

Review of the National Disability Advocacy Framework

The following review has been formulated by MEDA's Program Manager with endorsement from MEDA's Committee of Management. Suggestions for amendment or addition are in red or italics.

I also acknowledge and support the review submitted by CEO, Mary Mallett from Disability Advocacy Network Australia (DANA). I also recognise the value of the co-ordination and support offered through a peak body like DANA who are in a critical position of viewing and responding from a National perspective.

1. Do you believe the current framework encompasses your vision of advocacy in the NDIS environment. If not what changes are required?
Advocacy should be independent and free from conflict of interest. Concerned if advocacy is funded directly by NDIS and is an individual's package option that they are needing to pay for amongst other service options. People should have the right to access advocacy at no cost to the individual or not to have to choose advocacy amongst the individual's support needs. Would like the framework to reflect on a position around ensuring that disability advocacy has a valued, sustained and significant place and role within NDIS. Would like to see within this framework a statement, reflection and dialogue that has a direct link to NDIS vision, policy and practice.
2. Are the principles of the framework appropriate for guiding the delivery of advocacy for people with disability in a changing disability environment, including in the context of the NDIS? If not what changes are required?
Would suggest an enhanced emphasis within the principles that continue to strengthen advocacy as a key platform for the inclusion of people with a disability in decision making agendas, arenas and opportunities. Principle c) with its focus on systemic advocacy could highlight influencing this sphere to ensure more people with a disability are involved in key decision making arenas.
 - b) Disability advocacy promotes **and strengthens the rights**, interests and wellbeing And promotes and **enhances** their full and valued
 - d) Disability advocacy promotes **and strengthens** leadership, **empowerment** and capacity building ...
 - e) Disability Advocacy ensures that the views represented meet the individual preferences, goals and needs of **the individual** and may acknowledge the broader needs of people with a disability.
 - g) Disability advocacy recognises and respects the diversity of people with a disability **with a commitment to customise service delivery that supports diversity.**
 - h) Disability advocacy ensures that the rights of people with a disability to privacy, dignity, confidentiality, **equality** and **freedom from abuse** are recognised and upheldTo move the language of the principles from promoting to strengthening or enhancing.
Other proposed principles

Impartiality – no discrimination

Independence – to remain independent from external organisations and systems to support and uphold an individual's rights. Support that is free from conflict of interest.

Research and evidence based practice. To be committed to best practice and evidence based advocacy approaches.

Disability Advocacy in it's variety of approaches (individual, citizen, self, systemic etc) is a vital and fundamental disability service provider within the NDIS framework.

Maybe refer to the NDIS operational guideline – General conduct – supporting participants decision making. Although this guideline could be more proactive around supporting individuals to engage an independent advocate alongside natural supports.

3. Are the outcomes of the Framework still relevant or should different ones be included?
Support current outcomes a), d), e) & g)
People with disability are heard, validated, empowered and their rights are upheld
b) People with disability can achieve enhanced economic and civic participation and social inclusion
c) people with disability have a right to choice, personal wellbeing and safety and are supported to pursue their life goals
f) people with disability experiencing multiple disadvantage have their needs identified and met.
Disability Advocacy organisations work in collaboration with other agencies to meet an individuals advocacy needs???
4. Are the outputs of the Framework still relevant or should different outputs be included?
Suggest the following changes and inclusions to outputs
Support current outputs b),
a) Individual advocacy that is tailored through a variety of advocacy approaches ie. self, systemic, citizen, individual advocacy meets the individual needs of people with a disability
c) Disability advocacy that is planned and delivered in a co-ordinated manner and supports communication between the person with disability, disability advocate,
d) Disability advocacy that promotes community education and awareness of disability issues, rights and the role of advocacy
e) Systemic advocacy that positively contributes to local and broader systems change ie NDIS, legislation, policy and practice
Citizen Advocacy that positively contributes to local community civic participation and matching community members that uphold the rights of people with disability.
5. Does the Framework identify what is needed in the current and future disability environment? If not what changes are required?
In response to this question I have reviewed the section Reform and Policy Directions
Suggested changes:
15. All governments agree to sustain and strengthen the provision of Disability Advocacy whilst honouring all approaches ie. individual, citizen, systemic , self etc advocacy and to improve

- a) Supporting and implementing the NDIA whilst ensuring NDIS principles, policies guidelines and practices acknowledge, value and engage the disability advocacy sector
- d) Ensuring that the funding of disability advocacy is sustained, expanded
- e) The use of evidence based data for administration, planning and service delivery of
- f) Improving including promoting linkages between all advocacy approaches / models individual, citizen, self etc and systemic

16. All governments and disability advocacy key stakeholders

6. Do you have any other comments, thoughts or ideas about the Framework?

Can the principles be more concise ie

IMPARTIALITY

INDEPENDENCE

With explanations or criteria

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