

Assessment and planning are the processes we undertake, where relevant to the type of service or support provided, at individual and community levels to ensure our services and programs are responsive to identified needs and align with our strategic intent. At Life Without Barriers (LWB) we provide a range of programs across a number of different service sectors, which require us to actively explore and understand the strengths and needs of the clients, groups and communities we serve and effectively and efficiently target our resources to achieve results. We do this in close partnership with clients, groups and communities, acknowledging their expertise and agency.

Assessment and planning is tailored to the individual context and purpose. We recognise that assessment and planning are key parts of an integrated service delivery approach and must be robust, transparent and subject to regular review. Effective assessment and planning is ensured by:

- using assessment and planning processes and tools that are evidence informed and strengths-led, and are sensitive to:
 - a client's age, gender, abilities, culture, language, social customs and traditions
 - community characteristics
- actively partnering with clients, communities and other professionals (as required) in identifying and assessing their needs
- collecting, analysing and documenting the best available information, both internally and externally, to inform assessment and planning
- working collaboratively with other stakeholders including other services/programs within LWB, other non-government services and government departments in identifying and assessing client and community needs
- documenting client and service/program plans to meet assessed needs including indicators and measurable outcomes
- updating assessments and regularly reviewing progress, and updating client and service/program plans as necessary
- periodically reviewing the effectiveness of assessment and planning processes and tools.

Our services and programs are reviewed drawing on assessments of client and community needs and, where necessary, redesigned to better meet those needs. Outcomes of these reviews are used to inform strategic planning and the identification of priorities.

We affirm our unwavering commitment to being a child safe organisation by upholding the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and embedding the Universal Principle, which affirms the right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to feel culturally safe, respected and included in our operations. We actively align with the legislated or endorsed Child Safe Standards across all Australian jurisdictions, including:

- Qld – Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 and Universal Principle
- Vic – 11 Child Safe Standards
- NSW – Child Safe Standards and Code of Practice
- Tas – Child and Youth Safe Standards
- SA – Child Safe Environments Program
- WA – Commitment to the National Principles
- ACT – Mandatory Child Safe Standards
- NT – Endorsement of the National Principles with mandatory reporting obligations.

Our policies, practices and culture reflect a nationally consistent yet locally responsive approach to child safety, ensuring the wellbeing, inclusion and protection of all children and young people in our care.

Related Documents

Further guidance on our approach to community needs assessment and planning can be found in Policy Centre documents covering the topics listed below:

- client referral, engagement, matching and placement
- case management: including case planning, casework, review, transition and closure
- leaving care planning
- pillars of practice
- person centred practice approach and toolbox
- carer recruitment, assessment, training and support, review and exit
- behavioural support
- clinical assessment
- our values.