

Northern Territory Disability Advisory Council (DAC) Terms of Reference

Membership of the Advisory Council

Advisory Councils' membership is derived from the community. Consumer and community members constitute the membership of the Advisory Councils. Disability Service providers and agency representatives are participants on Advisory Councils for the purpose of hearing the consumer and community perspective, contributing information and actioning relevant advice. All members of the Disability Advisory Council are appointed by the Minister for Family and Community Services.

Meeting frequency and process

It is expected that Advisory Councils will meet no more frequently than four times a year with the discretion to hold meetings over one-two days. Advanced notice of meetings is required to support participation. Opportunity for meetings to occur outside of Darwin can be explored by the Advisory Council and supported where practicable within the Northern Territory.

Specific objectives

1. To provide disability service providers, the Department of Health and Community Services and Minister for Family and Community Services with advice on disability services and the needs of people with disabilities, their families and carers within the area that they represent.
2. To be receptive to the diverse opinions, ideas and proposed solutions of people across the lifespan, cultures and groups within the broader community.
3. To support community feedback to the Minister and DHCS regarding disability service provision.
4. To provide information to the Minister on the disability needs of the community and the appropriateness of models of service provision and consumer interests.
5. To advise on opportunities to improve the coordination of disability service delivery.
6. To raise the level of consumer and community understanding of disability issues.
7. Contribute to the development of service delivery models.
8. To develop and work to a plan that outlines the priority issues of the Advisory Council.

Work plan and reports

Within the first three months, a draft work plan for the coming 12 months will be developed. The work plan will identify how the Advisory Council aims to undertake its role and the support needs of that role.

A quarterly or half yearly short summary report will be submitted to the Minister for Health and Community Services outlining the following:

- key initiatives and activities of the Advisory Council
- issues and achievements of the Advisory Council in relation to community and consumer participation and work plan priorities
- areas of un-met need
- future plans and proposals
- achievements and lessons learnt
- support needs of the Advisory Council.

Evaluation criteria

Within the first 12 months, the Advisory Council will draft a work plan that includes simple and relevant evaluation criteria to enable the Advisory Council to gain feedback on its progress and areas to build upon.

These criteria might initially focus on:

- building the ability of the membership and Advisory Council to obtain information about key disability issues
- consumer and community consultation strategies and effectiveness
- the effective workings of the Advisory Council
- achievements in relation to consumer and community input into disability service improvement.