



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Communities**

Policy Framework for the Funded Advocacy Program



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Definition

To safeguard and advance the rights, interests and well-being of people with disability.

Target group

This policy framework applies to people with disability who are eligible for Department of Communities (Communities) funded and provided services at levels 2 and 3. Level 2 eligibility is based on assessed need and includes people with a disability that is manifest before the age of 60 years. Level 3 eligibility is based on an assessment of need for people with an intellectual disability or autism.

Purpose

Communities recognises that advocacy is undertaken by families and carers and by disability services in both the non-government and government sector.

However, there is a need for a formalised advocacy response that:

- is independent from the provision of either funded or provided disability services
- provides people with disability with choice in meeting their advocacy needs.

Therefore, the Funded Advocacy Program will consist of non-government organisations that provide advocacy and are not involved in the provision of other disability services.

Individual advocacy service guidelines

Outcomes

People with disability:

- are included, participate in and are accepted in all aspects of community life
- have access to services/supports that meet their needs and choices
- are supported to participate in decision-making processes that affect their lives
- are not treated in a manner that is harmful, discriminatory or negligent
- are treated justly and fairly.

Outputs

Individual advocacy services focus on empowering and supporting people with disability to address their needs and/or choices in order to bring about positive changes in the quality of their everyday life. Individual advocacy can include:

- assistance to people with disability to enable them to act for themselves
- support for families, carers and members of the community to act with or for people with disability
- acting with and for people with disability.

Service guidelines

Individual advocacy services:

- involve people with disability as actively as possible in the advocacy support that is provided
- offer a high standard of service delivery by appropriately trained professional or voluntary staff, who are supported, resourceful and accountable
- ensure that the advocate's primary loyalty is to the person for whom they are advocating
- recognise the value of family and carers and include them where appropriate
- are accessible to people with disability of all cultures, beliefs and linguistic backgrounds
- always work towards optimum individual independence and empowerment of people with disability
- strive to be independent, autonomous and minimise conflicts of interest
- will involve people with disability at all levels of corporate governance and service development where possible
- are provided in flexible, accessible settings
- provide services for which there is no charge.

Systemic advocacy service guidelines

Outcomes

People with disability:

- are included, participate and are accepted in all aspects of community life
- have access to services/supports that meet their needs and choices
- are supported to participate in decision-making processes that affect their lives
- are not treated in a manner that is harmful, discriminatory or negligent
- are treated justly and fairly.

Outputs

Systemic advocacy services focus on influencing or producing changes in society in order to positively affect the quality of life of people with disability.

Systemic advocacy acts to affect changes in the following:

- government legislation
- government and non-government policies, practices and services
- private sector policies, practices and services
- attitudes and understanding of the general community.

Service guidelines

Systemic advocacy services speak with, and on behalf of, people with disability and are reliant on strong linkages with:

- people with disability, their families and carers
- individual advocacy and other systemic advocacy organisations
- disability organisations.

Systemic advocacy services:

- identify the issues that are of greatest concern or priority to people with disability
- offer a high standard of service delivery by appropriately trained professional or voluntary staff, who are supported, resourceful and accountable
- ensure that the focus of systemic advocacy is people with disability
- recognise the value of family and carers and include them when appropriate
- are accessible to people with disability of all cultures, beliefs and linguistic backgrounds
- strive to be independent, autonomous and minimise conflicts of interest
- will involve people with disability at all levels of corporate governance and service development where possible
- are provided in flexible, accessible settings.