Workshop 3 – Action Development

Portside Convention Centre
Kent St Sydney
17 September 2015
9.30am - 2.30pm

Attendees included representatives from NSW government departments and Accessibility Working Group (established in the NSW Disability Inclusion Plan).

**Facilitator** - Ms Linda Kurti, Urbis.

**Presenters** - Ms Suzanne Colbert OAM, Chief Executive, Australian Network on Disability; Ms Janet Schorer, Executive Director, National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Reform Group Department of Premier and Cabinet.

**Panellists** – Ms Louise Farrell, Acting Director, NSW Ministry of Health; Ms Gail Le Bransky, Principal Manager Transport Social Policy, Transport for NSW; Ms Rose Samuels, Principal HR Officer, Department of Family and Community Services (FACS).

**Videos:** Online video clips of national and international disability awareness campaigns were shown throughout the day to provoke discussions on the four Disability Inclusion Plan action areas. The links for all the clips are available below.

Video 1 - [*Web Accessibility*](https://youtu.be/bEM9Fn9aOG8)

Video 2 - [*End the Awkward Handshake*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vE2HgtoOE7g)

Video 3–[*Talk (part 1 of 2)*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FZfOVNwjFU0)

Video 4–[*Changing Places Solutions*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3mzG6sKcSsM)

Video 5- [*The Job Access Stories*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mCCjvwpLCb8&feature=youtu.be)

**Pre-workshop survey:** Thank you for completing the pre-workshop survey, your responses helped shape the forum. The workshop was designed to facilitate discussion and the exchange of ideas between agencies and departments, about their Disability Inclusion Action Plan actions, including those identified and still under development.

**Opening speech** - Suzanne Colbert OAMwelcomed participants to the workshop and acknowledged the importance of their role in developing their agencies Disability Inclusion Action Plans. These plans are critical to ensuring that people with disability as employees and customers of the agency can better access the department’s services.

Disability Inclusion planning is not limited to NSW Government but has also been embraced by some parts of the private sector who have benefited from incorporating disability inclusion planning into its core business. Features of successful disability inclusion planning include a strong role for people with disability in planning, implementing and reviewing organisational plans and encouraging approaches that support collaborative learning.

Suzanne encouraged departments to relish the challenge to improve disability inclusion and provided information on ‘Designing for Dignity Guidelines’. This document is being prepared by the Australian Network on Disability to support disability inclusion planning. A copy of the version for consultation will be provided to participants when available.

**Janet Schorer** updated participants on the status of the NDIS transition, confirming that NSW has signed a bi-lateral agreement with the Australian Government. Janet outlined the transition schedule, explaining the staged geographic roll out and some of the other benefits to NSW.

Janet advised that while it remains the responsibility of the states to promote disability inclusion policy, the National Disability Insurance Agency is looking to influence local coordination and inclusion. She reflected that inclusion practices are crucial in order to honour the intentions of the NDIS Act.

The NDIS will change how government and its departments interact, support and work with individuals. This outlines the importance of Disability Inclusion Action Plans, as departments will increasingly become the primary point of contact for all people with disability.

Session One –Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) Progress in NSW Governments - Panellists

**Louise Farrell and Daphne Shakespear** presented the Ministry of Health’s Disability Inclusion Action Planning approach and discussed some challenges that they have faced along the way. Louise and Daphne spoke about the wide ranging consultation process which has engaged senior management, surveyed frontline staff and involved participation in community forums.

Louise and Daphne outlined their vision of the final approved DIAP that will have clear accountabilities linked to existing reporting structures, will align with key policies and include best practice case study examples.

**Gail Le Bransky** spoke about how Transport for NSW is ensuring a focus on customer service and improving the quality of journeys is present in their Disability Inclusion Action Plan. Some core concepts viewed people with disability as mainstream customers and recognising that excessive compliance may reduce innovation.

Gail discussed the challenge of reframing the conversation from ‘just meeting the standards’ towards truly embracing inclusion. She demonstrated how broadening the concept of inclusion to other commuter groups, for example including people with luggage or sports equipment, can support the business case for accessibility.

**Rose Samuels** provided insight into how FACS is developing their Disability Inclusion Action Plan. Rose highlighted the importance of achieving buy-in from senior managers to support inclusion policies. She spoke about how FACS has widely consulted across the department and shared some successful tactics such establishing a steering committee to drive progress on the Disability Inclusion Action Plan.

Rose outlined a key objective in developing the FACS Disability Inclusion Action Plan is to create an inclusive document with diversity generic principles, so that the benefits of accessibility will reach as many people as possible.

Session Two - Alignment with the NSW Disability Inclusion Plan focus areas

The second session was an opportunity for small groups to discuss how their agency is planning to respond to the focus areas ‘Attitudes and Behaviors’ and ‘Systems and Processes’. After watching some short video clips the groups shared some of their best approaches and ideas to each focus area.

**Attitudes and behaviours:**

Video - [*Web Accessibility*](https://youtu.be/bEM9Fn9aOG8)

Video - [*End the Awkward Handshake*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vE2HgtoOE7g)

Key points raised in group discussions:

* There are a number of challenges in this area but also a number of opportunities for easy wins such as engaging committees and stakeholders to find out what actions can make a difference.
* Engage agency leadership to promote inclusive attitudes.
* Opportunities to change behaviour, such as training and awareness campaigns, should be embraced.

**Systems and Processes:**

Video –[*Talk (part 1 of 2)*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FZfOVNwjFU0)

Key points raised in group discussions:

* Some challenges can be more easily overcome if we have the right people and share knowledge.
* The importance of “building in” and not just “bolting on” inclusion in systems.
* Successful systems and processes will be streamlined, efficient and consistent across NSW Departments.

Session Three – Alignment with the NSW Disability Inclusion Plan focus areas

The third session was an exercise for small groups to discuss their agency’s approach to the focus areas of ‘Liveable communities’ and ‘Employment’. After watching some short video clips the groups shared some of their best approaches and ideas to each focus area.

**Liveable communities:**

Video –[*Changing Places Solutions*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3mzG6sKcSsM)

Key points raised in group discussion:

* Ensure flexible and universal designs are incorporated from the start when planning for liveable communities.
* Integration of services to deliver community wide benefits
* Agencies using networks that already exist to consult and determine how communities can be made more liveable and inclusive.

Note the Liveable Communities grants have opened –see details [here](http://www.ageing.nsw.gov.au/about_us/news/liveable-communities-grants-program)

**Employment:**

Video - [*The Job Access Stories*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mCCjvwpLCb8&feature=youtu.be)

Key points raised in group discussion:

* Auditing of barriers to accessible employment
* Accessible recruiting should be a common objective across NSW departments.
* Ensure hiring managers are adequately trained and aware

**Evaluation results:**

Thank you for sharing your feedback! Eleven evaluation forms were collected after the workshop. Overall, the vast majority of feedback was positive with each element of the day ranking mostly to very informative and mostly to very useful.

People enjoyed hearing about the diverse range of experiences from other departments and learning about how to use certain techniques to address challenges in their agency. We also heard that the forum was an opportunity to share knowledge across government proving informative, helping agencies across different stages of their Disability Inclusion Action Plan development.