



MAKING INCLUSION HAPPEN

*The opportunities for embedding inclusive practice within CatholicCare
Social Services Hunter-Manning accommodation services*

Funded By

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Introduction

This report will outline the outcomes of the Making Inclusion Happen project undertaken by CatholicCare Social Services Hunter-Manning (CatholicCare) through the NDS Organisational Transition Funding.

Executive Summary

Person Centred Practices have been used by CatholicCare for many years. With the introduction of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), CatholicCare embarked on a project designed to measure our organisational methodology and identify opportunities to develop our organisation as a preferred service provider. A key objective of the project included fostering inclusion and participation in all organisational practices between staff, the People We Support (PWS) and those agencies who CatholicCare collaborates with.

Focus areas of the project included:

- a) Assessment of the implementation person centred practices.
- b) Evaluation of organisational methodologies, including IT systems and practices, and how they aligned to incorporate an inclusive service with the PWS.
- c) Adoption of a range of person centred planning tools including one page profiles, 4+1 questions, PATH, moving through levels of inclusion, relationship maps, planning and evaluation templates, gifts of hearts and hands and head, to support and assist staff in planning and measuring the success of achieving the goals of PWS, as well as monitoring the steps to participation and inclusion.
- d) The ongoing development of a person centered, strengths based organisational culture, aligning values and beliefs and identifying how these contribute to supporting inclusion.

- e) Examining existing workplace practices and identifying opportunities for the organisation and our team to be more inclusive of staff, volunteers, the PWS and those agencies CatholicCare collaborates with through all practices such as recruitment and policy development.

As a result of the project CatholicCare identified a number of areas for further development within our organisation, the service network and the broader community regarding the implementation of inclusive and participatory practices.

The Project

Organisational Methodology and Capacity for Inclusion.

Organisation capacity and methodology was evaluated through:

- Evaluation against the Disability Service Standards.
- Evaluation against current service practices such as activities and outings the PWS participate in.
- Evaluation of plans, inclusive of the PWS individual goals, and how well identified targets are being met.
- Evaluation of governance, policies and procedures, IT Systems and how these foster participation and inclusion for the PWS.
- Evaluation of workforce readiness.

Resources used for this project

- Inclusion Consultant.
- Person Centered tools, such as one page profiles, 4+1 questions, PATH, moving through levels of inclusion, relationship maps, planning and evaluation templates, gifts of hearts and hands and head.

Organisational Staffing Culture- Workforce readiness.

This was evaluated through:

- Evaluation against the Disability Service Standards.
- Evaluation of staff's personal values and beliefs and how these align with the organisation and the meaning of inclusion.

Key Findings from This Project

- Person centred practices and planning had been implemented in CatholicCare for a number of years. Practices were person centred, however the measurement of inclusion and meaningful participation was quite varied.
- Barriers were evident between goal setting and funding. What was included for true inclusion in PWS plans was not funded in NDIS plans. This highlights the need for further collaboration between agencies and the community to ensure social opportunities such as attendance at events and festivals, access to training and job readiness programs and participation in sports/social programs are provided to the PWS.
- Challenges were identified with goal setting and the identification of who the goal had been developed by. On evaluation, goals were often set with staff and family members, which is important, however at times poses additional challenges to ensure true individualised person centred goals. An example of this is where a family member led the discussion and development of the goal as opposed to the person we support having independent input into the planning process.
- Further community education needs to occur, aimed at raising awareness of the value people with disabilities play as active members in our community. CatholicCare have a key focus on PWS having a higher involvement in volunteer and paid employment settings. To this end, we are actively seeking to work in collaboration with other social service providers, businesses and sporting associations to assist in the development of pathways to volunteering and employment. An example of this is some of the PWS volunteering with the CatholicCare Community Care Van.
- Process and practices need to be designed to enable PWS to be true advocates for themselves and others. These include the intentional use of the aforementioned person centred planning tools, PWS being part of interview panels for support worker positions and PWS acting as informal support people for each other when attending community events, job interviews, medical appointments etc.
- Staff, although committed to inclusion and participation, had a varied understanding of the meaning of these concepts. Staff were challenged to think outside of the 'norm' and to be aware of situations that challenged their own personal beliefs and values.
- In an effort to ensure PWS are supported by staff and volunteers who have similar interests and outlooks, it is our intention to widen our recruitment parameters to not only attract new staff that possess industry qualifications and skills, but also to attract



and appoint staff with attitudes and values that reflect inclusion but may not have a background in disability services. In these circumstances, CatholicCare will provide training and support and ensure that staff are rostered based on compatibility with the PWS, where possible.

Information Technology

As part of this project, CatholicCare undertook a review of our internal information technology systems to ensure that we were positioned to provide a person centred case management system. Two key factors that we needed to consider were as follows:

- a) As a small service provider, funding to support the implementation of a case management system was limited.
- b) Acknowledging that as part of the launch site, the measurement requirements imposed by NDIS would be evolving.

CatholicCare made the decision to implement Community Data Solutions (CDS), a client database system already utilised within existing CatholicCare service areas. CDS is a leading cloud based software provider operating exclusively in the Not-for-Profit sector in Australia. CDS provides a range of modules that assist us with person centred planning, organisational administration, case planning, reporting, pricing and data management.

Conclusion

Planning is integral to any organisation migrating to NDIS. Organisations need to focus on evaluating practices and structures. This evaluation needs to ensure a balance between being ready for the NDIS and ensuring organisation financial viability, along with embedding practices that are inclusive and participatory to provide better outcomes for service users.