

Standards and monitoring performance

Disability Act 2006

Introduction

The *Disability Act 2006* (the Act) commenced on 1 July 2007. The Act will help to make sure that disability services provided to people with a disability in Victoria are of high quality.

How does the Act help to make sure that quality services are provided?

Under the Act, the Minister for Community Services must determine the standards that are to be met by disability service providers. Disability service providers must comply with these standards.

The standards apply to things like:

- the way in which services and supports are delivered
- plans for people
- how complaints will be heard and managed
- how information is managed and privacy is maintained.

The Act will ensure all disability service providers meet the same standards.

These standards have been published in the Victorian Government Gazette and came into operation on 1 July 2007.

Under the Act, the Secretary of the Department of Human Services may monitor the performance of disability service providers. This means that service providers have to show a person or agency, who has the power to conduct a review of the service, how they meet each standard and how they are working to improve the quality of their service.

What are the standards for disability services?

The standards for disability services in Victoria define the acceptable standard for disability services, against which disability service providers are measured. The standards assist to establish a common language that defines quality and establishes criteria for safety, rights, reliability, efficiency and service-user outcomes.

Standards have been developed in two key areas:

1. **Outcome standards.** Outcomes standards are used to measure whether services and supports make a difference in the lives of people who use them. For example, measuring if a person has been able to participate in the community or be more independent.

2. **Industry standards.** Industry standards are used to measure disability service providers' systems and processes. For example, how the service provider respects a person's privacy and confidentiality, and how they handle complaints.

How will the service providers show that they are meeting the standards?

From July 2007, disability service providers must start to make sure their services meet the standards.

This means that disability service providers will use the standards to measure the quality of their services. This includes asking people with a disability, their families and carers what they think about the service.

Disability service providers must show how they are meeting the standards and improving their services in a quality plan.

How will disability service providers be monitored?

Independent quality monitoring will commence from 2009. Disability service providers will have to show an independent person or agency how they are consistently meeting the standards.

Whoever monitors the disability service provider will also speak to people with a disability, their families and carers about the service.

For a copy of *Better services, better outcomes, stronger communities: The Quality Framework for Disability services in Victoria*, or more information on the quality framework:

Visit the *Improving supports – Quality and continuous improvement* website at: www.dhs.vic.gov.au/disability
Telephone: 1300 366 731

TTY: (03) 9096 0133 (for people who are deaf or have a hearing, speech or communication impairment)

Email: qualityindisability@dhs.vic.gov.au

For more information about the Act, visit:

www.dhs.vic.gov.au/disability