

The Senior Practitioner

Disability Act 2006

Introduction

The *Disability Act 2006* ('the Act') will become fully operational from 1 July 2007.

The Act provides a much greater level of scrutiny and accountability for disability service providers who use restrictive interventions or compulsory treatment through the establishment of the Senior Practitioner.

What is the role of the Senior Practitioner?

The Senior Practitioner is generally responsible for ensuring that the rights of people who are subject to restrictive interventions and compulsory treatment are protected and that appropriate standards in relation to these practices are complied with.

What are the powers of the Senior Practitioner?

The Senior Practitioner will have powers to assist in the discharge of the functions of the Act. These powers are essential to enable the Senior Practitioner to safeguard the rights of people subject to restrictive interventions and compulsory treatment. The Senior Practitioner can:

- visit and inspect any premises where disability services are being provided (except for a private residence which is not a residential service)
- see any person, investigate, audit and monitor, inspect and make copies of or take extracts from any documents relating to a person subject to any restrictive intervention or compulsory treatment
- see any person involved in the development, implementation or authorization of any restrictive intervention or compulsory treatment, request information from a disability service provider and authorize a disability service provider to use a restrictive intervention.

The Senior Practitioner may give a disability service provider a written order directing them to discontinue or alter a practice, procedure or treatment, to observe or carry out a practice, procedure or treatment, or to provide a practice, procedure or treatment to a person with a disability.

Who is the Senior Practitioner?

Mr Jeffrey Chan has been appointed to the role of Senior Practitioner and commenced on 6 November 2006.

Who will support the Senior Practitioner?

To deliver the statutory requirements of the Act, an Office has been established to support the Senior Practitioner. In addition to the staff of the Office of the Senior Practitioner, the Act allows the Senior Practitioner to enter into agreements or arrangements to obtain a person or body with appropriate expertise to assist the Senior Practitioner in fulfilling functions under the Act.

For more information about the Senior Practitioner

Contact the Office of the Senior Practitioner by email: seniorpractitioner@dhs.vic.gov.au

For more information about the Act, contact:

Disability Services Division, Department of Human Services

Telephone 1300 366 731 (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday)

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

Email: disability.legislation@dhs.vic.gov.au