes or expectations, Aspect will adopt the higher practice as minimum throughout the organisation. These practices have been embedded throughout Aspect's Quality Management Framework through the Principles outlined above, and are tied to all Aspect Policy Framework documentation.

External Framework

The Quality Management Framework illustrates Aspect's adherence to the National Standards for Disability Services (NSDS) Human Rights and Quality Management Principles.

This policy speaks in further detail to the specific NSDS Standards:

- Standard 4: Feedback and Complaints - for Aspect to ensure that feedback of all forms are effectively handled and seen as opportunities for improvement.
- Standard 6: Service Management - for Aspect promote a culture of continuous improvement through quality management practices as a basis for quality service delivery.

Aspect's Quality Management Framework also upholds the organisations requirement under the Disability Standards for Education Part 8: Standards for Harassment and Victimisation to ensure that complaint mechanisms are available to a student who is harassed or victimized in relation to a disability of a student or an associate of the student, which are fair, transparent, accountable and handled promptly with due regard to the severity of the matter.

Critical Definitions

Continuous improvement - describes the ongoing effort of an organisation to improve services, systems, processes or products to maximise benefits for its clients. The process of continuous improvement relies on evidence-based information to support the organisation's success in achieving its goals and outcomes. This also means adapting to changing needs of the community or people using services.

Quality management - describes the systems and processes an organisation has in place to monitor, review, plan, control and ensure quality of services, supports or products.

Legislation References

Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)
Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW)
Anti-discrimination Act 1991 (QLD)
Children and Young People Act 2008 (ACT)
Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW)
Children Legislation Amendment (Wood Inquiry Recommendations) Act 2009 (NSW)
Children Youth and Families Act 2005 (VIC)
Children's Protection Regulations 2010 (SA)
Community Services (Complaints, Reviews and Monitoring) Act 1993 No 2 (NSW)
Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
Disability Act 2006 (VIC)
Disability Services Act 1993 (ACT)
Disability Services Act 1993 (NSW)
Disability Services Act 1993 (SA)
Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cth)
Discrimination Act 1991 (ACT)
Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (VIC)
Health and Community Services Complaints Act 2004 (SA)
Health Records and Information Protection Act 2002. (Cth)
Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986 (Cth)
National Standards for Disability Services 2013 (Cth)
Privacy Amendment Act (Private Sector) Act 2001 (Cth)
Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (Cth)
Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)
Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)