

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT POLICY

Applies to: The Organisation

Version Number: 10

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Next review date: August 2022



POLICY STATEMENT

Direct Care Australia is committed to providing clients with a service of unquestionable quality. Direct Care Australia is committed to excellence in the provision of person-centred care and best practice service provision, and with this aim the company continually strives to improve all aspects of its operation.

DCA's quality management system framework is based on an organisation wide framework detailed in policies and procedures, incorporating shared systems for data collection, and continuous monitoring to address specific opportunities for improvement.

What is Continuous Improvement?

Continuous improvement is a systematic, ongoing effort to improve the quality of care and services and:

- takes into account the needs of your care recipients and may involve them in improvement activities,
- is part of an overall quality system to assess how well processes and systems are working and the standard of care and services achieved, and
- is a results-focused activity demonstrated through outputs and outcomes.

To be effective, continuous improvement must be a central focus and must be understood and sought at all levels and accepted by all management and staff.

Key elements of continuous improvement

- consumer-directed and consumer-informed
- person centred
- innovation
- achieved through planned activities that are continually reviewed
- driven by involvement and accountability of key stakeholders:
 - care recipients, representatives, service users, carers and others
 - staff and volunteers
 - committee members
 - advocates; and
- involves regular monitoring and evaluation of progress
- linking evaluation to strategic planning.

Benefits of continuous improvement

- improve care and services to care recipients,
- improve stakeholder input and ownership,
- identify changes in care and service needs,
- enhance systems to monitor and track change; and
- demonstrate sustainable results.



DCA's Continuous Improvement Process

DCA's quality management system is designed to facilitate the process of continuous improvement; to promote an enthusiastic culture of improvement, innovation and customer service; and to invite and facilitate participation by all stakeholders.

DCA shall continually improve the suitability, adequacy and effectiveness of its quality management system.

The Chief Executive Officer determine the direction of the quality management system and have ultimate responsibility for its effective implementation.

The Management Team has oversight and coordination of the program and develops and manages all staff in its execution.

All staff are expected to participate in and contribute to the program.

The organisation considers the results of analysis and evaluation and the outputs from management review in order to determine if there are needs or opportunities that are required to be addressed as part of continual improvement.

The Management Team work collaboratively to write, review and/or update quality documents and may, in consultation with the Chief Executive Officer, authorise proposed changes, made in writing by other staff members.

Direct Care Australia's quality program is underpinned by the following Industry Standards:

- Aged Care Quality Standards
- NDIS Practice Standards
- National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards
- Australian Standards
- Internal and External Audits

Business Improvement Plan

Direct Care Australia develops an annual Business Plan which includes clearly defined goals for improvement, in line with corporate objectives.

The goals reflect problems or opportunities that have been recognised as important to Direct Care Australia's operations.

The plan includes details of issues or expected outcomes (goals), broad strategies or actions to be used, tools to measure progress, team members responsible, and realistic time frames.

Departmental reports and progress of projects or budgets are reported on at staff meetings, governance meetings and on completion.

Larger planned projects are reviewed quarterly to ensure that time frames are being met, and so that orderly adjustments can be made to the overall plan if needed. Additional items may be added to the plan during the year according to assessed priority.

The plan is reviewed annually and evaluated in terms of timeliness of project completion, and the outcomes achieved. The evaluation forms the basis for the next annual plan.

Continuous Improvement Monitoring

Various important areas will be monitored continuously, and summary statistics used to determine trends, develop benchmarks, and identify issues where improvement is needed. These include, but are not limited to:

- Complaints and grievances – monthly review
- Staff & client incident reports – monthly review
- Organisational hazard & risk register – quarterly review
- Formal Client Feedback reviews – quarterly review
- Service Agreements & Contracts – quarterly review

Response to Problem Issues and Opportunities for Improvement

Non-conformances are identified through many pathways, and are examined and prioritised for action. High priority issues are addressed immediately, whilst others may be slotted into an Improvement Plan for the current year, or held for inclusion in the next annual plan.

Review of Compliance with Standards, Guidelines and KPIs

Compliance with the required or accepted Standards, guidelines and stakeholder KPIs are continuously reviewed according to an organisation wide annual schedule.

Goals of review process:

- To increase knowledge and understanding of the Standards, guidelines and KPIs
- To meet our obligation to regularly review our compliance
- To accurately identify areas of deficit so that corrective action can be implemented in a timely manner
- To provide documentation to assist business development.

Responsibility for conducting review:

- The Operations and Development Manager will assign the responsibility of the review.
- All Staff must participate in the process
- The Operations and Development Manager directs the process, delegates tasks identified by the review and monitor adherence to the schedule
- The Operations and Development Manager will assist in prioritising and scheduling any opportunities for improvement that are identified.

Legal and Regulatory Requirements

DCA operates in an environment involving the administration of legislative and regulatory requirements, such as:

Federal Legislation

- Aged Care Act 1997
- National Disability Insurance Scheme 2013
- Aged Discrimination Act 2004
- Safe Work Australia Act 2008
- Privacy Act 188
- Safety Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988

State Legislation – South Australia

- Safety Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988
- Equal Opportunity Act 1984
- Health and Community Services Complaints Act 2004
- Work Health and Safety Act (2012)
- Work Health and Safety Regulations (2012)
- Return to Work Act 2014
- Return to Work Corporation of South Australia Act 1994
- Return to Work Regulations 2015
- Return to Work (Claims Management – Contractual Arrangements) Regulations 2015
- Long Service Leave Act 1987
- Payroll Tax Act 2009
- Racial Vilification Act 1996
- Superannuation Act 1988
- Fair Work Australia Act 1994

In addition to this, DCA operates under the same legislative responsibilities that apply to all Australian private sector corporations.

Related Policies:

Quality Policy
Corporate Governance Policy
Complaints & Grievances Policy

Related Procedures:

Complaints, Grievances and Appeals Procedure
Appeals Procedure
Internal Audits and Reviews Procedure
Feedback Procedure

Related Forms:

Feedback Form
Incident Form
Improvement Request Form

Related Standards:

NDIS Practice Standards – Standard 2: Provider Governance and Operational Management (Quality Management)
Aged Care Quality Standards – Standard 8: Organisational Governance