
Contents

Before you begin	vi
Topic 1: Determining the service requirements of people with disability	1
1A Applying different communication techniques	2
1B Determining personal support needs	15
Summary	25
Learning checkpoint 1: Determining the service requirements of people with disability	26
Topic 2: Evaluating service options	27
2A Evaluating the suitability of service options	28
2B Referrals to other providers	34
Summary	39
Learning checkpoint 2: Evaluating service options	40
Topic 3: Providing services to people with disability	41
3A Informing clients	42
3B Accessing services and supports	45
3C Responding to feedback	51
Summary	55
Learning checkpoint 3: Providing services to people with disability	56

1A

Applying different communication techniques

Disability is a broad term. According to the Australian Network on Disability, a disability is any condition that restricts a person's mental, sensory or mobility functions.

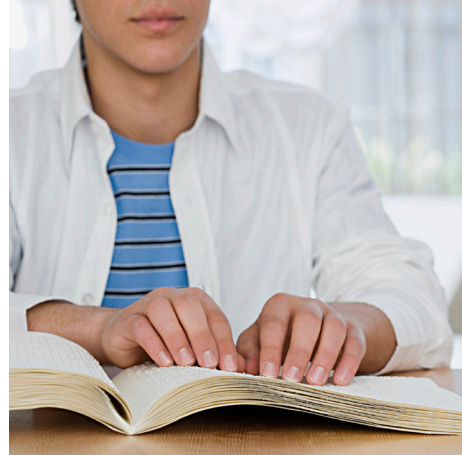
It may be caused by accident, trauma, genetics or disease.

A disability may be:

- temporary or permanent
- total or partial
- lifelong or acquired
- visible or invisible.

According to a range of surveys conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in 2015:

- Over 4 million people in Australia (one in five) have some form of disability.
- 18.6 per cent of females and 18 per cent of males in Australia have a disability.
- The likelihood of living with disability increases with age.
- 1.8 million or 50.7 per cent of Australians aged 65 and over have disability, compared to one in eight (12.5 per cent) aged under 65.
- 2.1 million Australians of working age (15–64 years) have a disability.
- 35.9% of Australia's 8.9 million households include a person with disability.



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (2016) – 2015 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers 2015, Australia: www.abs.gov.au

These statistics highlight the prevalence of disability in Australian society. People living with disability may have more than one disability and many find it difficult to engage in society and their local community. For some people their disability may be impacted by other types of diversity, such as age, gender, race, religion, location and sexual orientation.

Disability Discrimination Act

The Disability Discrimination Act recognises that people with disability must be treated equally before the law.

The *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth) (DDA) defines disability as:

- total or partial loss of a person's bodily or mental functions
- total or partial loss of a part of the body
- the presence in the body of organisms causing or capable of causing disease or illness
- the malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of part of the person's body
- a disorder or malfunction that results in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction
- a disorder, illness or disease that affects a person's thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgment, or that results in disturbed behaviour.

Communication symbols

The complexity of a person's communication needs will determine the way they are able to communicate.

Some people have more complex communication needs and are unable to speak. This includes people with an acquired brain injury (ABI), cognitive impairment or speech difficulty. Instead of using spoken words, they may use symbols that represent meanings.

Here are examples of communication symbols.

Photographs

Photographs are a kind of symbol used to represent meaning. Photos may represent items a person wants or likes, friends and relatives or may have personal meaning. They can be used in chat books, activity boards and other communication aids.

Pictures

Pictures are used to represent objects or items a person wishes to communicate about. A widely used system is the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS). It is based on exchanging pictures to express a person's communication needs. PECS is divided into structured phases that progress from teaching about requesting specific items to building sentences.

Icons

Minspeak is a visual language designed for use in augmentative communication and uses icons as symbols instead of relying on the written word. The person using Minspeak can independently communicate a large vocabulary with a small number of icons. This means the person doesn't have to spell, or learn or navigate a large set of pictures.

For more information, go here: <http://aspirelr.link/minspeak>.

Pictographs

Pictorial aids are a type of assistive technology that do not rely on reading, hearing or speaking words. Because of this, pictographs do not require any level of literacy. They include a set of clear and easily understood drawings that allow someone to convey the information needed.

A communication board allows someone to use a combination of communication symbols to communicate their needs and feelings. A communication board includes frequently used letters, words or pictures the person can point or gesture to. The pictures or symbols are ordered in a systematic way. A communication board may be grouped according to activities, food or the alphabet.

Before meeting with a client, plan who will be invited, what will be discussed, where the meeting will take place and how information will be collected and recorded.

More information about complex support needs planning can be accessed here:
<http://aspirelr.link/support-planning>.

Example

Procedures for maintaining privacy, dignity and confidentiality

Here is an example of an organisation's procedures for maintaining the privacy, dignity and confidentiality of individuals who access their services.

Procedures for maintaining privacy, dignity and confidentiality	
The agency will:	
1.	Only collect information about the client that can be shown to be directly relevant to effective service delivery and the agency's duty of care responsibilities.
2.	Seek the written consent of the client or family prior to obtaining information from any other source.
3.	Seek the written consent of the client or family prior to releasing information to any other source.
4.	Ensure that personal information is stored securely and is not left in view of unauthorised agency staff or the general public.
5.	Ensure that only those agency staff who require access to the above information will be granted access.
6.	Advise the client and family of the nature of the personal information that is held by the agency about the client.
7.	Advise the client and family of their right to view the information that the agency keeps in respect of the client.
8.	Ensure that personal information about a client is only held by the agency for as long as it remains relevant to the delivery of effective services and the agency's duty of care obligations.
9.	Promptly investigate, remedy and document any consumer grievance regarding privacy, dignity or confidentiality.

Person-first language

Staff must use inclusive language when communicating with and about people with disability.

Person-first language places the disability as a secondary consideration. Keep in mind that the disabled person can identify themselves however they want to be identified. For example, autistic people often prefer to be called autistic rather than 'person with autism' because they don't have autism; it is who they are.

Consider the following examples of ways to describe a person with disability.



Practice task 3

Read the case study, then answer the question that follows.

Case Study

Joanne is enquiring after accommodation services. She has an intellectual disability and has trouble understanding and retaining information. She does not use a smartphone or any form of social media. Joanne has several family members who support her, as well as a support person who is employed through the NDIS. Joanne has given permission for the family members and support worker to receive information on her behalf.

Which of the following are ways to confirm with Joanne that the information about her accurately reflects her needs and preferences? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Providing a printed summary of the information to Joanne in plain English
- ☐ Providing a verbal summary of the conversation to Joanne over the phone
- ☐ Sending a text message to the contact number listed in Joanne's records with a reminder of a follow-up meeting
- ☐ Providing a copy of the conversation to Joanne's family members and support person
- ☐ Speaking to Joanne's key family members or carers who are directly involved in providing care
- ☐ Confirming with Joanne that she wants to move ahead with the service



Summary

- Legislation such as the Disability Discrimination Act protect the rights of people with disability and ensures they can participate fully in life as the rest of the community does.
- There has been a change in how disability is viewed from an impairment in the medical model to the social model of disability.
- Service providers need to adjust how they communicate to better meet the needs of people with disability.
- Augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) is the term used for communication strategies or techniques that maximise communication for people who have significant difficulties speaking.
- Service providers must establish the reasons a client wants to access services before they can determine if they can provide the appropriate services to the client.
- A client's privacy, dignity and confidentiality must always be protected.
- The client's preferences must be confirmed before determining the capacity of the provider to meet their needs.



Topic 2

Evaluating service options

Clients will want the best solution for their needs and may source services from one or more providers over time.

Service needs can be complex and can change over time. Providers must always work in the best interests of clients to find the most suitable solutions for them.

However, you should also recognise that you will not always be able to meet the service needs of every client. You should confirm with a supervisor if you are unsure if you can fulfil a client's needs. This may require some discussion to decide if you have the training and skills to meet the specific needs of the client.

You will need to have some knowledge of the range of services that other providers can offer your client and support them to seek assistance from other sources if required.

In this topic you will learn about:

- 2A Evaluating the suitability of service options
- 2B Referrals to other providers

Before discussing a referral with a client, consider the following:

- the eligibility criteria, such as the client's age or geographical location
- the cost of the service
- waitlists and waiting periods
- other referrals, such as a doctor's referral if the service is health-related
- the type of information the referral service will require
- travel requirements to and from appointments.

As a frontline staff member, you can help by providing appropriate information and assisting with the documentation. You must have the information about the client and understand their support needs, such as:

- the client's current situation and presenting needs
- the client's readiness to be referred to a service
- any issues that might make it difficult for the client to follow through with the referral, such as its location or cost.

The client needs to be given information about the referral procedure and criteria. The information provided in a referral must be clear and include the following:

- personal details of the person wishing to access the service (name, address, contact details, etc.)
- information relevant to the type of service required (disability type, current situation, etc.)
- any specific needs the person may have (communication, access, interpreter needs, etc.)
- details of the person making the referral (name, contact number, etc.).

Referral services

There are several ways a referral may be conducted. The process will be outlined in a procedural document.

Each service provider may use one or more methods, depending on the needs and capabilities of the client. For example, the client might ask for contact information for appropriate services and be left to make their own contact at a time that suits them best. Other procedures include:

- The referring organisation makes an appointment with the other service on the client's behalf, and asks the other service to make contact with the client with the client's consent.
- A live three-way conversation in the presence of the client (can be face to face or over the phone) in which the referring organisation introduces the client, explains what has already been done to assist the client and why the client is being referred to the service.



Topic 3

Providing services to people with disability

Providing quality services depends on matching the right product or service to the circumstances of the client.

As a worker providing services to clients, you must make sure their support needs are being met, and evaluate the effectiveness and suitability of the services you are providing. This means anticipating how the client will use the resources and asking for feedback on the suitability of these services once they are in place.

In this topic you will learn about:

- 3A Informing clients
- 3B Accessing services and supports
- 3C Responding to feedback