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- ▶ people receive a service that does not pose a risk of injury or harm to them or their property and their home is safe if services are to be provided there
- ▶ you consider the person's condition and mobility when assessing their suitability for a service.

Individual needs

Each person using a service brings with them a range of individual needs. The following outlines some of the major issues to be mindful of when making assessments for service planning and gives examples of the needs that may be involved.

Disability

A person with a vision impairment has requested information about your service but all the available information is in written form.

Language

You are working with a young woman who is homeless. She has brought her grandmother in who she says has agreed for her to stay in her flat. The grandmother does not speak English.

Gender

An older man has requested that a male worker provide his personal care assistance for showering.

Culture

A father has asked about his children being able to continue their cultural practices while in foster care; they require Halal meals and time to pray each day.

Age

A person is able to complete activities of daily living independently without support providing she is allowed additional time; she explains that she prefers to do things herself even if it takes a bit longer.

Location

A person would like help to access local services, such as the GP, greengrocers and library, as she wishes to remain in a familiar community and environment.

Environment

An older woman you are visiting states she never leaves her flat because she is frightened of all the gangs in the neighbourhood.

Strategies to remove barriers

Physical and mental disabilities

- ▶ Intake and assessment procedures that focus on identifying individual needs
- ▶ Communication aids and tools
- ▶ Accessible spaces
- ▶ Clear signage

Language and learning barriers

- ▶ Provision of interpreters
- ▶ Use of plain English

Fear and mistrust

- ▶ Provision of clear information
- ▶ Good communication
- ▶ Welcoming environments
- ▶ Independent advocates
- ▶ Open and inclusive planning

Transport

- ▶ Public transport timetables
- ▶ Supported transport

Cultural

- ▶ Staff cultural awareness training
- ▶ Culturally sensitive display materials
- ▶ Inclusive use of language on signs
- ▶ Welcoming reception space

Environmental

- ▶ Adequate access to services
- ▶ Organisational involvement in local issues
- ▶ Gender awareness training for staff
- ▶ Referrals to other support organisations

Example

Address barriers to participation

Liam comes to a community health centre focus group organised to gain feedback from the local community about its services.

The group of 10 participants is diverse in terms of age, cultures and gender; however, Liam, who is visually impaired, is the only person there with an identifiable disability.

The group coordinator has not been told about Liam's disability. This is problematic, as the session depends entirely on people reading information from handouts and contributing to written comments on butcher's paper.

The coordinator approaches Liam and apologises. He tells her not to worry as it happens all the time. She asks him about how these things have been solved for him in the past and what he would like to do. He tells her that if the others read what is being written down out loud, he should be able to keep up.

Liam picks things up very quickly and proves to be one of the main contributors, identifying ways services can be improved. His input relates mainly to ways the service can attract young people.

The coordinator reports on the group at the next team planning session and suggests that requests to participate in focus groups in the future include a question about special needs.



Two-way communication

Good communication is essential when interacting with service users. Spend time listening to and getting to know your service users. This is invaluable in terms of being attuned to how the service is meeting needs. Regular informal feedback, such as observations and chats, and making sure staff are accessible and available, helps collect ongoing feedback from people who use the organisation's services. If people feel they know the staff and the staff value their feedback then they are more likely to pass on constructive comments.

Monitor changing needs

Regular, meaningful consumer feedback is one way to ensure the services provided by the organisation or agency stay focused on the people who use the service. There are many methods to obtain service-user feedback to monitor changing needs, as in the example below.

Suggestion boxes

Suggestion boxes can be placed in community services facilities or other services to encourage people to provide feedback. Suggestion boxes may be used by service users and others who access the service, such as family members and friends. Suggestion boxes provide an opportunity for anonymity if this is preferred, which may be the case when a person has complaints or concerns about the quality of services.

Complaints processes

A complaints process must be established in any organisation delivering community services. The standards that underpin community services organisations stipulate that service users, family members, advocates and carers have the right to complain without losing access to the service or having it reduced. All organisations must have a complaints policy and process that service users can easily follow. They must make sure that users understand what they need to do if they wish to complain.

Feedback forms

Many organisations have feedback forms available for people to record positive and negative comments about the organisation or agency providing a service. Feedback forms can be completed anonymously. However, it is often a good idea to encourage the person to sign their feedback forms. If the organisation knows who is making the comment, they can arrange a meeting with the person and resolve any issues that have arisen.

Surveys

Surveys can be conducted annually to obtain feedback about specific aspects of service delivery. Surveying a range of stakeholders, including other service providers that your agency works with, can be an effective mechanism to obtain feedback about how well the service is meeting peoples' needs. For example, an agency may receive feedback from another agency stating that their referral processes are cumbersome and hard to understand and that this is making it difficult for older people to access the service.

Language

Interpreting, translation and language support is often provided through multicultural organisations as well as neighbourhood houses and individual cultural support networks.

Culture

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have support networks in every state providing health and cultural support and services.

There are a variety of other multicultural and culture-specific groups available, sometimes connected with neighbourhood houses or adult education.

Age

Age services are usually focused on youth and older people. They are often linked to local government and are involved in advocacy and service delivery.

Location

Communities often have neighbourhood houses and health centres which, along with local government, provide support to people living in particular neighbourhoods.

Environment

There are a growing number of organisations working in communities to combat environmental problems and encourage sustainability and better use of natural resources, including food.

Develop service partnerships

Managers and workers in community services organisations need to liaise and work with a range of organisations offering similar or complementary services. Relationships between agencies can range from networking to collaborating to developing partnerships. In recent years both government and philanthropic funders have encouraged organisations to partner together when applying for funding grants.

The most important aspect of service partnerships is the opportunity to enhance the service you offer people in need.

Partnerships can be informal arrangements but will usually require memorandums of understanding or contracts if shared resources are involved.

Legislative requirements

Always keep in mind the legislative requirements that all services must adhere to. There are laws and statutory requirements to protect the service provider and the client, as listed here.

Relevant legislation:

- ▶ *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth)
- ▶ *Disability Services Act 1986* (Cth)
- ▶ *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth)
- ▶ *Age Discrimination Act 2004* (Cth)
- ▶ *Aged Care Act 1997* (Cth)
- ▶ *Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986* (Cth)
- ▶ *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* (Cth)
- ▶ *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* (Cth)

Legislation relevant to community services work

Community services workers must understand the legislation that underpins the work they do, as well as the organisation's policies and procedures. They must know which piece of legislation supports particular areas of their practice. Workers also need to know where to go to obtain further information about their responsibilities and the organisation's responsibilities under the legislation. Consider some of the legislation and obligations relevant to community services work and a worker's duty of care, as detailed below.

Privacy legislation

The *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth) and other state- and territory-based privacy legislation is significant to the community services sector because:

- ▶ privacy and confidentiality are legislative requirements
- ▶ people have the legal right to access their own medical records (each state and territory in Australia has laws and regulations regarding these records)
- ▶ you have a duty of care to protect a person's privacy and to ensure that their documentation such as case notes or incident reports (which are legal documents) are collected and archived according to your workplace's policies and procedures, which are guided by legislation.

Freedom of information

The *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Cth) is significant to the community services sector because:

- ▶ freedom of information gives people the right to access government documents
- ▶ when collecting or documenting information, workers should keep in mind that everyone has the legal right to view all that has been written about them
- ▶ workers have a duty of care to provide clear, factual and accurate information.



Topic 2

In this topic you will learn how to:

- 2A Facilitate input into program development**
- 2B Engage people accessing programs**
- 2C Incorporate consideration of individual differences**
- 2D Integrate internal and external services**
- 2E Determine resource requirements**
- 2F Develop supporting systems and procedures**
- 2G Develop and integrate service evaluation methods**
- 2H Document the program identifying priorities, time lines and responsibilities**

Develop programs

Community services programs have a better chance of being successful if they are well planned. There is a large body of knowledge available to assist workers to plan effectively when engaging stakeholders, planning resource requirements and applying evaluation methods to programs.

While organisations usually have a commitment to maintaining key stakeholder engagement and integrating evaluation into their service delivery, they often fail to do the planning work that is needed to make these things happen.

As a community services worker you are required to use a planned approach to delivering service programs.

2A Facilitate input into program development

Program development involves assessing needs and developing service strategies, as well as implementing, evaluating and continually monitoring and reviewing service delivery.

A key aspect of program planning involves consulting with and including key stakeholders from within and external to the organisation.

The program development process operates right through an organisation's operations, from the strategic plan to individual service plans, and engages everyone from the Board to service users.



Internal stakeholders

Internal stakeholders are the people and programs that operate within the organisation you are working for. Sometimes community services workers don't understand the importance of including staff who are not part of direct care in their planning for and with service users. Staff from finance, human resources and transport can offer a valuable contribution to program planning. They are the people who understand what resources are available to support workers and service users, and the more they understand the context in which resources are being used, the better they can plan to provide them.

The Board that governs the organisation signs off strategic plans and budgets, and needs to be kept well informed to operate effectively.

The following list outlines some key internal stakeholders linked to strategies for engaging them.

Internal stakeholders and engagement strategies

The Board

- ▶ Reports, presentations, subcommittee meetings

Management

- ▶ Reports, presentations, management meetings

Finance

- ▶ Reports, program planning meetings, budget planning meetings

Human resources

- ▶ Reports, program planning meetings, recruitment and staff development planning meetings

Reception staff

- ▶ Reports, staff meetings, program planning meetings, reviews

2B Engage people accessing programs

Whilst engaging service users in the planning processes at the community worker level is important, it is essential that the engagement occurs at all levels of the organisation. If management processes don't include service-user input, programs may be planned without taking their individual needs into consideration and will most likely be less effective.

When people using the service are engaged right through the management process of an organisation, planning and decision-making is more responsive to people's needs.



Management processes

The management processes of an organisation extends from the service worker level right through to the governance that happens at Board level.

In a well-governed organisation, the Board will ensure that management processes are guided by sound policies and procedures that are constantly monitored and reviewed. It will also monitor the actions taken to address feedback arising from the review process.

The following information identifies ways service-users can be engaged in management processes.

Governance

- ▶ The Board requests regular reports from management that summarise service-user feedback. Some Boards create Board positions for service-user representation. Service users may also be asked to present directly at a board meeting or as a guest speaker at the annual general meeting.

Strategic planning

- ▶ Service-user engagement should be a major part of the strategic planning process to both collect their input about needs and comment on the sort of service delivery required to meet them.

Quality assurance

- ▶ As part of continuous improvement, organisations survey service users for feedback that will guide improvement.

Management meetings

- ▶ Managers should report on service-user feedback at their meetings on a regular basis. Managers may meet with service users to resolve disputes. They may also engage service users in discussion about service delivery as part of performance planning for staff.

2D Integrate internal and external services

The community services sector is made up of a huge range of organisations varying in size from a few workers to hundreds. Often organisations are one of a network of agencies delivering the same service; for example, aged care, child welfare or community health. Sometimes organisations may be specialist and may be the only one delivering a particular service in their region; for example, transgender support, AIDS awareness or multicultural support.



Community services workers in large organisations need to factor in all the service delivery areas in their own organisation when planning. These can include services like finance, transport, human resources and reception.

All community services workers need to integrate external services into their planning process so service users can benefit from the specialist services and extra support offered.

Internal services

In large and medium sized community services organisations, service delivery is backed up by an extensive internal service network that supports the workers engaged directly with service users.

Effective service delivery planning integrates these services into the planning process to achieve outcomes that are affordable, fully costed, staffed efficiently and well organised.

Organisations will vary as to the breakdown of service areas but the more common ones are listed below.

Internal services include:

- ▶ finance
- ▶ fleet management
- ▶ reception
- ▶ human resources
- ▶ marketing
- ▶ project management.

External services

Workers in community services acknowledge the benefits of networking with other workers and their organisations. At the local level networks are formed for information sharing and partnership approaches. There are also many professional networks in each state and territory that meet and share information. The focus and structure varies from network to network, but the overall goal of sharing information to support clients is common to all. Consider the types of networks listed below.

2E Determine resource requirements

When planning a new program, the first things that need to be considered are what are the costs involved; what are the staffing needs and what are the other resources required.

While the plan for designing a new service is the central focus, it can't be delivered efficiently if other business planning is not developed, implemented and monitored.

Funding bodies, boards and senior management will all need to evaluate budgets, human resources strategies and accommodation plans before approving a new project.



Funding frameworks

Finding a funding source is usually the first big challenge for any new program. While you will usually have supervisors and finance managers supporting the process, it is good for community services workers to understand their funding sources and how funding is managed.

The two main sources of funding supporting community services are described below.

Government funding

- ▶ Government funding can be granted at the federal, state or local level.
- ▶ Since the 1990s almost all government funding is made available through a competitive tendering process.
- ▶ Tenders are advertised and organisations are invited to submit tenders outlining how they would deliver the service and what it would cost.
- ▶ Some funding is granted on a fixed-term basis for organisations to deliver a service such as community health or residential care, and is ongoing.
- ▶ Other funding is one-off and project-based with the funding ceasing at the end of the contract.
- ▶ Accountability is rigorous when government funds are involved.

Philanthropic funding

- ▶ Philanthropic funding comes from private individuals or companies that provide funds to support particular projects.
- ▶ Grants can be delivered by the organisation itself and are often a tax deduction.
- ▶ Community foundations have been developing over the past 15 years offering philanthropists an organised way to donate without physically managing the grants themselves.
- ▶ Funding is usually project-based and time-limited. Organisations need to submit applications to the trusts or foundations to engage their interest.
- ▶ Accountability for funding is not usually as rigorous as government funding but is still required.
- ▶ Some philanthropists like to stay anonymous, while others like to get 'hands-on' with projects.

Integrate feedback into service planning

Feedback is not a valuable resource if it is not acted upon. Consider the steps outlined below to make good use of feedback.

Record feedback

All feedback received must be documented. A written record of service-user feedback (whether hard copy or electronic) is a reference that enables organisations to review and reflect on the service they provide. It also shows patterns that can assist you when analysing the feedback.

Analyse feedback

To be responsive, you need to analyse all feedback, decide on a response, and act on it. Complex issues may require time to resolve, and the collaboration of a number of people. For less-complex issues, analysis may be brief and the action obvious. You may need to involve other people, such as health professionals, agency members and family members, to help you analyse the information.

Categorise feedback

You need an efficient and ordered way of analysing feedback. Placing feedback in specific categories is useful. For example, the facilitator of a service user-assessment process may provide a comprehensive report to the service, grouping feedback that relates to the same issue. Once a pattern has been established, it is easier for the service to interpret the feedback and to take the actions needed to respond to the feedback.

Isolate feedback

While it is important to analyse the patterns in service-user feedback, you shouldn't discount feedback that is 'one-off'. Significant and serious feedback may not always emerge from a pattern of feedback. It may be that an isolated client survey or phonecall from a family member highlights an important issue for clients and the service. If you are not sure how to respond, seek advice.

Involve others

Analysis of feedback should involve more than one person in order to obtain a range of perspectives and avoid any possible conflict of interest. For example, if a client survey shows half the respondents receiving physiotherapy are unhappy with the way their treatment occurs and the only person analysing the feedback is the manager of allied health services, then the analysis may be biased.

6**Develop objectives**

Objectives should be specific and measurable.

7**Draft a work plan**

Work plans involve mapping out what will be done and who will be responsible against time lines and performance indicators.

8**Draft a budget**

A budget needs to include all costs including in-kind costs from the organisation.

9**Develop evaluation**

A framework for evaluation needs to be set against the agreed objectives.

10**Review staffing and resource needs**

A recruitment strategy will explore the skills, qualifications and position descriptions of the staff required to deliver the program.

Identify resources already available and cost out the extra resources required.

11**Write up the program plan**

The program plan may be a simple expanded work plan or an extensive business plan, depending on the size of the project.

12**Seek Board and key stakeholder approval**

Approval includes establishing accountability and reporting frameworks.

Document the work plan

A simple work plan can be used to document the program.

The leaders in this case include the chief executive officer (CEO), the program manager (PM) and the project worker (PW).

Sample work plan								
Tasks	Wk 1	Wk 2	Wk 3	Wk 4	Wk 5	Who leads	Performance indicator	Resources needed
Identify stakeholders	x					PW	Stakeholders identified	Nil
Conduct scan	x	x				PW		Software
Meet with board		x			x	CEO		Nil
Stakeholder meeting			x		x	PM		Catering

Steps in setting up a training program

The following guide outlines the basic steps to take when setting up a training program.

Setting up a training program

- 1** Recruit and appoint trainers.
- 2** Consult and timetable the training to suit stakeholders.
- 3** Identify and book a training facility.
- 4** Assess the learning needs of participants.
- 5** Consult with trainers and modify training as required.
- 6** Collect resources and make them available for trainers.
- 7** Promote training.
- 8** Provide training.
- 9** Evaluate training.
- 10** Acknowledge completion with a celebration and, if relevant, a certificate of achievement.

- ▶ How will you know how much money you have spent and how much is left?
- ▶ Will the money last until the end of the project?
- ▶ How will you report on monitoring to key stakeholders?
- ▶ Who will analyse the data and how?
- ▶ How will you respond to feedback?

A summary of the monitoring process

In short, the monitoring process follows these stages.

Stages of the monitoring process

- ▶ Performance indicators are developed to measure activity outcomes against objectives.
- ▶ Data collection and reporting procedures are developed to test performance indicators.
- ▶ Data is analysed and results reported to the planning group.
- ▶ Adjustments are made to the program as required and monitoring continues.

Example

Monitor service delivery

Louise is a program manager setting up a new project to support young women at risk of dropping out of school.

Louise works with the finance manager to develop a budget that lists income and expenditure, with projections to the end of the year. The finance department provide her with monthly reports showing income and expenditure to date against the budget. Louise uses this, along with her quarterly statistics on service delivery, to report to the Board.

Here is a sample from the program plan she has developed to guide ongoing monitoring.

Objective	Performance target	Who is responsible	Resources required	1st quarter update	2nd quarter update	3rd quarter update	4th quarter update
Provide homework clubs	3 nights a week with 6–12 people attending	Teacher	Extra staffing hours in the budget	Operated 3 nights Average 4–7 attending			

User-friendly approaches

- ▶ Simple user-friendly templates written in plain English (or translated if relevant) should be used to collect feedback from people who are receiving services from an organisation. Methods used to collect feedback need to suit the service users' abilities, language and literacy skills, age and be responsive to their emotional state.

Address service-user problems in accordance with organisational procedures

Once it has been identified that changes need to be made, they should happen as quickly as possible. Remember that community services workers' duty of care is to provide appropriate care and support at all times. How you do this depends on the organisation you are working for and its procedures. You may have to organise a meeting with your manager or another professional to identify what needs to be done to resolve the situation. When you have identified the action to take, discuss it with the service user before taking action. Sometimes changing plans will incur extra costs or changes to worker routines. Approval is required from all key stakeholders before taking action.

Here are some strategies that may assist when responding to individual service-user feedback.

Strategies for responding to feedback from service users:

- ▶ Alter appointment times or locations
- ▶ Provide the worker delivering the service with more support
- ▶ Change workers
- ▶ Change activities
- ▶ Provide assistance with transport
- ▶ Integrate cultural requirements
- ▶ Provide information in plain English
- ▶ Improve the waiting area
- ▶ Be more age responsive
- ▶ Use technology for better efficiency
- ▶ Provide support with technology
- ▶ Expand service provision
- ▶ Allow the service user more input into decision-making
- ▶ Refer the person to another service

Example

Identify and address service-user problems

Alan has been attending behaviour management sessions at a counselling service for three months. During an informal chat with his case worker he suggests that he may get more out of the sessions if he had other men to talk to who shared the same problem. The service he currently attends provides individual counselling, but the local community health centre provides men's behaviour management group sessions.

Alan is attending counselling sessions as part of a diversionary order from court and his counselling fees are being paid for through program funding. The community health centre men's behaviour program charges a small fee that may create a barrier to Alan attending. The counsellor reports on the situation to her supervisor. After discussions with the finance department, it is agreed that the service will pay for Alan to attend the community health session from the programs special resource funding, which has some unallocated funds in it. This will enable Alan to attend both the individual counselling and the group program.



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Service delivery documentation

Information that is collected and stored about service users must be relevant and up to date in order to facilitate the delivery of appropriate services. Documentation varies between organisations.

Documentation types include:

- ▶ referral, intake and assessment forms
- ▶ service-user profiles
- ▶ case notes
- ▶ care plans and service delivery plans
- ▶ communication books for health professionals, family members and significant others
- ▶ medication documentation
- ▶ incident or injury forms, and WorkCover forms
- ▶ feedback forms, surveys and questionnaires.

Example

Maintain documentation

Kaylene lives in a hostel where Angela is the team leader. Kaylene is able to shower herself and receives limited support from staff to complete her activities of daily living. Today when a personal care worker enters Kaylene's room, she finds Kaylene crying on the floor of her ensuite bathroom. Kaylene's knee is swollen and red. When the worker goes to help Kaylene up, Kaylene lashes out, hits the worker on her face and leaves her with a cut lip.

When Kaylene has calmed down, Angela speaks with her and asks her what happened. She says that as she was getting out of the shower, she slipped. Angela makes sure Kaylene is feeling okay and then together with the personal care worker, they go to the office to complete the relevant documentation, which includes:

- ▶ an incident report detailing the injuries to Kaylene's knee and the worker's face
- ▶ a WorkCover report regarding the worker's injury and the treatment given
- ▶ a hazard report requesting a review of the floor and shower area in Kaylene's bathroom
- ▶ a progress note in Kaylene's file objectively detailing what happened so patterns, such as regular falls, can be noted.



Practice task 20

1. List four reasons for maintaining program documentation.

There are a number of checks you can make to assess capacity in these areas.



Factors affecting capacity

- ▶ Have we engaged service users in the planning?
- ▶ Do we have systems to continue service-user engagement?
- ▶ Have we consulted widely and included all stakeholders?
- ▶ Has the Board approved the project?
- ▶ Are our time frames realistic?
- ▶ Do we have an evaluation framework?
- ▶ Do we have the capacity to conduct the evaluation?



Assessing capacity

- ▶ Check that service-user feedback has been included.
- ▶ Identify engagement processes and include them in the program plan.
- ▶ Seek evidence of broader consultation.
- ▶ Check for Board approval with senior management.
- ▶ Develop a work plan to map activities against time.
- ▶ Check for evidence of an evaluation framework.
- ▶ Identify who will evaluate and how.

Meet objectives

The most important part of the program involves meeting objectives. Measuring achievement against objectives requires sound performance indicators.

Here is an example of matching performance indicators to objectives.

Objective: To reduce the level of reoffending by young men facing their first criminal charges		
Activity	Performance indicators	Who will monitor?
Provide education support through peers as tutors	Number attending Number of sessions attended Impact on school attendance Feedback re attitude to school	Tutors Tutors Teacher Teacher

4C Modify programs to meet changing requirements

Establishing good processes to gain feedback from stakeholders and evaluate achievements against objectives is an important part of delivering community services.

Feedback and monitoring usually provides information that is both positive and negative.

Positive feedback gives cause for celebration but also confirms that the program is working effectively. Positive feedback and evaluations can form the basis for new ways of doing things. Sometimes it is appropriate to share findings with others through publications or presentations at conferences.



Negative feedback provides an opportunity to use the information to improve the service being delivered. In extreme cases programs may be cancelled if they are not achieving objectives or providing the services that users require. A majority of the time negative feedback allows you to modify the program or service delivery and improve it so future feedback is positive.

Modifications always need to fit within policy and budgetary guidelines unless more funds can be found or policies are changed.

When planning or modifying programs you need to understand the principles of risk, regulatory and sustainability mechanisms.

Change requirements

Sometimes minor changes may be made to the way the service is delivered to improve it for service users. For example, changing the times or days that programs are offered or simplifying the referral processes. Such minor changes require little effort on behalf of the service but may make the service and programs more accessible to users. Monthly and daily reviews can bring about improvements and changes in service provision, as outlined below.

Monthly reviews

- ▶ Reviewing should not wait until annual planning time. The way reviews are undertaken depends on the organisation. For example, there may be structured, formal weekly team meetings or case conferences with health professionals and other service providers. These ensure the client's progress is discussed in relation to their needs and rights and the service's capacity to continue. The outcome of these meetings depends on the situation; for example, whether the service is no longer meeting needs and should be discontinued; whether small adjustments can be made; or whether the person's situation or changed needs require a completely different service.

Risk

Most organisations should have risk assessment procedures in place that assess likely risks that may occur and their level of importance. They should also have a risk plan that monitors how the organisation responds to risks when they occur and acts proactively to put things in place to decrease the chance of them occurring.

When developing a new program risks should be identified as part of the planning process and integrated into the organisation's risk assessment policies and procedures and management plan.

Sustainability

Sustainability relates to the long-term future of programs. Organisations usually include sustainability as part of their financial planning. When developing new programs workers need to check viability in consultation with the finance department and other senior managers. Viability is about assessing income and expenditure over time as well as forecasting whether there is an ongoing need for the program. Viability can also be impacted on by availability of qualified staff and alignment with the future direction of the organisation.

Regulation

Compliance with legal requirements, codes of practice and organisational standards are usually monitored by management and are part of quality assurance. Organisations often need to audit service delivery as part of their accreditation requirements. New programs need to be audited to make sure they comply with the standards maintained across the organisation, and should be included in the organisation's quality assurance or continuous improvement plans.

Example

Modify programs

Mark has completed his evaluation of the neighbourhood house 'Fix a bike' project and presented his report to the Board and local council that provided the funds. The house has received funds to continue the program, but a number of suggested modifications have arisen from the evaluation, and these need to be acted on.

The modifications include finding a new location so more children can participate; changing the time snacks are offered so the children get to eat before they start work on the bikes rather than after; translating the information kit (supplied with the bikes for the children to take home) into languages other than English; and moving unspent funds in the travel part of the budget into purchases so more bikes can be bought.

