

# ACCOUNTABLE GOVERNANCE

## The Disability Royal Commission Recommendations on Service Provider Boards

How having the right people, processes, structures and information can help create a more accountable organisation that supports the independence of people with disability and their right to live free from violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation.



### BOARD ACCOUNTABILITIES

- ▶ Delivering safe and quality supports and services, promoting human rights and a culture of safe and quality supports
- ▶ Facilitating contribution by clients and their supporters to the organisation's governance and procedures
- ▶ Ensuring the views and wishes of the people with disability using their services are at the forefront of decision-making about service delivery
- ▶ Demonstrating they have considered the matters reported to them, and that appropriate action is taken to prevent and respond to identified risks to quality and safety



## THE RIGHT PEOPLE

- ▶ Ensure membership of the board includes:
  - People with disabilities, possibly including people with intellectual disabilities
  - Persons with expertise in service delivery
- ▶ Update your Board Skills and Attributes Matrix for these requirements
- ▶ Make sure that all directors are trained in:
  - Human Rights
  - Responsibilities about risk management, including dignity of risk
  - Prevention of and response to violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation
  - Responsibilities about complaint and incident management



## THE RIGHT STRUCTURES

- ▶ Depending on your organisation's size and context, create a dedicated board-level committee on human rights, quality and safety
- ▶ Facilitate regular and unfiltered access to specialist safeguarding advice about complaints and incidents



## THE RIGHT PROCESSES

- ▶ Leadership
  - Lead for human rights, quality and safeguarding
  - Create transparent and accountable decision-making
- ▶ Build a positive culture
  - State your values, philosophies and principles
  - Ensure that these are understood and applied
  - Identify and address problematic sub-cultures
  - Communicate openly and regularly with clients and staff
- ▶ Ensure that safety, quality and risk are included on the agenda of every board meeting and that sufficient time is allocated
- ▶ Get out of the boardroom and into the field
  - Implement a roster to meet with clients, their supporters and staff
  - Maintain a roster to visit sites of operation, with the consent of clients
- ▶ Implement a framework for governing practice
  - Ensure risk management frameworks and processes prioritise risks to people over organisational risks, and include both preventative and reactive approaches
  - Ensure oversight and monitoring of quality and safety, including proactive approaches to prevent violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation
  - Ensure there is a framework of robust policies and procedures and that these are being translated into practice
  - Ensure that workers are competent, capable, valued and supported
  - Support continuous improvement
- ▶ Review your governance periodically for fitness for purpose and to ensure it reflects human rights



## THE RIGHT INFORMATION

- ▶ Ensure information from client advisory forums or groups flows to the Board
- ▶ Build a direct 'line of sight' regarding human rights, quality and safeguarding, with reporting no less than quarterly
- ▶ Develop organisational data collection, analysis and reporting capabilities, which are periodically reviewed
- ▶ Include qualitative data, e.g. individual stories, focus group results
- ▶ Use safeguarding indicators
- ▶ Review information on serious incidents and complaints, to ensure that the person affected has been supported appropriately, outcomes are appropriate and fair, and that lessons are identified
- ▶ Learn from the experiences of other providers
- ▶ Publish information about your organisation's performance on human rights, quality and safeguarding in your annual report



## BUILD THE INTERNAL CONTEXT

- ▶ Invest in disability leadership, including as directors, executives, managers and advisors
- ▶ Engage meaningfully with people with disabilities
- ▶ Create client advisory forums or groups
- ▶ Ensure that people with disabilities and their supporters have the opportunity to participate actively in decisions about services and support



## EXTERNAL CONTEXT CHANGES

The Royal Commission has recommended:

- ▶ The NDIS Commission strengthen Practice Standards and Quality Indicators to promote robust governance
- ▶ The NDIS Commission requires boards to undertake training as part of compliance actions, where appropriate



## PRACTICE GOVERNANCE FOR DISABILITY SERVICE PROVIDERS

Right on Board is a capacity building program on human rights, quality and safeguarding for Boards and Executive Teams of disability organisations.

Right on Board answers the need highlighted by the Disability Royal Commission for greater awareness of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, as well as the strengthened governance and management of quality and safeguarding.

Find out more on: [www.nds.org.au/training-and-development](http://www.nds.org.au/training-and-development)

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Further reading: Disability Royal Commission Final Report, Volume 10, Disability Services; International Standard ISO 37000, Governance of organizations, which embeds a stakeholder view of governance.

Our wording is close to that of the Royal Commission Final Report, but sometimes does not reflect it exactly.



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