NSW Disability Inclusion Plan Implementation Update

On 26 February 2015 the Hon. John Ajaka Minister for Disability Services launched the NSW Disability Inclusion Plan (NSW DIP). The NSW DIP was developed in consultation with people with disability, NSW Government agencies and the community and sets out the NSW government’s commitment to implementing the principles of the Disability Inclusion Act 2014.

Consultation with people with disability in development of the plan highlighted that the big issues, the big social barriers that need to be overcome, rest with the actions and decisions of those without disability – the broader community.

With that in mind, many of the actions in the NSW DIP focus on influencing the decision makers across government, business and the community in a way that encourages positive attitudes towards people with disability.

The 10 actions in the initial plan are the starting point. These will be refined and added to in response to feedback from people with disability and other partners.

The four areas of focus for the NSW DIP are:

1. Developing positive community attitudes and behaviours
2. Creating liveable communities
3. Supporting access to meaningful employment
4. Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes

The Department of Family and Community Services (FACS) is responsible for supporting the implementation of the NSW DIP across government and the community and work has commenced in each of these areas. A snapshot of progress and highlights of implementation is summarised below.

1. Developing positive community attitudes & behaviour

1.1 Public awareness campaign on disability inclusion

Development of a public campaign on disability inclusion has commenced. An initial component of this campaign has been the revision of the Don’t DIS myAbility campaign. This year’s campaign had a greater focus on public awareness and will continue beyond the International Day for the Rights of Persons with Disability. Specifically, a targeted public awareness campaign is being planned for early 2016.
This year’s campaign “Inclusion is about U & I”, emphasised how the decisions that we as a community make each day, can impact on the lives of people with disability.

The campaign focused on promoting positive attitudes and creating an inclusive community for all, reflecting the focus areas of the NSW DIP.

Links to the Don’t Dis Campaign information are available at:


1.2 Human rights learning and development resource

A human rights and disability training resource has been developed in partnership with the Human Rights Commission. A train-the-trainer model is being undertaken across agencies which will involve people with a lived experience of disability in the delivery of the program within agencies and across the community.

It is expected that training will be available in early 2016. For enquiries on training contact NSWDIP@facs.nsw.gov.au

2. Creating liveable communities

2.1 Liveable communities competition

The winners of the 2014 Liveable Communities competition were announced in February 2015. To build on this program Minister Ajaka committed a further $1 million per year over four years to the Liveable Communities Grants Program.

This program will provide funding for innovative ideas that strengthen community access for older people, people with disability and their carers. The focus is on initiatives to help these groups live active, independent, healthy lives and access their community freely and safely.

Applications closed in November 2015 and successful applicants will be announced by April 2016.

2.2 Coordinated planning for access and inclusion

The second Local Government Disability Inclusion Forum took place in November 2015. The focus of the forum was to support local councils to undertake inclusive planning and to share developments in disability policy and legislation.

FACS worked with Local Government NSW, local council representatives and the Office of Local Government to revise the
new Disability Inclusion Planning Guidelines to accommodate the planning and reporting needs of local councils. Minister Ajaka, Minister for Disability Services launched the guidelines on disability inclusion planning for local councils at the forum.

There were over 100 attendees from across NSW. Participants said that the forum provided useful information which will assist them to develop their plans. It also provided a great opportunity to share ideas and experiences.

2.3 Cross-sector local partnership in key areas

Building links with those in the community and business sectors to focus on local issues and community engagement will be an ongoing priority of the NSW Disability Inclusion Plan.

This year FACS has partnered with the NSW Business Chamber, Clubs NSW and Sport NSW to create the role of Disability Inclusion Promotion Officer in each organisation. These roles will promote positive attitudes inclusive practice across their membership and use the resources of the organisations to drive change across the local community. Actions to date have included the promotion of inclusion through their websites, internal and external publications and through presentations in forums and workshops.

A focus for 2016 will be on promoting meaningful employment and community participation for people with disability.

A community partnership with a very practical application is the Accessible Toilets Data Expansion Project. This project has improved access to information on accessible toilets for people with disability. Information on an estimated 1000 facilities will be uploaded to the National Public Toilet Map database by June 2016. This project is a collaboration between FACS, Spinal Cord Injuries Australia and the National Public Toilet Map.

3. Supporting access to meaningful employment

3.1 NSW Government agencies plan for workforce diversity

The Public Service Commission (PSC) is leading action to promote an inclusive and accessible NSW Government workforce that reflects the state’s population.
In June 2015, the NSW Disability Employment Advisory Committee (DEAC) was established to advise on the priorities to improve outcomes for people with disability who are employed, or seeking employment, in the NSW government sector.

The committee is co-chaired by the Public Service Commissioner, Graeme Head and FACS Secretary, Michael Coutts-Trotter and will provide advice on the best strategies to get meaningful and sustainable employment growth for people with disability. This will also help raise the profile of disability employment issues and guide the PSC in its work on data collection and the review of recruitment and other practice and policy.

3.2 Cross sector disability employment forum

A cross sector employment forum was convened by FACS in May 2015. A key note speaker was invited from the United States and presentations were made by the Hon Susan Ryan from the Human Rights Commission, Sonja Stewart from the PSC and the Secretary of FACS.

This whole of government employment forum helped raise the profile of employment strategies to recruit and retain people with disability, and informed development of agency disability inclusion action plans.

3.3 Disability employee networks

Disability Employee Networks provide support mechanisms and a voice for people with disability in the workplace. Action to support the development of these networks across government has commenced and is being led by the Department of Premier and Cabinet.

Further work will be undertaken in 2016 in partnership with FACS to identify the next stages and strengthen alignment with other employment actions identified in the NSW DIP and broader NSW reforms.

4. Improving access through better systems & processes

4.1 Accessibility Working Group

An accessibility working committee with representation from disability peaks and access experts was formed to provide advice on making systems more accessible for people with disability. The group’s focus areas are accessible information and communications technology, general information and communication provided by government and accessible feedback mechanisms.

The committee will continue to progress accessibility issues in 2016.
4.2 Implementation of Disability Inclusion Action Plans to improve system navigation

The implementation of Disability Inclusion Action Plans will be the single most influential activity in the NSW DIP.

In 2015, FACS developed and launched new DIAP guidelines to support government agencies through the development process. The guidelines focus on the importance of ongoing engagement with people with disability and promoting effective leadership from the executive level.

FACS has also held a series of workshops involving all NSW government agencies to support the phases of developing a plan, from executive sign off through consultation with people with disability, to the development of effective actions around each of the four focus areas.

Governance Monitoring and Reporting

Governance

FACS is responsible for keeping the implementation of the NSW Disability Inclusion Plan on track and ensuring the Minister for Disability Services is aware of the progress being made.

The governance structure for the NSW DIP will be finalised in early 2016. The governance will involve representatives from NSW Government agencies, the Disability Council NSW and other community stakeholders.

The governance framework will link with the work of the National Disability Strategy and the NSW NDIS implementation across agencies. More information on the governance strategy will be posted on the NSW DIP website.

The monitoring and evaluation framework for the NSW DIP and DIAPs will be completed in early 2016.

Contact us

To be involved, to be kept informed or access accessible information:

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