

Quality Systems Improvement Project

Implementation of Culturally Responsive Disability Services Standards

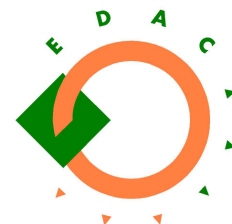
Final Report

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Acknowledgement

The Ethnic Disability Advocacy Centre would like to acknowledge with thanks the Quality Services Improvement Grant provided by the Disability Services Commission.

Thanks and appreciation to the Management and Staff of Activ Industries in Osborne Park, Advocacy Southwest and DaDAA WA for enabling us to share our knowledge and experience in the implementation of the Culturally Responsive Disability Services Standards. It was an invaluable exchange and we hope you have gained as much as we have in delivery this project.

EDAC also wish to thank the following Project Officers, staff and volunteers, namely,

Amy Berson – Project Officer (July 06 - May 07)

Anita Lumbus – Project Officer (June 2007)

Harry Pickett – Honourary Consultant

Zel Iscel – EDAC's Systemic Advocate who assisted with some training

Jenny Au Yeong – Executive Officer, EDAC for overall support and co-ordination of project

Thuan Geh – Administrator, EDAC for financial and policy management

Introduction

The **Ethnic Disability Advocacy Centre** (EDAC) is a community-based advocacy agency for people with disabilities from culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) backgrounds and their families/carers. It provides individual and systemic advocacy, support, information and training to consumers, families and the disability sector. EDAC was successful in obtaining funding from the Disability Services Commission within the Quality Service Improvement grant to assist and support the disability sector.

Project aim

The project aims to assist three disability services agencies across the disability sector to implement the Disability Services Standards 1-9, in culturally responsive ways suitable for CaLD consumers, their families/carers and communities

Anticipated outcomes

- The 3 disability agencies achieved knowledge and understanding of the Disability Services Standards in relation to the delivery of culturally appropriate services for their CaLD consumers.
- Contributed towards a continuous quality improvement process with CaLD consumers and their families within the respective agencies.

Implementation Process

EDAC, through previous service improvement grant had developed culturally responsive Disability Services Standards policies and guidelines following extensive consultations with their constituents. That manual is available for use by all disability agencies however they would benefit from some cultural/disability training and assistance in the implementation of the those standards.

It was proposed that only three disability agencies would be offered the assistance to implement the culturally responsive Disability Services Standards action plans and training with the resources available. EDAC will,

- Establish short term service development partnership arrangements with individual agencies;
- Provide individualised implementation support and training to suit each agency's particular roles and functions and current service priorities and issues;
- Provide all necessary assistance in the development of programs, policies that relate to addressing the needs of CaLD;
- The Agencies as recipients will make its staff available as a group for an intensive training session and then for follow-up support to plan and engage with implementation of priority areas for the agency and its consumers under the Standards;
- Training sessions durations will vary but at least one full day or equivalent will be required for Quality process familiarisation and for each component

of the Disability Services Standards 1-9 to be addressed from CaLD consumer perspectives;

- Follow up implementation support periods will also vary depending on needs but a notional commitment of four hours a week for one month will be budgeted; and
- Costs for the provision of training and support will be met by EDAC, such as materials, use of equipment, administrative, office support and travelling expenses.

The three agencies selected for training and support were, Activ Industries in Osborne Park, Advocacy South West in Bunbury, and Disability in the Arts, Disadvantage in the Arts Australia (DADDAA) in Fremantle.

Agency 1 – Activ Industries in Osborne Park

Activ Industries in Osborne Park is one of many employment services provided by the Activ Foundation. Activ Employment Services provides meaningful work opportunities for people with disability in various work activities and situated in both metropolitan and regional centres of WA.

Summary

EDAC worked mainly with staff and workshop employees of Activ Industries in Osborne Park. They had previously contacted EDAC regarding some issues of racism amongst some of their employees and requested support and advice. After a couple of meetings with management and staff, it was agreed that it would be most beneficial to address the issues from a more holistic perspective by offering all the staff and workshop employees training and support including the implementation of the Disability Services Standards by examining the CaLD consumers perspectives. Racism would be discussed and addressed within the workshop session and if appropriate incorporate into the Disability Services Standards policy and action plan.

Workshop

The project worker from EDAC conducted two workshops for Activ Industries' Osborne Park staff on the CaLD perspectives of the Disability Services Standards. These workshops explored multiculturalism in Western Australia, the significance of the CaLD consumers perspectives, examining the standards and the implementation of the standards through case studies. These workshops proved to be very successful. Workshop outline and feedback received from the staff is summarised in the Appendixes

Implementation Support

The staff of Activ Industries requested that their implementation support be focussed on Standards 6, Valued Status and Standard 9, Freedom from Abuse and Neglect and in the form of training workshop on racism with their (sheltered workshop) employees. EDAC project worker conducted subsequent sessions with their employees and some staff members,

focussing on racism issues within the parameters of Valued Status and Freedom from Abuse, including the multicultural charter framework and acknowledging the positive contributions from different cultures in Western Australia. Given that majority of their (sheltered workshop) employees had mental health and intellectual disabilities, considering adjustment and planning were undertaken to make it meaningful to the audience. About one hundred and ten employees and eight staff members attended the training session.

These workshops were extremely well received by both the employees and the staff. Following the sessions with the employees, they were asked if they had enjoyed the session and found it useful. All replied that they had, but further evaluation was conducted with staff members in order to gain greater feedback (see Appendix B).

Following the completion of the workshops further meetings were held with the Employment Services staff, an assistant supervisor and an employee representative. In this meeting, ongoing implementation strategies were discussed. These included improved access to interpreters, holding regular cultural displays (e.g. to celebrate different feastive days) and appropriate referrals to EDAC. One of the major outcomes was that the group decided to incorporate the CaLD perspectives of the Disability Services Standards into their ongoing standards training.

Agency 2 - Advocacy South West

Advocacy South West in Bunbury provides individual advocacy services and programs for people with disabilities.

Summary

EDAC has worked with Advocacy South West over the past couple of years as part of the Disability First Stop project. Advocacy South West staff expressed an interest in participating in this project after becoming aware of the CaLD perspectives on the Disability Services Standards. They would like to ensure that their services are culturally responsive and accessible to CaLD consumers.

Workshop

A full day workshop was held for staff and volunteer advocates from Advocacy South West. This was conducted in Bunbury and 22 staff/volunteers attended. The workshop focussed on the CaLD perspectives of the Disability Services Standards and practical applications of these. The participants were very engaged and the discussions that developed proved to be constructive and applicable. The workshop presentation of the Disability Services Standards and handouts can be viewed in the Appendix section including the evaluation.

Implementation Support

Following the workshop a meeting was held with two key staff from Advocacy South West to discuss items to follow up on. The biggest area of support requested was determining methods to target CaLD consumers within the region. Among the resources provided included a multicultural services directory. Staff were encouraged to make contact with their local regional multicultural services and if further assistance were required to contact EDAC. Advocacy South West had an ongoing relationship with EDAC and stated that they felt comfortable requesting support as required.

Agency 3 - Disability in the Arts, Disadvantage in the Arts Australia (DADDAA) WA

Disability in the Arts Disadvantage in the Arts Australia (DADAA WA) is an organization that promotes the arts as a means to build communities by working with them to develop innovative arts processes reflecting the specific needs of their members with disabilities.

Summary

EDAC has been working in partnership with DADAA WA on the Vicinity film project. The Vicinity project aims to increase the number of West Australians with disabilities participating in all aspects of filmmaking.

DADAA expressed an interest in receiving training and information on cultural/disability issues but in particular on managing the behaviour of CaLD children with disabilities and strengthening the cultural awareness of its staff. They had taken on a project that involved working with this target group and accepted the offer of training and support from EDAC.

Workshop

An afternoon workshop was held with nine staff from DADAA WA. The majority of the attendees were arts workers and support workers who were currently working with children with disabilities including those of CaLD backgrounds. In addition to training on CaLD perspectives of the Disability Services Standards, the workshop also discussed culture, disability and children's behaviour and staff were able to talk about issues they had experienced working with CaLD children with disabilities. The discussion and case studies proved extremely useful for the participants, as indicated in their feedback forms.

Implementation Support

EDAC provided the DADAA WA staff with additional resources, including a multicultural directory, relevant brochures and a contact list. They were informed of the support available by EDAC, and requested some additional information on interpreting services which was also provided.

Discussion

The project highlighted the importance in engaging with management and policy makers within each agency to enable procedural changes where required. The need for different approaches for workshops with front line staff that were more “hands on” was also evident, as they preferred more practical examples of the application of each service standard.

One difficulty proved to be the ability to cover all of the nine standards sufficiently and in detail during the workshop time. The task of reviewing each standard and its CaLD perspectives was attempted in two of the workshops by doing small group work, but some participants found this tedious, time consuming and not always applicable to their every day work.

During the third workshop the staff were provided with an overview of each standard, and asked to give examples of how DADAA WA meets the needs of CALD people with disabilities in its implementation of the Disability Services Standards.

A further challenge that EDAC faced was getting some agencies to prioritise their work timetable. In general, it seemed that agencies that approached EDAC (Activ Industries and Advocacy South West) were more interested, enthusiastic and accommodating in terms of organising workshops and ensuring staff were available on the day. It was comparatively difficult to engage with other agencies as although many expressed an interest, they were not able to prioritise this project over other competing priorities.

Conclusion

In general, the project proved to be very successful. The agencies involved appreciated the opportunity in learning about various cultural/disability issues and felt they had benefited from their participation. EDAC also gained valuable feedback regarding the “user-friendliness” of the CaLD Perspectives of Disability Services Standards Manual.

From the feedback received we believe this project has achieved the stated objectives and accomplished most outcomes in varying degrees. All agencies have demonstrated a commitment for inclusion of culturally diverse clients and maintain a high standard, quality service. We are confident that the overall input provided by this project will have lasting effect and sustainability within the respective agencies.

APPENDIX A

POWERPOINT PRESENTATIONS AND HANDOUTS

APPENDIX B
EVALUATION REPORTS