

# **CHCDIS012**

**Support community participation and social inclusion**



## **LEARNER GUIDE**

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# This Learner Guide

## **CHCDIS012 - Support community participation and social inclusion (Release 1)**

This unit describes the performance outcomes, skills and knowledge required to assist with supporting people with disability in community participation and social inclusion using a person-centred approach. This involves enabling people to make choices to maximise their participation in various community settings, functions and activities to enhance psychosocial wellbeing and lifestyle in accordance with the person's needs and preferences.

This unit applies to workers in varied disability services contexts. Work performed requires some discretion and judgement and may be carried out under regular direct, indirect or remote supervision.

The skills in this unit must be applied in accordance with Commonwealth and State/Territory legislation, Australian standards and industry codes of practice.

**A complete copy of the above unit of competency can be downloaded from the TGA website:**

<https://training.gov.au/Training/Details/chcdis012>

## About This Unit of Competency Introduction

As a worker, a trainee, or a future worker, you want to enjoy your work and become known as a valuable team member. This unit of competency will help you acquire the knowledge and skills to work effectively as an individual and in groups. It will give you the basis to contribute to the goals of the organisation which employs you.

It is essential that you begin your training by becoming familiar with the industry standards to which organisations must conform.

## This Learner Guide Covers

Support community participation and social inclusion

- I. Identify opportunities for community participation and social inclusion
- II. Implement strategies for community participation and inclusion
- III. Identify, address and monitor barriers to community participation and social inclusion

## Learning Program

As you progress through this unit of study, you will develop skills in locating and understanding an organisation's policies and procedures. You will build up a sound knowledge of the industry standards within which organisations must operate. You will become more aware of the effect that your own skills in dealing with people have on your success or otherwise in the workplace. Knowledge of your skills and capabilities will help you make informed choices about your further study and career options.

## Additional Learning Support

To obtain additional support you may:

- Search for other resources. You may find books, journals, videos and other materials which provide additional information about topics in this unit.
- Search for other resources in your local library. Most libraries keep information about government departments and other organisations, services and programs. The librarian should be able to help you locate such resources.
- Contact information services such as Infolink, Equal Opportunity Commission, Commissioner of Workplace Agreements, Union organisations, and public relations and information services provided by various government departments. Many of these services are listed in the telephone directory.
- Contact your facilitator.

## Facilitation

Your training organisation will provide you with a facilitator. Your facilitator will play an active role in supporting your learning. Your facilitator will help you at any time during working hours to assist with:

- How and when to make contact
- What you need to do to complete this unit of study
- What support will be provided

Here are some of the things your facilitator may do to make your study easier:

- Give you a clear visual timetable of events for the semester or term in which you are enrolled, including any deadlines for assessments
- Provide you with online webinar times and availability
- Use ‘action sheets’ to remind you about tasks you need to complete, and updates on websites
- Make themselves available by telephone for support discussion and provide you with industry updates by email where applicable
- Keep in touch with you during your studies

## Flexible Learning

Studying to become a competent worker is an interesting and exciting thing to do. You will learn about current issues in this area. You will establish relationships with other students, fellow workers, and clients. You will learn about your own ideas, attitudes, and values. You will also have fun. (Most of the time!)

At other times, studying can seem overwhelming and impossibly demanding, particularly when you have an assignment to do and you aren't sure how to tackle it, your family and friends want you to spend time with them, or a movie you want to see is on television.

Sometimes being a student can be hard.

Here are some ideas to help you through the hard times. To study effectively, you need space, resources, and time.

### Space

Try to set up a place at home or at work where you can:

- Keep your study materials
- Be reasonably quiet and free from interruptions
- Be reasonably comfortable, with good lighting, seating, and a flat surface for writing

If it is impossible for you to set up a study space, perhaps you could use your local library. You will not be able to store your study materials there, but you will have a quiet place, a desk and chair, and easy access to the other facilities.

## Study Resources

The most basic resources you will need are:

- A chair
- A desk or table
- A computer with internet access
- A reading lamp or good light
- A folder or file to keep your notes and study materials together
- Materials to record information (pen and paper or notebooks, or a computer and printer)
- Reference materials, including a dictionary

Do not forget that other people can be valuable study resources. Your fellow workers, work supervisor, other students, your facilitator, your local librarian, and workers in this area can also help you.

## Time

It is important to plan your study time. Work out a time that suits you and plan around it. Most people find that studying, in short, concentrated blocks of time (an hour or two) at regular intervals (daily, every second day, once a week) is more effective than trying to cram a lot of learning into a whole day. You need time to ‘digest’ the information in one section before you move on to the next, and everyone needs regular breaks from study to avoid overload. Be realistic in allocating time for study. Look at what is required for the unit and look at your other commitments.

Make up a study timetable and stick to it. Build in ‘deadlines’ and set yourself goals for completing study tasks. Allow time for reading and completing activities. Remember that it is the quality of the time you spend studying rather than the quantity that is important.

## Study Strategies

Different people have different learning ‘styles’. Some people learn best by listening or repeating things out loud. Some learn best by ‘doing’, some by reading and making notes. Assess your own learning style and try to identify any barriers to learning which might affect you. Are you easily distracted? Are you afraid you will fail? Are you taking study too seriously? Not seriously enough? Do you have supportive friends and family? Here are some ideas for effective study strategies:

1. **Make notes.** This often helps you to remember new or unfamiliar information. Do not worry about spelling or neatness, as long as you can read your own notes. Keep your notes with the rest of your study materials and add to them as you go. Use pictures and diagrams if this helps.
2. **Underline keywords** when you are reading the materials in this Learner Guide. (Do not underline things in other people’s books.) This also helps you to remember important points.
3. **Talk to other people** (fellow workers, fellow students, friends, family, or your facilitator) about what you are learning. As well as help you to clarify and understand new ideas, talking also gives you a chance to find out extra information and to get fresh ideas and different points of view.



## Using This Learner Guide

A Learner Guide is just that, a guide to help you learn. A Learner Guide is not a textbook. Your Learner Guide will:

1. Describe the skills you need to demonstrate to achieve competency for this unit.
2. Provide information and knowledge to help you develop your skills.
3. Provide you with structured learning activities to help you absorb knowledge and information and practice your skills.
4. Direct you to other sources of additional knowledge and information about topics for this unit.

### How to Get the Most Out of Your Learner Guide

Some sections are quite long and cover complex ideas and information. If you come across anything you do not understand:

1. Talk to your facilitator.
2. Research the area using the books and materials listed under Resources.
3. Discuss the issue with other people (your workplace supervisor, fellow workers, fellow students).
4. Try to relate the information presented in this Learner Guide to your own experience and to what you already know.
5. Ask yourself questions as you go. For example, 'Have I seen this happening anywhere?' 'Could this apply to me?' 'What if...' This will help you to 'make sense' of new material, and to build on your existing knowledge.
6. Talk to people about your study. Talking is a great way to reinforce what you are learning.
7. Make notes.
8. Work through the activities. Even if you are tempted to skip some activities, do them anyway. They are there for a reason, and even if you already have the knowledge or skills relating to a particular activity, doing them will help to reinforce what you already know. If you do not understand an activity, think carefully about the way the questions or instructions are phrased. Read the section again to see if you can make sense of it. If you are still confused, contact your facilitator or discuss the activity with other students, fellow workers or with your workplace supervisor.

## Additional Research, Reading, and Note-Taking

If you are using the additional references and resources suggested in the Learner Guide to take your knowledge a step further, there are a few simple things to keep in mind to make this kind of research easier.

Always make a note of the author's name, the title of the book or article, the edition, when it was published, where it was published, and the name of the publisher. This includes online articles. If you are taking notes about specific ideas or information, you will need to put the page number as well. This is called the reference information. You will need this for some assessment tasks, and it will help you to find the book again if you need to.

Keep your notes short and to the point. Relate your notes to the material in your Learner Guide. Put things into your own words. This will give you a better understanding of the material.

Start off with a question you want answered when you are exploring additional resource materials. This will structure your reading and save you time.

# Introduction



A *disability* is a condition that limits a person's capabilities. It may affect a person's mobility, ability to learn things, or appropriate communication with others. Different disabilities can affect people in varying ways.

Under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*, disabilities include the following:

- Total or partial loss of the person's bodily or mental functions
- Total or partial loss of body part
- The presence of organisms causing disease or illness in the body
- The presence of organisms capable of causing disease or illness in the body
- The malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of the person's body
- A disorder or malfunction that results in the person learning differently from persons without disability
- A disorder, illness or disease that affects a person's:

Thought  
processes

Perception of  
reality

Emotions

Judgement

Behaviour

Disabilities also include those conditions that:

- Presently exist
- Previously existed but no longer exist
- May exist in the future (including genetic predispositions to disabilities)
- Are attributed to a person

*Based on content from the Federal Register of Legislation at 1 January 2023.*

*For the latest information on Australian Government law please go to <https://www.legislation.gov.au>.*

*Disability Discrimination Act 1992, used under CC BY 4.0*

Depending on the severity, disabilities can cause difficulty in many aspects of a person's life. For example:

- An older person who gradually developed a vision impairment cannot do things that they did when they were younger.
- A child with cerebral palsy cannot participate in school activities, such as team games and physical exercises.
- An adult with anxiety disorder finds their daily living activities difficult.

Persons with disability require support from different professionals. These include professionals such as allied health, which includes specialists and doctors. Persons with disability may also receive support from support workers. To assist persons with disability, you support their community participation and social inclusion.

*Inclusion* means everyone can take part in society regardless of their race, sex, religion or ability. Inclusion happens when everyone has equal access to the resources they need to live a full life. Inclusion for persons with disability means that they can still work, study or do activities equally with persons without disability. Suitable accommodation and support can make this possible.

*Social inclusion* is inclusion within the community. An inclusive society welcomes and respects people of all abilities. This society allows all people to participate in their community. There is social inclusion when facilities, activities and attitudes allow everyone to participate in their community.

These include the following:

Employment

Education

Public transportation

Recreational and cultural activities

Social clubs and groups

As a disability support worker, part of your job is to support the community participation and social inclusion of your clients. *Supporting* means providing help to make something happen or making something more accessible. This means finding ways for your clients to participate in their communities regardless of their disability. To do this, you must implement strategies for community participation and inclusion. These strategies must be in accordance with the individualised plan. You will then monitor and promptly address any barriers to community participation and social inclusion.



In this Learner Guide, you will learn to:

- Identify opportunities for community participation and social inclusion
- Implement strategies for community participation and inclusion
- Identify, address and monitor barriers to community participation and social inclusion

# I. Identify Opportunities for Community Participation and Social Inclusion



As mentioned before, social inclusion means all members of a community are welcomed and respected. An inclusive community allows each member to participate in activities and programmes that affect their daily lives. To support your clients' community participation and social inclusion, you need to know what opportunities are available to them. You also need to talk to your clients to understand what they enjoy or want to achieve, or try.

If you cannot identify these opportunities for your clients, you cannot help them join the activities or programmes they want to do. You might also recommend places or activities for them that cannot meet their needs or preferences.

In this chapter, you will learn how to:

- Consult with the person with disability to determine support requirements for engaging with a social network
- Identify and access appropriate community participation options that fit the needs and preferences of the person with disability
- Inform the person with disability about community participation options, networks and services
- Recognise and accommodate the cultural and religious needs of the person with disability

## 1.1 Consult With the Person With Disability to Determine Support Requirements for Engaging With a Social Network

*Social network* is a network of social interaction and personal relationships. It may be a group of people with similar interests, beliefs or cultures. Social networks include, but are not limited to, the following:

Family groups	Disability support groups	Direct neighbourhood or local community	Work groups
Sport and other recreation groups	Age-related groups (youth or senior citizens)	Community centres	Clubs

Engaging with a social network can increase a person's feelings of belonging and purpose. Aside from that, engaging with a social network can:

- Improve the behaviour and attitude of persons with disability, their families, and carers
- Boost the self-confidence of persons with disability
- Provide economic opportunities for persons with disability, such as participation in the workforce
- Break negative stereotypes people may have about persons with disability

Given these benefits, it is vital that you support your clients in engaging with their chosen social networks. The support you provide must cater to the various support requirements of your clients.

These requirements include the following:

Interests	• These refer to what ideas and activities the client wants to learn and participate in.
Needs	• These refer to what is necessary to live an independent and fulfilling life.
Abilities	• These refer to the means or skills the client has to perform a certain task or activity.
Preferences	• These refer to what the client chooses when presented with various options.

You must also determine the requirements your clients may have for their preferred manner of participation. *Manner of participation* refers to how persons with disability will interact with others within their social networks and communities. Persons with disability can completely commit to participating with others only if they feel comfortable enough to do so.

There are certain stages they go through before they develop a sense of belongingness. This later translates to full participation or taking an active role in the community. The graphic below illustrates the stages persons with disability go through to develop their sense of belongingness:



1. **Appearance** – This means that you are physically present in the community, but you have little to no contact with others.
2. **Connection** – This involves incidental meetings with strangers that may or may not form relationships. Some examples would be interacting with the shop staff, local people at libraries and community centres, etc.
3. **Contribution** – From the term itself, it means developing connections and friendships in the community.

It is important to outline the level of participation persons with disability prefer. Some want casual engagements only for the sake of having company. Others may wish to broaden their networks and get as much as they can in terms of employment, education, recreation and others. Each level will have a set of requirements necessary for each person with disability to commit to their community fully.

As a support worker, you may need to cater to the requirements or special requests of clients to ensure their full participation in their social networks and communities. These requirements may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The amount of time the client can commit
- The place where the participation will take place in
- The limitation in terms of the number of people involved
- The limitation in terms of who the people involved

As you consult with your clients to determine these support requirements, ensure that you:



### 1.1.1 Understand the Client, Their Impairments and Their Needs

As a support worker, it is your responsibility to understand your clients. To understand persons with disability is to recognise that they are unique individuals. Each person with disability has their own experience of how they interact with others and the world. Understanding this will help you determine their needs.

To understand your clients and their disability, you must understand the following:

- Social model of disability
- Handicap and discrimination
- Rights and responsibilities of persons with disability
- Active citizenship and what it means to persons with disability

Doing so will allow you to understand your clients better. This makes it easier for clients to state what they need and prefer when engaging with a social network and taking part in their communities. It also allows you to show your clients that you are fully committed to assisting them. This assistance is according to how they want to be cared for and not by their impairments.

#### Social Model of Disability

Think of the social model of disability as the lens persons with disability use to view the world. The model states that impairments are not the leading cause of disability. It is the barriers set by society that limits people.

In this context, we can define *impairment* as a medical condition that leads to *disability*. *Impairment* is defined as losing control over the body's physical, cognitive or anatomical functions.

Impairment can range between three levels:

### Mild

- Impairments cause minor discomfort and changes in physical, social or occupational function.

### Moderate

- Impairments cause a notable amount of discomfort. There are also significant changes in physical, social or occupational function.
- People under this level need help in doing basic tasks and activities.

### Severe

- Impairments cause an extreme amount of discomfort. There are also serious changes in physical, social or occupational function.
- People under this level often cannot complete tasks without help.

*Disability*, then, refers to the relationship between people with impairments and barriers set by society. These barriers can be considered factors that affect persons with disability. Common barriers that persons with disability may face will be discussed in Subchapter 3.1 of this Learner Guide.

As a support worker, you must understand what barriers your clients have in their lives. Remember that your clients are not disabled because of their impairments. The barriers set by society are the causes of their disability. These barriers are what stop them from actively participating in their community.

## Multimedia



This video further describes the social model of disability. The video compares the model to the medical model of disability and how the social model seeks to change society:

[The Social Model of Disability](#)

## Handicap and Discrimination

When a person with an impairment interacts with society, they often experience discrimination. Discrimination is the unfair treatment of people on various grounds. These grounds include factors such as race or background. In this case, the person is discriminated against due to their disability.

The Disability Discrimination Act 1992 defines discrimination against persons with disability. Discrimination comes in two forms:

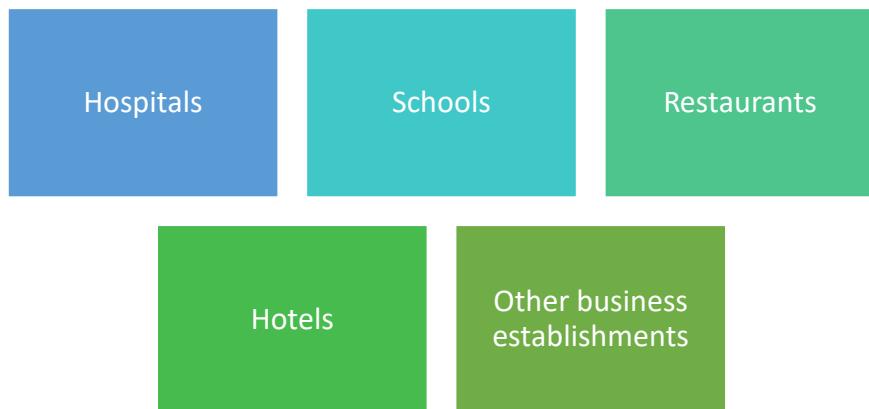
- **Direct discrimination** – This occurs when a person is treated worse than another person. The following must be met for an action to be considered direct discrimination:
  - The discriminator treats the person less favourably than a person without disability.
  - The discriminator does not make reasonable adjustments for the person.
  - The failure to make reasonable adjustments has a negative effect on the person.
- **Indirect discrimination** – This occurs when a policy or requirement disadvantages a person receiving support. The following must be met for an action to be considered indirect discrimination:
  - The discriminator requires the person to comply with a requirement but:
    - Because of the disability, the person cannot or is not able to comply with the requirement
    - The requirement or condition has the effect of disadvantaging the person
    - The person would comply with the requirement if the discriminator made reasonable adjustments; however, the discriminator does not do so
  - The failure to make reasonable adjustments has (or is likely to have) the effect of disadvantaging people receiving support.



*Based on content from the Federal Register of Legislation at 1 January 2023.  
For the latest information on Australian Government law please go to <https://www.legislation.gov.au>.  
Disability Discrimination Act 1992, used under CC BY 4.0*

Persons with disability can often recall experiences involving discrimination. They can also describe their feelings because of such events. Their experiences can include the following:

- Being denied service or entry to an establishment due to their condition
- Not being considered for job posts and openings due to their condition
- Receiving substandard or inappropriate service at:



- Not having access to aids, equipment, and assistive technologies for daily activities
- Having to endure hurtful remarks and inappropriate language
- Being physically excluded from others, such as with:
  - Separate entrances
  - Sections in a public establishment

The experiences listed above can make it more difficult for one to function normally. They can also make it harder for the person to cope with their impairment. In such scenarios, the person's impairment creates a disability and a handicap.



### Lotus Compassionate Care

Lotus Compassionate Care is the simulated organisation that provides services in disability support, home and community support, and residential care referenced in our learning resources.

Access and review the Lotus Compassionate Care Handbook for anti-discrimination legislation through the link below:

[Lotus Compassionate Care Handbook](#)

(username: newusername password: new password)

When a person experiences a handicap, their impairment does not change. However, the experience changes their self-image, confidence, relationships and overall capability.

For example, consider an older person who lost control of their legs. This impairment causes a disability in the form of not being able to walk and move around. Using assistive equipment, such as a wheelchair, can help overcome the barrier. However, when they use a wheelchair to travel around, they may encounter barriers, such as:

- Not having access to public transport due to a lack of accommodations for wheelchairs
- Not having access to elevated areas due to a lack of ramps and lifts

The person's impairment (the loss of control over their legs) stays the same. The disability (not being able to walk) was already addressed. The handicap, on the other hand, creates difficulties for the person. These difficulties can adversely affect a person's:



Motivation

Drive

Outlook on life

This happens as the person has to accept that they cannot remove these difficulties on their own. Other conditions that can result from unaddressed handicaps and difficulties include the following:

- Mental health problems, such as depression
- Overeating and obesity
- Undereating
- Fatigue and physical injury

As a support worker, you will be responsible for preventing the development of these additional health problems. You can do this by understanding your clients' experiences with barriers and discrimination. This ensures that your clients do not suffer from discrimination and harm.

## Rights and Responsibilities of Persons With Disability

*Human rights* are the standards used to recognise and protect the dignity of all humans. These rights serve as the basis for laws and acts governing people and communities.

The Australian Human Rights Commission (2019) states that human rights:

- Recognise the inherent value of each person
- Are based on principles of dignity, equality and mutual respect
- Are about being treated fairly, treating others fairly, and having the ability to make genuine choices in our daily lives



The Australian Government agreed to respect and uphold many human rights treaties, including the following:

- United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
- Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
- Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Convention on the Rights of Persons With Disability

*Based on content from What are human rights?, used under CC BY 4.0.  
© Australian Human Rights Commission 2017.*

As a support worker, you must remember that these treaties support basic human rights. Their existence does not mean there are many sets of rights for different kinds of people. These treaties are only meant to emphasise the rights of certain groups of people. Their rights are misunderstood or ignored by the state.

The rights and responsibilities of persons with disability can be found in the following declarations and treaties:

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)

Convention on the Rights of Persons With Disabilities (CRPD)

All support workers must know and understand the basic human rights and responsibilities that apply to everyone. These are outlined in the UDHR.

Additionally, disability support workers who support persons with disability must understand the CRPD. The Convention contains many basic human rights also found in the UDHR.

The CRPD contains general and specific obligations. These aim to protect the rights and responsibilities of all persons with disability. The two documents in the CRPD consist of the following:

- The actual rights and responsibilities of persons with disability
- An optional protocol for upholding these rights and addressing complaints

It is crucial to note that Australia has signed and accepted both documents. The CRPD was signed on 17 July 2008, and the optional protocol was signed on 30 July 2009.

The Convention explains what rights persons with disability are entitled to and what responsibilities they have. It also explains what actions must be avoided and what they must be supported with.



### Further Reading

The UDHR details the basic rights and freedoms that must be afforded to all people. It is the foundation of many legislations on the rights of men. You may access it through the link below:

[Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#)

The CRPD recognises the rights set forth by the UDHR. It details the obligations all people have in upholding and safeguarding the rights of persons with disability. The two documents that make up the CRPD can be accessed through the link below:

[Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#)

Human rights are vital for a person with disability to understand any specific needs or preferences they may have. A person with disability who knows their rights has a better understanding of the following:

- What they are entitled and allowed to do
- What others are not allowed to do
- What the state or country, as a whole, is required to do to accommodate them

Persons with disability must also understand their right to choice and control. *Choice and control* are about the person with disability, their families and carers having control over the course of their lives. This includes the flexibility to make decisions about the disability services and supports they use, such as the type of support and services they use. As a support worker, you must ensure your clients understand this right when determining their support requirements.

With an understanding of their rights, persons with disability can understand their responsibilities. These responsibilities are what they are expected to fulfil to support their community participation and social inclusion. Therefore, any support worker who truly wishes to support persons with disability must help them learn their rights. Doing so can help persons with disability better understand their responsibilities and how they can control their lives. It also aids persons with disability in their decision-making.

For example, your client has the responsibility to cooperate in obtaining necessary medical records. As their support worker, you can explain what kind of information will be obtained from the medical records and why they are important.

Another example is the responsibility of the client to inform their employer if their disability can affect their work performance. You can encourage the client to be open with their employer and liaise with the employer as needed.

## Active Citizenship and What it Means to Persons With Disability

*Active citizenship* refers to being earnestly involved with one's local community. This intersects the rightful place of persons with disability in their communities. *Rightful place* in the community refers to the right of persons with disability to participate in their community. This means there should be support for them to take an active role in their communities. You can find the articles on these rights in two separate declarations and treaties:



Articles 27 and 29 of the basic human rights found in the UDHR

Article 19 of the fundamental rights of persons with disability found in the CRPD

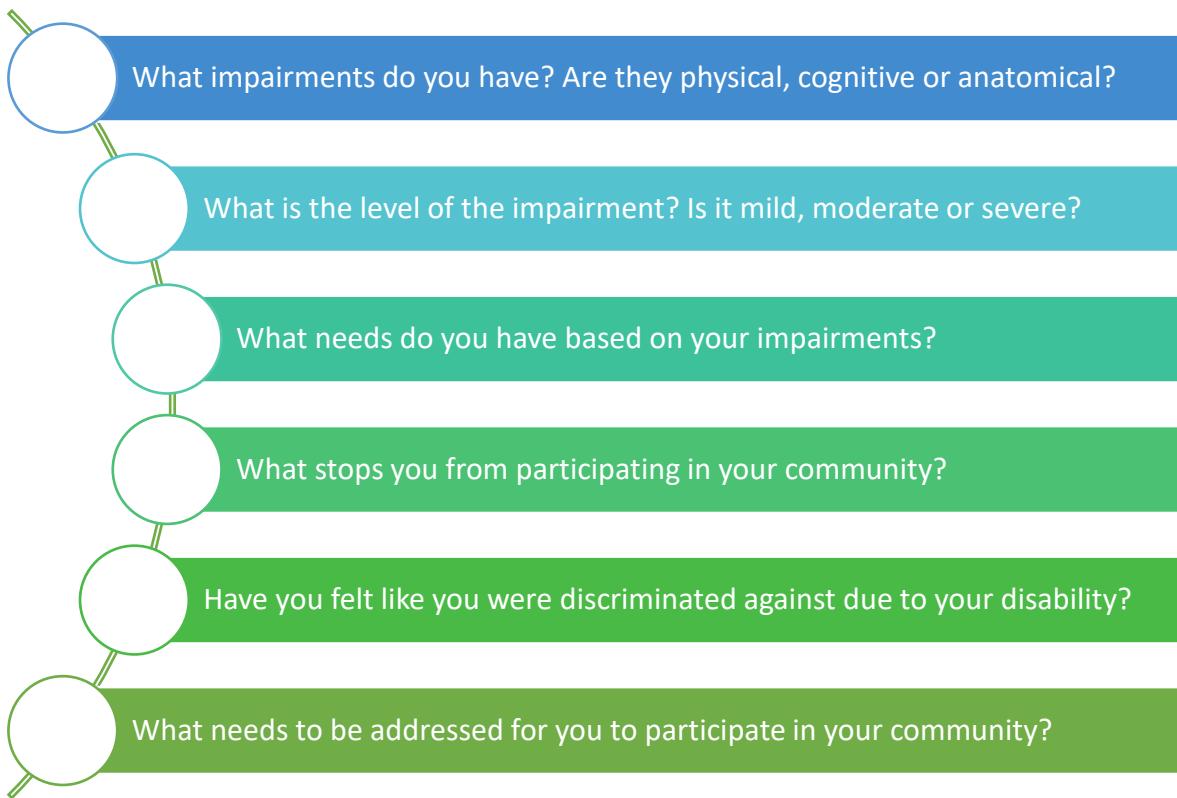
Both the UDHR and CRPD state that all persons with disability must be supported. This means helping them in the social, political, spiritual and cultural aspects of the community. So, their rightful place should not be decided by their impairments. Their talents and abilities should determine it. Persons with disability must be given the same respect to pursue their goals as everyone else.

Active citizenship matters for persons with disability. Like everyone else, they want to participate in their community actively. Persons with disability also want to work with others with the same interests, goals, and preferences. They want to take part in all resources available in their communities in ways that they would feel included and respected. As such, persons with disability must be able to exercise their responsibilities as a citizen without discrimination.

Using your understanding of the concepts discussed in this section, you can now determine any need your clients may have to interact with others.



You can ask your clients the following questions regarding engaging with a social network:



### 1.1.2 Confirm the Client's Preferences for Interacting With Others

As a support worker, it is vital that you discuss with the client how they want to be supported when interacting with others. This ensures that you provide them with the support they want as they engage with their social networks. Discussing with clients what kind of support they want also lets you understand their preferred manner of participation.

To do so, you must understand the principles of person-centred practice.

As the name suggests, a *person-centred practice* means involving the person with disability in their service delivery. This means treating the person with disability first, focusing on what they can do rather than their condition or disability. A person-centred practice:

- Supports the person, at the 'centre of the service,' to be involved in making decisions about their life
- Takes into account each person's life experience, age, gender, culture, heritage, language, beliefs and identity
- Requires flexible services and support to suit the person's wishes and priorities
- Is strengths-based, where people are acknowledged as the experts in their life with a focus on what they can do first and any help they need second
- Includes the person's support network as partners

*Based on What is a person-led approach?, used under CC BY 4.0. © State of New South Wales NSW Ministry of Health. For current information go to [www.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au).*

The following table shows how person-centred practice differs from traditional services:

Traditional	Person-Centred
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Service is based on clinical or medical advice</li> <li>▪ Persons with disability are required to comply with the support staff's instructions</li> <li>▪ Care strategies prioritise the management of illness and medical condition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Service is based on the personal goals and preferences of the person with disability</li> <li>▪ Persons with disability are empowered to make their own choices and decisions</li> <li>▪ Care strategies focus on improving the overall quality of life of the person with disability</li> </ul>



## Further Reading

Person-centred practice can follow different basic principles depending on the nature of your work. The principles of person-centred health care are provided in the link below:

[Person centred practice](#)

By following the principles of person-centred practice, you will ensure that your clients' opinions are heard. Your compliance will help your clients be happier with your service. Also, a person-centred practice has the following benefits:

Your clients will generally have an easier time developing and maintaining trust in you.

Your clients will be more engaged with activities and programmes designed based on their needs and preferences.

You will not have a difficult time developing support strategies for your clients.

You will not need to spend a lot of time and effort encouraging your clients to participate in certain activities.

## Discussing and Confirming With Your Clients Their Preferences

When discussing with your clients their preferences for engaging with a social network, you must do the following:

- **Ensure the rights of the client are upheld:**
  - By letting the client make choices on how they should be cared for
  - By letting the client decide what social networks they should participate in
  - By letting the client decide how they will participate in each social network they participate in
  - By allowing the client to engage or participate in risky tasks and activities if you explain the risks and take steps to mitigate them
  - By encouraging the client to speak up on any concerns they might have

- **Ensure that the needs of the client are upheld:**

- By listening to the opinions of the client regarding how they want to socialise with other people
- By encouraging the client to ask questions about the social network or social activity
- By having the client, their family and their carers involved in making decisions about their community participation and social inclusion

Further discussion on the rights of persons with disability can be found in the previous section.

After discussing with your clients, you will need to confirm your understanding of their preferences. Here are some strategies you may use to confirm their preferences for engaging with a social network and the manner of participation:

- **Ask the client to repeat what they said.**

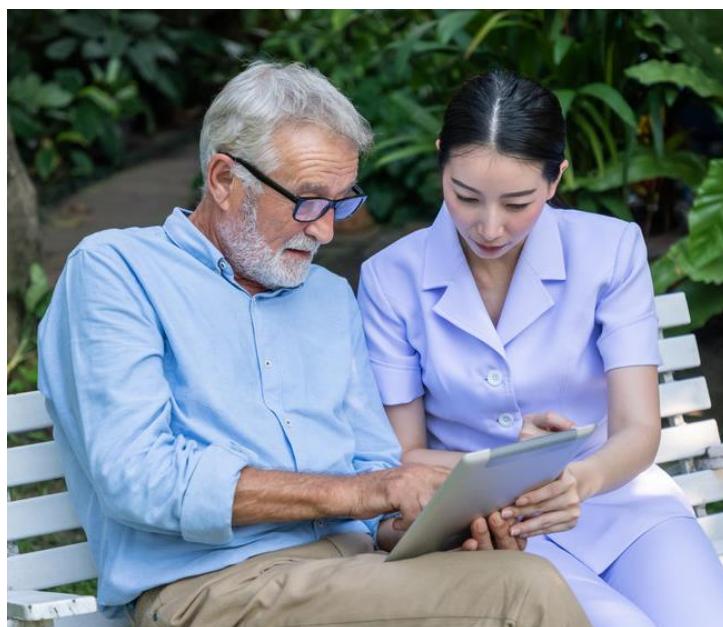
If you feel that you misheard or misunderstood what is being said, you can ask the client to repeat themselves. This will ensure that you clearly understand their preferences.

- **Repeat and restate what the client said.**

Another way to be sure that you understand the client's preference is to repeat what you heard using your own words. By restating what they said, you can show that you listened carefully to them when they were speaking. This also helps the client clarify what they mean to say if you have misunderstood them.

- **Thank the client and show your understanding.**

After clarifying with the client on their preferences, you must thank them for sharing. Make sure to state that you understand their preferences better after their explanation. This allows the client to feel that you are taking them and their opinions seriously. This also assures them that you are both on the same page regarding their preferences.

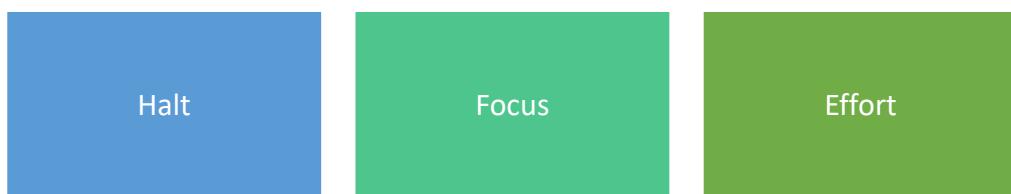


Aside from the strategies mentioned on the previous page, you may also use the principles of active listening as you consult with your clients.

## Active Listening

There are times when a care worker can get overwhelmed with work and other personal issues. When they are overwhelmed, they can fail to listen to their clients genuinely. Sometimes, a care worker can only listen to prepare a reply instead of understanding what is said. *Active listening* is a concept that allows care workers to be *in the moment* as they interact with a client.

Active listening follows the following principles:



- **Halt** – This refers to stopping everything you are doing while interacting with a client. It includes:
  - Doing some other task (e.g. cleaning or filling out a form while a client speaks with you)
  - Thinking about other things (e.g. making a mental plan of what you will be doing next after talking with the client)
- **Focus** – This refers to removing distractions and putting all your attention on the client. When care workers focus, they must:
  - Concentrate on what is essential (e.g. the client's words)
  - Block out everything else that is unimportant (e.g. background noises)
- **Effort** – This refers to expending energy and taking the time to communicate. This means purposefully using non-verbal cues and positioning. Doing so will allow you to be able to talk with the client. This can include the following:
  - Being at eye level with the client
  - Facing the client while they are talking
  - Keeping your hands and feet still

By adhering to these principles, you can easily acquire information about the client's preferences.

The following are questions you can ask to confirm with your clients their preferences:

Would you mind repeating that for me again?

I do not think I got what you said. Could you go over that again?

I do not think I quite understand what you meant. Would you mind repeating that?

If I understand correctly, you are saying... Does that sound right?

My impression of what you said was... Is that what you meant?



### **Lotus Compassionate Care**

Access and review Lotus Compassionate Care Handbook for the policies and procedures on decision-making and consent through the link below:

[Lotus Compassionate Care Handbook](#)

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#### **1.1.3 Help Set the Goals of the Client Based on Their Interests**

The level of engagement of persons with disability depends significantly on their interests. If a person with disability *likes* what they are doing, they are more likely to stay motivated to engage in an activity or finish a task.

As the support worker, you must identify the goals that will guide you and your clients when engaging with their chosen social networks. To do so, you may work with the person with disability to set their goals from their interests.

*Goal setting* refers to deciding what the person with disability wants to achieve. These should be based on their interests. The person with disability can have an easier time participating in their community. Without goals, it can be difficult for person with disability to determine what activity they want to do or participate in.

When setting goals, you must first consider the long and short-term goals of the person with disability. To differentiate, these are defined as follows:

- **Long-term goals**

These refer to the goals the person with disability wants to accomplish in the far future. These goals will require a significant amount of time and planning. Usually, long-term goals are set at least several years away. It takes many steps to achieve a long-term goal.

- **Short-term goals**

These refer to the goals the person with disability wants to accomplish soon. These are the smaller steps needed to achieve a long-term goal. The person with disability can achieve these goals within a day, week, month or year. Short-term goals can help you think of what can be achieved.

For example, a person with disability may set a long-term goal of opening a bakery. This goal could take several years of development and training to accomplish. Short-term goals they may set can include:

Learning how to bake bread rolls

Acquiring the necessary qualifications for baking

Taking up an apprenticeship in a pastry shop or bakery

To further break down the long and short-term goals, you may use the SMART goals framework as the guiding principle.

The SMART goals framework consists of the following:

- **Specific** – The goals set should be well-defined and clear for more effective planning. A specific goal answers the following questions:
  - What does the client want to accomplish?
  - What steps or actions will the client take to achieve the goal?
  - Who else is involved in achieving the objective with the client?
  - When does the client want to accomplish the goal?
  - Why does the client want to achieve the goal?
- **Measurable** – The goals set should have the means to track the client's progress objectively. A measurable goal answers the following questions:
  - What and how much data will be used to measure the goal?
  - How does the client know if they have reached the goal?

- What will track the client's progress?
- **Attainable** – The goals set should be realistic and within the client's capacity. An attainable goal answers the following questions:
  - Does the client have the available resources to accomplish the goal?
  - Does the client have the time to achieve the goal?
  - Will the client be able to commit to achieving this goal?
- **Relevant** – The goals set should be beneficial to the client. A relevant goal answers the following questions:
  - Why is accomplishing the goal vital to the client?
  - How does the goal align with the client's other support requirements?
- **Time-bound** – The goals set should have a start and finish date to give a sense of urgency. A time-bound goal answers the following questions:
  - When does the client want to start working on their objective?
  - By when does the client want to accomplish the goal?

The following table provides an example of breaking down one of the short-term goals mentioned before:

Short-Term Goal: Learn How to Bake Bread Rolls	
<b>Specific</b>	The goal is for the person with disability to bake bread rolls.
<b>Measurable</b>	The amount of successfully baked bread rolls can be used to measure the progress of a person with disability.
<b>Attainable</b>	The person with disability can watch YouTube videos on baking bread rolls or take a class that teaches how to bake bread rolls.
<b>Relevant</b>	The person with disability has a long-term goal of opening their bakery.
<b>Time-Bound</b>	The person with disability has set the deadline for this goal at the end of a month.
<b>SMART Goal Summary</b>	Within a month, the person with disability should bake a dozen bread rolls successfully.

Remember that the goals set should always align with your clients' other support requirements. Before selecting a SMART goal, refer to the relevant documents as a guide. These documents provide the information you need to ensure that the response goals meet the identified requirements of your clients when engaging with a social network.

#### **1.1.4 Determine the Strengths and Abilities of the Client**

A common challenge for persons with disability is that they may lack self-confidence. They may have a negative image of themselves due to their perceived deficits. These may have arisen from experiences of difficulties or even discrimination. As such, a person with disability may hesitate to provide information on their abilities.



As a support worker, you can use strengths-based practice to build up their confidence. The strengths-based practice is a holistic approach that builds upon the strengths of the person with disability. Knowing their strengths allows them to see themselves at their best. This person-led practice gives an idea of what their current abilities are. This can help them consider what can be done to improve the quality of their life.

You may use the following principles to guide you in determining the strengths and capabilities of persons with disability:

- **The person with disability has individual aspects that help them grow.**

Everyone has the potential to grow. Their limitations do not determine their growth. Instead, their growth is determined by their strengths and capabilities.

- **The person with disability has a responsibility to maintain and improve their wellbeing.**

Focusing on the strengths of the person with disability helps see challenges as opportunities for growth instead of things to avoid.

- **The person with disability has the willingness to learn, improve and change.**

You must respect the person with disability and work together with them in their skills development. Make sure to be flexible, as their willingness to learn can vary depending on their personal goals.

Strengths-based practice is essential when determining the abilities of a person with disability. The approach highly emphasises the importance of the person with disability playing an active role in any decision. There has to be a focus on their life, what it is about, and what they would like it to be. Knowing these factors can help you determine how they can engage with their chosen social network. The strengths-based practice also aids you in understanding their preferred manner of participation.

When the person with disability feels that their input is necessary, they will be more willing to provide detailed information on how they want to engage with others. They will also participate more in decision-making and planning. To determine the strengths and abilities of the person with disability, you may ask the following questions:

- What are three (or any number) things that are going well in your life right now?
- What things should happen for you to have a good time with other people?
- What could you do that would make your interactions with others better?
- What do you find you learn or do most easily?
- How would you describe your strengths and skills?

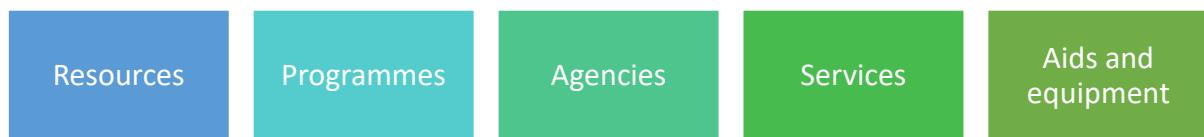


### Checkpoint! Let's Review

1. Social network is a network of social interaction and personal relationships. It may be a group of people with similar interests, beliefs or cultures. Engaging with a social network can increase the feelings of belonging and purpose of persons with disability.
2. Manner of participation refers to how persons with disability will interact with others within their social networks and communities. Persons with disability can completely commit to participating with others only if they feel comfortable enough to do so.

## 1.2 Identify and Access Community Participation Options That Fit the Needs and Preferences of the Person With Disability

It is imperative that persons with disability have access to options available for them to participate fully in their communities. *Community participation options* refer to the following that is available for persons with disability to use to participate in their communities. These are as follows:



- **Resources**

These refer to sources of information on how persons with disability can participate in their community.

- **Programmes**

These refer to activities and initiatives conducted by different organisations with the goal of supporting persons with disability in community participation.

- **Agencies**

These refer to organisations that provide specific services for persons with disability to aid them in participating in their community.

- **Services**

These refer to transport services and health services that are relevant to supporting persons with disability in participating in their community.

- **Aids and equipment**

These refer to assistive technologies (AT) that help persons with disability fully participate in their communities. Further discussion on this topic can be found in Subchapter 2.4 of this Learner Guide.

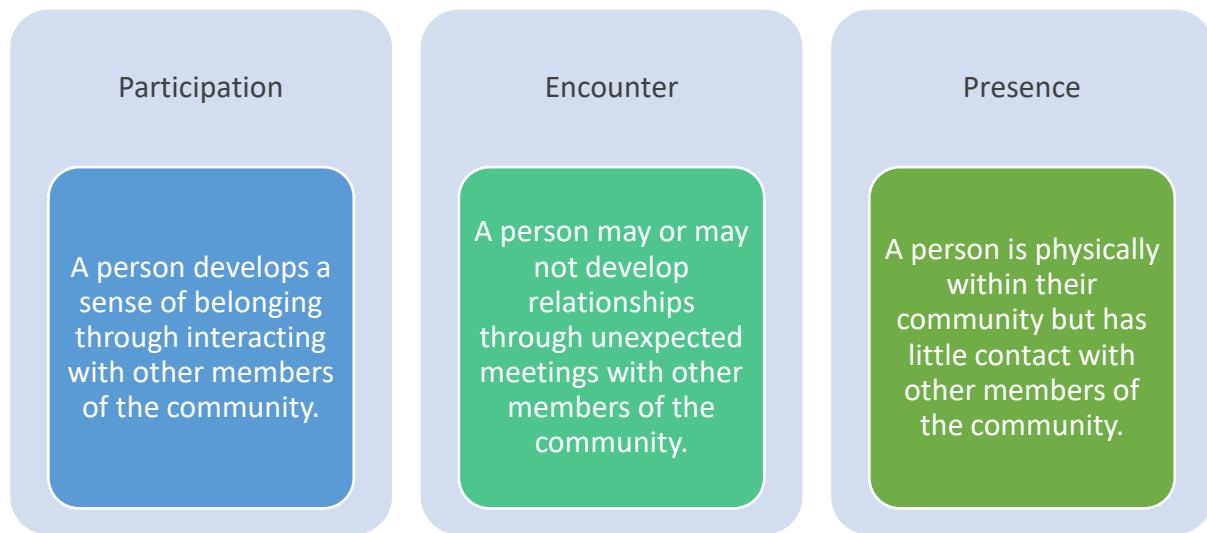
It is important to note that these community participation options may not be easily accessible to persons with disability. They may come across barriers in accessing these options due to their impairments. The lack of access to these options may cause a person with disability to have lesser opportunities to live a fulfilling and independent life.

So, as a disability support worker, you must be familiar with the community participation options available to your clients. These options must meet the client's specific needs and preferences. Aside from this, all community participation options you will identify and access should adhere to the principles of community inclusion and best practice examples.

## Community Inclusion and Best Practice Examples

*Community inclusion* means everyone can access and fully participate in the options available in the community. This access and participation are the same way as other community members. Best practices in community inclusion mean that persons with disability have access to a fully accessible community. Environments, services or products are designed to be easily used by everyone. The design is made for all community members rather than one group of people.

Community inclusion has the following principles:



Using best practices in community inclusion means ensuring that resources work in a way that is intentionally accessible and inclusive to people of all abilities. It is not enough to develop strategies for inclusivity after a person with disability attempts to use a resource. Best practice means ensuring that the facilities, activities and attitudes are accessible and inclusive beforehand. This creates a community that is welcoming and appropriate for everyone who wants to participate in it.

Best practice examples of community inclusion include the following:

- **A playground designed to be accessible for:**
  - A child who uses mobility aids
  - A child with reduced mobility
  - A child with sensory challenges
- **A workplace that offers:**
  - Reasonable adjustments to employees with cognitive disability
  - Ergonomic equipment for employees with physical and mobility disability

## 1.2.1 Community Participation Options

This section will discuss how you can identify the appropriate community participation option for your clients based on their needs and preferences.

### Resources

As mentioned before, resources refer to sources of information on how persons with disability can participate in their community. Your responsibility as a disability support worker is to have up-to-date information on how your clients can participate within their communities. Some community participation resources include the following:

- Research articles by government agencies, local councils, organisations, individuals and the NDIS who conduct research involving persons with disability
- Reports by advocacy groups, national and state authorities, and other organisations representing persons with disability
- Updates and reports from news organisations, government declarations, and other official sources
- Articles and blog posts from highly reputed academic or professional websites
- Other similar sources that aim to inform persons with disability and their family and carers about options for community participation

As you access resources to identify ways for your clients' community participation, you must remember that not all persons with disability go through the same experiences. You must not base your support strategies solely on this information. Instead, you must use this outside information to help you understand how you can best support your clients' community participation.

### Programmes

Programmes are activities and initiatives conducted by different organisations with the goal of supporting persons with disability in community participation. These may include the following:

- Volunteer programmes
- Financial support programmes
- Educational programmes
- Other similar programmes that aim to help persons with disability to better participate in community activities



As a support worker, you must be able to identify programmes that will be beneficial to your clients. To do so, make sure you understand your clients' needs and preferences. Note that these needs and preferences were discussed in the previous subchapter.

Below are some programmes that help persons with disability to better participate in community activities:

Programme	Function
Employment Assistance Fund (EAF)	This programme gives financial assistance to persons with disability to acquire workplace modifications and services. Examples include assistive technology and other support services.
RecruitAbility scheme: A guide for applicants	This programme offers employment opportunities to persons with disability in the Australian Public Service (APS).
Mobility Allowance	This programme provides financial support to persons with disability who are unable to use public transport without a lot of help. The programme helps persons with disability with travel costs for work, study, or those looking for work.
Disability Support Pension	This programme provides income support to persons with disability with disabilities that stop them from working. The DSP can only be provided to people who are over 16 years old.
National Disability Insurance Scheme	This programme is administered by the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA). It is a major reform to support services for people with permanent disabilities.
Hearing Services Program	This programme provides Australian persons with disability with hearing loss access to high-quality hearing services and devices.
Mail for the blind	Under this programme, the Australia Post delivers mail to the vision-impaired free of charge. Eligible letters must weigh no more than 500 g, while parcels must be under 22 kg.

Once you have identified the programmes suitable for the clients' participation in their communities, you must ensure that they can access each programme. This involves aiding clients in acquiring the necessary requirements to apply for a certain programme. Say a client wants to apply for a job under the RecruitAbility programme. They will need help preparing their application to ensure that they will meet the minimum requirements of the role they are applying for. This is necessary for them to progress to the next stage of the programme.

## Agencies

*Agencies* are organisations that provide specific services to persons with disability. These services provide support to persons with disability in participating in their communities. Agencies include organisations that provide the following:

- Rights and advocacy services
- Legal services
- Health services
- Other similar services that will help persons with disability in community participation

Below are some community participation agencies in Australia:

Agency	Function
Department of Social Services	DSS works with other government and non-government organisations. They manage a wide range of programmes and services that support persons with disability and their families in Australia.
National Disability Services	The National Disability Services is the peak body for non-government disability service organisations. NDS represents several non-government service providers providing care for all types of disabilities. They provide doctors, support groups, sports and social clubs, and education.
National Disability Insurance Scheme	The NDIS organisation provides persons with disability with connections to services in their communities. These include doctors, support groups, sports and social clubs and education.
Australian Federation of Disability Organisations	AFDO is the peak organisation in the disability sector representing persons with disability. It is an organisation run by and for persons with lived experience of disability in Australia.

Agency	Function
Services Australia	Services Australia is the government organisation that developed the service delivery policy. The organisation provides persons with disability access to social, health, and other payments and services.
Persons With Disability Australia	PWDA is an organisation that advocates human rights and represents persons with disability. It is made up of and led and governed by persons with disability.

Accessing agencies for community participation can be done through warm referrals. This will be further discussed in Subchapter 2.1 of this Learner Guide.

## Services

Services are the systems placed to address certain needs persons with disability have in order to live a fulfilling and independent life.

The following are relevant services that can aid clients in community participation.

- **Assistive technology**

*Assistive technology* refers to the devices and equipment designed to support a person with disability. Technology helps people live their independent lives. Clients can buy the technology pre-made, modified, or custom-made to suit their needs. You may refer to Subchapter 2.4 of this Learner Guide for the scope and breadth of assistive technology a client may use to meet their needs.

Technicians can help the client in selecting the technology that meets their needs. The technician evaluates the client's abilities and challenges. This is to determine which devices and equipment to recommend. Technicians can also teach the client how to use their devices and equipment.



If a client has needs that assistive technology can address, you can refer them to a technician for assessment. For example, the technician can assess a client with partial hearing loss. They can recommend different in-ear hearing aids to the client and teach them how to operate the device.

- **Dietetics**

*Dietetics* refers to the effects of food and nutrition on human health. Persons with disability are at risk of different dietary and nutritional problems. A dietitian can support them when making decisions on their food and nutrition. For example, dietitians can design diets for clients struggling with chewing and swallowing.

You can also refer clients to dietitians to meet fitness goals. Suppose a client wants to gain weight but finds mealtimes stressful. You may refer them to a dietitian to devise and implement a plan to reduce stress during mealtimes.

- **Occupational therapy**

*Occupational therapy* is a treatment to improve motor skills, balance and coordination. Occupational therapists help rehabilitate persons with disability to perform tasks in their daily routines. They assess their skills and environment. This is to develop appropriate treatment plans to expand their physical and fine motor skills.

For example, a client with cerebral palsy may have difficulty learning to write. You can refer an occupational therapist to plan a treatment programme. The programme can include specific writing activities to be practised throughout the day. The occupational therapist can also recommend assistive technology to assist the client and access funding to purchase equipment.

- **Physiotherapy**

*Physiotherapists* work with a person with disability who needs support in mobility, function and wellbeing. They are trained to assess movement. This assessment can help in managing pain and improving fitness.

Suppose a client exhibits functional problems (e.g. loss of grip strength and stumbling often) or endures chronic pain. This affects their daily routine. In that case, you may consider referring them to a physiotherapist.

For example, say that a client wishes to regain mobility after a stroke. You can refer them to a physiotherapist to devise a plan containing rehabilitation exercises for muscle strength.



- **Social work**

A *disability social worker* helps persons with disability cope with the challenging barriers they have in their daily lives. They assess their strengths and needs. This is to determine what support systems need to be in place to improve their quality of life. Workers may work in schools, hospitals, welfare agencies, or private practices.

Disability social workers assist persons with disability in understanding their impairments. This is to make lifestyle adjustments to accommodate their needs. They make sure that the person with disability is connected to the right support groups to help them live independent lives. If clients need to find resources, you may seek a disability social worker to act as their advocate to acquire the resources.

Suppose a client requires funding to avail of a skill development service. In that case, you may refer them to a disability social worker who can assist them in applying for financial assistance programmes.

- **Speech therapy**

*Speech therapy* refers to treating speech disorders, such as stuttering and difficulty expressing information. This means speech therapists can treat a broad range of speech and language disorders the person with disability may have. Techniques used aim to improve the communication skills of the person with disability. They also enhance their self-confidence.



For example, suppose a client has difficulty processing what others say due to an acquired brain injury. You may refer them to a speech therapist. The therapist can provide exercises geared to improve the client's cognitive communication. This includes problem-solving and memorising. They can also come up with conversational techniques to improve the client's social skills.

Aside from the services mentioned, clients may also have the need for transport services for their community participation.

*Transport services* refer to services provided by certain organisations to help persons with disability move around different locations in their community.

Services may include the following:



Transportation is also essential for persons with disability. Without transportation that caters to their individual needs, it may be tough for them to reach their destinations. This is especially true for those who do not own a private vehicle.

To address this need, each state and territory made sure that they have transportation means that are inclusive for persons with disability.

Click the links to be directed to the actual page that provides all the necessary information about transportation programmes and services:

State or Territory	Transportation Programme or Service
Australian Capital Territory (ACT)	Home - Transport Canberra
New South Wales (NSW)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="632 1343 1044 1376">▪ Taxi Transport Subsidy Scheme</li> <li data-bbox="632 1388 1013 1421">▪ Wheelchair accessible taxis</li> </ul>
Northern Territory (NT)	Transport subsidy and incentive schemes
Queensland (Qld)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="632 1556 981 1590">▪ Bus, train, ferry and tram</li> <li data-bbox="632 1601 1060 1635">▪ Queensland Ambulance Service</li> <li data-bbox="632 1646 1140 1680">▪ Taxi Subsidy Scheme and Lift Payment</li> <li data-bbox="632 1691 1378 1724">▪ Council cab service for people with a disability and seniors</li> </ul>
South Australia (SA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="632 1803 933 1837">▪ Access and disability</li> <li data-bbox="632 1848 901 1882">▪ Transport Service</li> <li data-bbox="632 1893 1203 1927">▪ South Australian Transport Subsidy Scheme</li> </ul>

State or Territory	Transportation Programme or Service
Tasmania (Tas)	Community Transport Services Tasmania
Victoria (Vic)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="632 361 975 395">▪ Public Transport Victoria</li> <li data-bbox="632 417 975 446">▪ Metro Trains Melbourne</li> <li data-bbox="632 473 975 503">▪ V/Line</li> <li data-bbox="632 530 975 559">▪ VicRoads</li> <li data-bbox="632 586 975 615">▪ Yarra Trams</li> </ul>
Western Australia (WA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="632 671 816 700">▪ Transperth</li> <li data-bbox="632 727 816 756">▪ Transport</li> </ul>

Most of the time, the services for community participation clients need can be provided by you and your organisation. In some cases, however, a client may need support outside of your organisation's areas of expertise. When this happens, it is best to refer the client to other agencies to ensure their needs are met. This will be discussed in Subchapter 2.1 of this Learner Guide.



### Further Reading

Disability Gateway is a one-stop resource that would lead you to the available local services and programmes. Click the link below to access the website:

[Welcome to the Disability Gateway](#)

## Checkpoint! Let's Review



1. It is imperative that persons with disability have access to options available for them to participate in their communities fully. Community participation options refer to the following that are available for persons with disability to use to participate in their communities:
  - Resources
  - Programmes
  - Agencies
  - Transport services
  - Aids and equipment
2. Community inclusion means everyone can access and fully participate in the options available in the community. This access and participation are the same way as other community members.
3. Best practices in community inclusion mean that persons with disability have access to a fully accessible community. Environments, services or products are designed to be easily used by everyone.

## 1.3 Inform the Person With Disability on Community Participation Options, Networks and Services

In the previous subchapter, you have learnt to identify and access community participation options for your clients. Now, you will learn how to support your clients in choosing which option suits their needs and preferences. This is done through informed decision-making.

*Informed decision-making* is when a person has all the knowledge they need to make a good decision. This includes the steps, risks and benefits of any community participation option. This can also include possible alternative options they can choose instead. Additionally, the person must know what will happen if they decide to pursue a particular option.

As a support worker, you must provide your clients with information on the following in the context of community participation:



Doing so will ensure that your clients will have enough knowledge to decide what they need to participate in their communities. This knowledge includes information on activities where persons with disability can develop new skills, which is one of the main goals of community participation.

### 1.3.1 Providing Information on Community Participation

Recall the community participation options discussed in the previous subchapter. These options include the following:



As you access the options for your clients, you must provide them with information on each option. This ensures that the option they will choose will meet their needs and preferences.

For example, say that a client requires a carer to be with them always when participating in their community activities and events. To address this need, the client wishes to apply for the Companion Card Programme of their state. This programme allows the client's carer free entry to activities and events that are part of the programme. As their support worker, you will aid the client by providing them with information on the following:

- The eligibility requirements of the programme
- The process for applying to the programme

Below is a list of the websites you may visit to acquire information regarding the program in different states and territories:

State or Territory	Companion Card Programme
Australian Capital Territory (ACT)	Companion Card
New South Wales (NSW)	Companion Card
Northern Territory (NT)	NT Companion Card
Queensland (Qld)	Companion Card
South Australia (SA)	Apply for a Companion Card
Tasmania (Tas)	The Tasmanian Government Companion Card
Victoria (Vic)	Home   Companion Card
Western Australia (WA)	Home Page

On the other hand, a client who is not fluent in English may require the services of a translator or interpreter. You may contact the NDIS to get information on the language interpreting services offered by the organisation.



### Further Reading

The NDIS has interpreting services that allow communication from a client's preferred spoken language into English. These services are delivered by the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) National on behalf of the organisation.

[Language interpreting services](#)

Before accessing the identified community participation options, make sure that you provide your clients with enough information on each option. This ensures they will make informed decisions for their community participation.



## Further Reading

Additional support you can access is My Community Directory. It leads you to community information helpful in community participation and social inclusion. Click the link below to learn more:

[My Community Directory](#)

### Community Participation Networks

Community participation networks refer to networks that allow persons with disability to connect with others in their community. These include the following:

- **Social networks**

Recall social networks as discussed in Subchapter 1.1 of this Learner Guide. Based on shared interests, these networks refer to opportunities for persons with disability to connect with other people in their community based on common interests. Social networks may include social groups that communicate either in person or online.

- **Work networks**

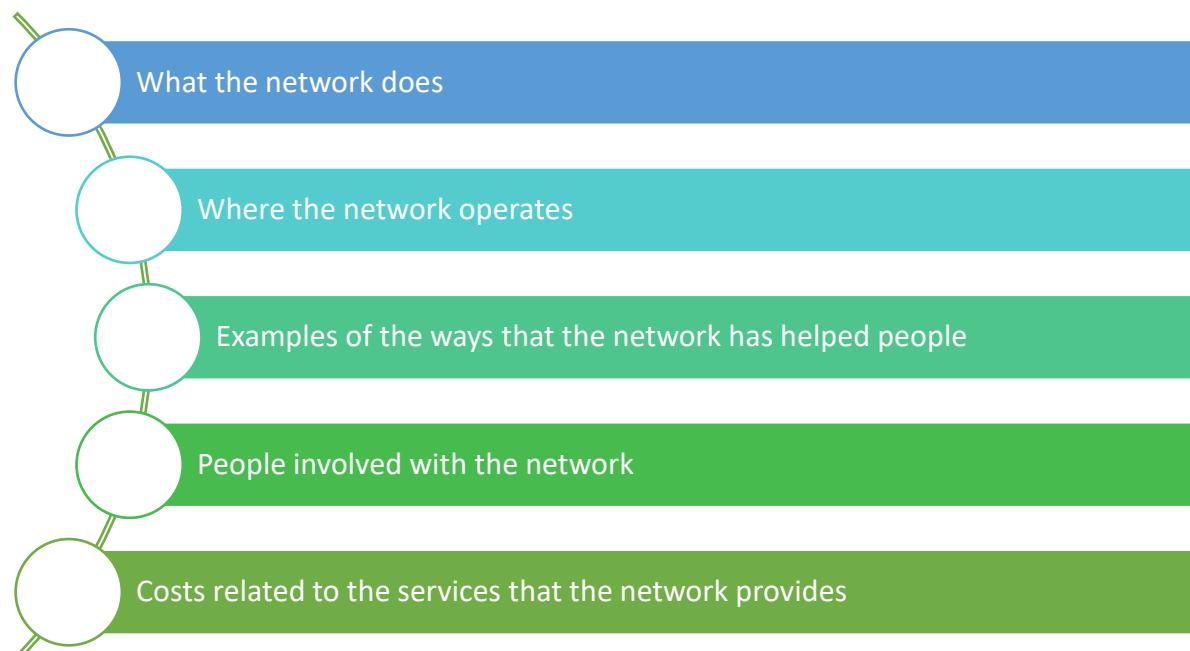
Work networks refer to opportunities for persons with disability to participate in work by connecting with employers and other workers. Work networks may include employment in local businesses and offices that can accommodate the skills, preferences and needs of persons with disability.



Consider the table below for examples of community participation networks in Australia:

Network	Function
Home	AND is a network that aids organisations that include persons with disability as their employees and customers.
First Peoples Disability Network Australia (FPDN)	FPDN is a national network that represents Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons with disability and their families.
Home   Disability Australia Hub	Disability Australia Hub provides persons with disability with information and advocacy resources.
Welcome to the Disability Gateway	Disability Gateway assists all persons with disability, their families, and carers in finding and accessing trusted services.
BuyAbility   Disability Enterprise & Social Procurement Specialists	BuyAbility is a network of the National Disability Services that is committed to increasing employment opportunities for persons with disability through their social enterprises.

You should also provide your clients with information about the different networks that can help them. This will help them decide if they want to connect with that network or not. The information you can provide for your client includes the following:



### 1.3.2 Community Information About Sporting, Cultural and Specific-Interest Groups

Part of your job is to give your clients information that is relevant to their interests. These interests may fall into the following groups:



Your clients should know about the local agencies and services available to them and how to access these. Access to these agencies and services allows them to gather community information on the activities that cater to their interests, such as:

- Benefits of the activity the client wants to try
- Options for where they can do the activity
- Important details about the activity providers, such as costs and facilities

Below are some examples of community information that may be obtained based on the client's activities:

Situation	Information to Obtain
Tennis for a client who uses a wheelchair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Examples of other persons who use wheelchairs and play tennis</li> <li>▪ Benefits of playing tennis</li> <li>▪ Wheelchair-friendly tennis courts near the client</li> </ul>
A client with visual impairment who wants to try an arts and crafts activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Different options for arts and crafts activities</li> <li>▪ Places and accommodations that provide craft materials and art lessons for people with visual impairments</li> <li>▪ Artists who also have visual impairments</li> </ul>
Outdoor survival camp for a client with intellectual disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Benefits of doing outdoor activities</li> <li>▪ Accommodations given to persons with disability in different outdoor camps the client can join</li> </ul>

Consider the table below for agencies and services regarding the sporting, cultural and specific interest groups in Australia:

<b>Sporting Groups</b>	
<b>State or Territory</b>	<b>Agency or Service</b>
Commonwealth (Cth)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Athletics Australia</li> <li>▪ Paralympics Australia</li> <li>▪ Riding for the Disabled Association Australia (RDAA)</li> <li>▪ Special Olympics Australia</li> </ul>
Australian Capital Territory (ACT)	Sports Australia
New South Wales (NSW)	Office of Sports – Sports for Persons With Disability
Northern Territory (NT)	City of Darwin – Accessible Equipment
Queensland (Qld)	Special Olympics Australia
Tasmania (Tas)	ParaQuad Tasmania
Victoria (Vic)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Disability Sport &amp; Recreation</li> <li>▪ People Outdoors</li> </ul>
Western Australia (WA)	Western Australia Disabled Sports Association (WADSA)
<b>Cultural Groups</b>	
<b>State or Territory</b>	<b>Agency or Service</b>
Commonwealth (Cth)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA)</li> </ul>
Australian Capital Territory (ACT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ National Gallery of Australia</li> <li>▪ National Portrait Gallery</li> </ul>
New South Wales (NSW)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ State Library of NSW</li> <li>▪ Front Up</li> </ul>

<b>Cultural Groups</b>	
<b>State or Territory</b>	<b>Agency or Service</b>
Northern Territory (NT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Disability access to community facilities</li> </ul>
Queensland (Qld)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ AMPARO Advocacy</li> <li>▪ Arts Queensland</li> </ul>
South Australia (SA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Access2Arts</li> <li>▪ Art Gallery of South Australia</li> <li>▪ State Library South Australia</li> </ul>
Tasmania (Tas)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Libraries Tasmania</li> </ul>
Victoria (Vic)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Arts Access Victoria</li> <li>▪ National Gallery of Victoria (NGV)</li> <li>▪ State Library of Victoria</li> </ul>
Western Australia (WA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Art Gallery WA (AGWA)</li> <li>▪ DADAA</li> </ul>
<b>Specific-Interest Groups</b>	
<b>State or Territory</b>	<b>Agency or Service</b>
Commonwealth (Cth)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Able Australia</li> <li>▪ Disability Services Australia</li> <li>▪ The Disability Trust</li> </ul>
Australian Capital Territory (ACT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Access Canberra</li> </ul>
New South Wales (NSW)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Achieve Australia</li> </ul>
Victoria (Vic)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Wild at Heart (WAH)</li> </ul>

It is also part of your job to ensure that your clients get the resources they need to participate in interest-based activities.

Resources to participate in the different interest groups include the following:



- **Technology**
  - Specialised prosthetics, such as ones for swimming or mountain climbing
  - Hearing aids and cochlear implants
  - Bicycles that can be pedalled using hands instead of feet
- **Human and animal resources**
  - Interpreters
  - Coaches especially trained for working with persons with disability
  - Service or support animals and their handlers
- **Financial support resources**
  - **National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)** – Provides financial assistance to persons with disability in Australia

The agencies and services previously mentioned may have these resources available for persons with disability to use. Make sure then that the resources your clients will need to participate in the activities are available. Some examples of how you can do so are the following:

- You have a client who has two prosthetic legs. They want to try hiking. They will need prosthetics that can handle rough terrain. You can help them by looking for companies that make those kinds of prosthetics. You can guide your client through the process of applying for those prosthetics. The process may involve the occupational therapist completing an assessment for specific requirements. They will then complete a report for the prosthetic specialist and get approval for payment from insurance.
- You have a client with cerebral palsy who wants to swim. You will look for a trained swim coach who has experience with persons who have mobility issues. You will also identify any special swimming equipment they may need. Then, you will help find special swimming equipment for your client. Again, you can also help your client get these resources approved by their insurance provider.

### 1.3.3 Strategies for Strengthening Options, Networks and Services for Persons With Disability

As a disability support worker, it is your responsibility to strengthen options, networks and services for your clients. The following are strategies that you may use as you support your clients regarding community participation options, networks or services:

- **Have regular consultations with the client regarding the options, networks and services.**

Regular consultations allow you to ensure that the option, network or service aligns with the client's needs and preferences. Doing this will enable you to meet the changing needs and preferences of the client consistently.

- **Keep track of options, networks and services being provided to the client.**

These options, networks and services continuously expand and change. Make sure that you stay up-to-date, as there may be changes that can affect your clients. For example, a client may be deemed ineligible for a certain programme due to changes in eligibility requirements.

- **Continuously look for options, networks and services the client may find useful in the future.**

As a support worker, you must keep track of what is available to meet any changes or additional needs of the client. If the client has a changed or additional need, you can provide all the necessary information on the option, network or service that can meet it.

- **Consult with your colleagues or supervisor.**

Sometimes, getting assistance from people in the workplace can help you. Some people, especially your supervisor, could provide you with valuable tips and insights on how to strengthen community participation options, networks and services for your clients.

With these strategies, you can continuously provide your clients with options, networks and services that fit their needs and interests. This can ensure that your clients will be happy with the support provided to them for their community participation. More importantly, strengthening these options can encourage their sense of belongingness.



## Checkpoint! Let's Review



1. Informed decision-making is when a person has all the knowledge they need to make a good decision. This includes the steps, risks and benefits of any community participation option. This can also include possible alternative options they can choose instead. Additionally, the person must know what will happen if they decide to pursue a particular option.
2. As you access the options for your clients, you must provide them with information on each option. This ensures that the option they will choose will meet their needs and preferences.
3. Community participation networks refer to networks that allow persons with disability to connect with others in their community. These include the following:
  - Social networks
  - Work networks
4. Part of your job is to give your clients information that is relevant to their interests. These interests may fall into the following groups:
  - Sporting groups
  - Cultural groups
  - Specific-interest groups

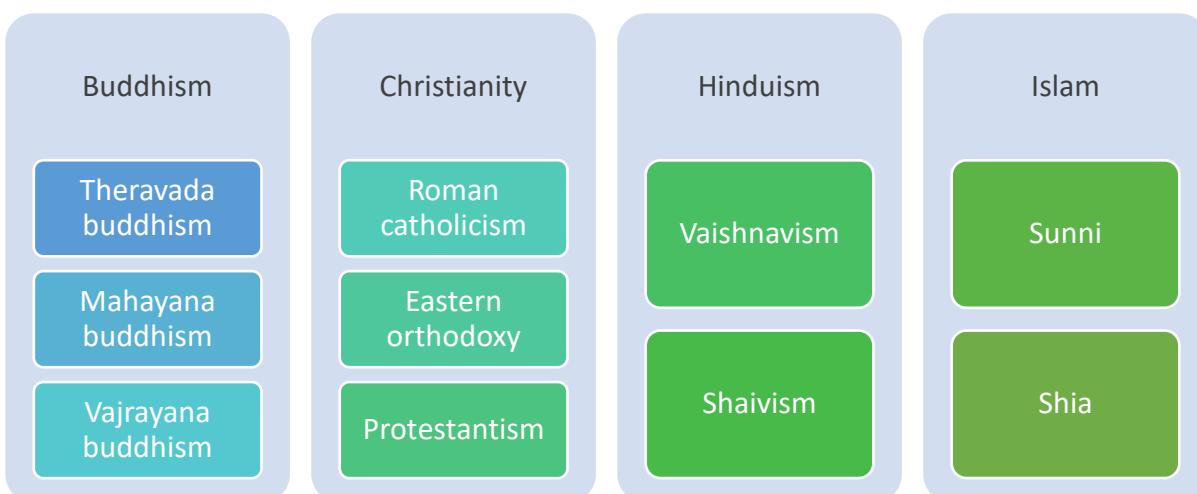


## 1.4 Recognise and Accommodate the Cultural and Religious Needs of the Person With Disability

*Cultural needs* refer to a wide variety of needs based on a person's social and ethnic identities. Culture, in this context, can refer to how a person identifies themselves and their group. As such, cultural needs can be based on ethnic background combined with:

- Sexual orientation
- Spoken language
- Other forms of group identification

*Religious needs*, on the other hand, refer to a variety of needs based on a person's spiritual beliefs or faith. *Religion*, in this context, refers to how a person observes a particular faith or religion. As such, religious needs can be based on the person's religion and the particular strand they are a part of, such as the following:



Some examples of cultural and religious needs are as follows:

- **Physical**
  - Food and eating schedule
  - Preferred clothing
- **Social**
- **Communication style, language, and choice of words based on cultural background**
  - Preferred visitors and times of visit
- **Spiritual**
  - Religious symbols and items
  - Prayers and other religious traditions

Providing for your client's cultural and religious needs is a requirement for providing support. Also, your clients have the right to require service that does not discriminate based on their cultural and religious backgrounds. As a support worker, you must recognise and accommodate these needs as you support your clients.

### Recognising and Accommodating the Cultural Needs of Your Clients

The following steps show how a support worker can recognise and accommodate the cultural and religious needs of their client:

**1. Secure a good understanding of your client's cultural and religious needs.**

- Do not make assumptions based on the colour of their skin or their clothing.
- Refer to their file or running record to identify their preferences.
- Ask your client directly. Listen to your clients and take note of all their preferences.
- Provide your client with what they can expect from you and the organisation. Identify what needs you will have problems providing and collaborate with your client. This would help in securing some of the resources that are not available to you and other support workers.



**2. Provide your client's cultural and religious needs.**

- Build trust between you and your client through constant communication.
- Provide your client's needs while following the organisational policies and procedures.
- Assist your client who will have difficulty accessing their needs due to a disability. For example, a person with reduced mobility needs to take certain positions and stances for traditional prayer. Your role will be to explore ways to accommodate the client for this need.

### 3. Adjust service based on your client's feedback and reaction.

- Listen to feedback and determine what needs were missed or not appropriately addressed.
- Make adjustments to address problems found in the service.
- Consider other factors that may affect how your client perceives the service, such as:
  - Fears
  - Severity of the diagnosis
  - Possible sources of trauma, grief and emotional instability
- Seek assistance from other support personnel when necessary.



### Further Reading

Additional information on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples can be accessed through the link below:

[Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultures](#)

### Multimedia



Knowing about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is vital to providing excellent care. Find out more through the video below:

[SBS Inclusion Program - Who are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders](#)



## Checkpoint! Let's Review



1. Cultural needs refer to a wide variety of needs based on a person's social and ethnic identities. Culture, in this context, can refer to how a person identifies themselves and their group.
2. Religious needs refer to a variety of needs based on a person's spiritual beliefs or faith. Religion, in this context, refers to how a person observes a particular faith or religion.
3. Providing for your client's cultural and religious needs is a requirement for providing support. Your clients have the right to require service that does not discriminate based on their cultural and religious backgrounds.



## Learning Activity for Chapter 1

Well done completing this chapter. You may now proceed to your **Learning Activity Booklet** (provided along with this Learner Guide) and complete the learning activities associated with this chapter.

Please coordinate with your trainer/training organisation for additional instructions and guidance in completing these practical activities.

## II. Implement Strategies for Community Participation and Inclusion

In the previous chapter, you learnt about the different abilities, needs, interests and preferences of persons with disability. You also learnt how to identify opportunities to meet your client's needs and preferences. This chapter will focus on implementing strategies according to the individualised plan. You will use your knowledge to identify support services to meet your client's needs. You need to learn these things to ensure that your clients get the support they need to thrive in their social and work networks.

The individualised plan should detail the following:

- What services will be provided to address the interests, needs, abilities and preferences of persons with disability
- How will each service meet the interests, needs, abilities and preferences of persons with disability
- Who will provide the services and assist the persons with disability with their community participation programmes and activities

Each detail in the individualised plan must be agreed upon by the following stakeholders:



The roles of the stakeholders in supporting the client in their community participation and social inclusion will be discussed in Subchapter 2.5 of this Learner Guide.



As a disability support worker, part of your job is to implement strategies based on your clients' individualised plans. *Implement*, in this context, refers to the execution of what is included in the individualised plan. Your clients may already have strategies in place to support their community participation and inclusion. As such, you must execute these strategies in collaboration with your clients and other stakeholders. Failure to do so can lead to your clients having unmet needs, which can lower the quality of their lives and increase their dependence on others.

In this chapter, you will learn how to:

- Assist the person with disability to identify and access community options based on their individualised plan
- Support the person with disability in establishing connections through shared interests
- Support the work participation of the person with disability and assist employer for inclusion
- Support the use of assistive technologies of the person with disability
- Seek feedback from the person with disability and others on meeting the person's needs and preferences
- Ensure strategies are regularly reviewed with the person with disability and supervisor
- Monitor the level of engagement in community and social networks of the person with disability

## 2.1 Assist the Person With Disability to Identify and Access Community Options Based on Their Individualised Plan

Recall the principles of person-centred practice as discussed in Section 1.1.2 of this Learner Guide. As a disability support worker, you must truly put the person with disability at the centre of all decisions. So, the person with disability is both the recipient and source for all strategies implemented within the individualised plan.

There is a tendency for support workers not to consider the opinions of persons with disability. However, this should not be the case. Persons with disability are more capable of determining what community options they would like to take due to the following reasons:

- They know and understand their own experiences better than anyone.
- They may have feelings or emotions that others may not understand.
- They may have desires or preferences that might not make sense to others.
- They can speak and thus provide more detailed or specific information on what they need help with.

Involving your clients in their individualised plan provides the following benefits:

It frames clients as capable of making operational decisions rather than seeking help

It increases clients' understanding of their strengths and limitations

It encourages clients to take part in activities, routines and programmes they choose

It provides the client with the benefit of inclusivity as we are all entitled to

To work with your clients to identify and access community options, you must do the following:

- Let clients choose how their needs should be addressed and what options will meet their needs and preferences.
- Inform clients of risky programmes and activities (i.e. the risk of being discriminated against or failing to complete the duty or exercise).
- Encourage clients to be vocal and bring up questions or concerns they might have.
- Provide necessary assistance to clients according to their disability.

Say that a disability support worker is tasked with helping a child with disability. The child shares that they want to socialise with children their age. With this in mind, the disability support worker must allow the child to:

Attempt to talk to other children despite the risk of failing to communicate well

Attend social events for children despite the risk of being discriminated against

Have their personal information left out from relevant documents

Be informed of opportunities to socialise within their community

Be provided with assistance when in conversation with other children, such as:

- Speech-to-text services
- Sign language interpreters

### **2.1.1 Identify Community Options That Will Meet Needs and Preferences Identified in Their Individualised Plan**

When working with clients to identify community options that will meet needs and preferences, consider the following strategies:

- **Consider the relationship of the client with other stakeholders of the individualised plan.**

Relationships are essential in the life of persons with disability. To support your client, you must respect and value their relationships with those involved in their life. Doing so will ensure that your client can live a rich and fulfilling life.

- **Encourage communication between you, the client and other stakeholders.**

Consider the best method to share information regarding the individualised plan with the client and other stakeholders. These methods can include the following:

- Email
- Text message
- App-based communication
- Meetings (e.g. face-to-face or online)

- **Acknowledge that the client's family and carer, and other stakeholders play a vital role in providing support.**

They may be involved in various aspects of the client's community participation and inclusion. Their involvement affects the client's ability to access and engage with the strategies within their individualised plan.



- **Acknowledge the different views of the client and other stakeholders.**

Where those involved have differing views, you must ensure that they are:

Able to express their opinions and concerns in a safe and supportive environment

Committed to working through their differences in a way that will benefit the client

## 2.1.2 Access Community Options That Will Meet Needs and Preferences Identified in Their Individualised Plan

Recall the agencies and services discussed in Section 1.2.1 of this Learner Guide. There are services your organisation may provide clients to meet their community participation needs. However, there are times when the support the client needs is beyond your capabilities. When this happens, consider seeking services from other community participation agencies to meet these needs. You may do so by making referrals.

A *referral* is a process of connecting to community participation services outside of your area of expertise. This means asking other agencies to handle and meet the clients' needs and preferences based on their individualised plans.

Referrals can be categorised in the following ways:

Warm Referral	Cold Referral
<p>A support worker discusses how other agencies can provide for the client's needs to gain their consent. Once the client consents, the support worker contacts the agency. The support worker may go with the client to the first meeting and follow up to see the referral.</p>	<p>A support worker provides only the contact details and basic information of other agencies. The client then can contact them by themselves.</p>

As a support worker, your responsibility is to use warm referrals to other agencies. Doing so will ensure that their needs will be met and supported accordingly.

You can refer to the following procedures when referring clients to other agencies to meet their needs and preferences:

### 1. Identify what support the client needs.

Is the client exhibiting signs of a complex medical condition (e.g. cancer, dementia, arthritis, etc.)? Has the client expressed a need outside of your and your organisation's area of expertise?

### 2. Develop a list of available agencies.

Research the information on the available agencies with services that can meet the client's needs. This information includes contact details and eligibility requirements, such as age, gender, culture, diagnosis, etc. It should also include how accessible the services are for the client. The information may change over time, so you must regularly update the list. Refer to Section 1.2.1 for community participation agencies that can meet your client's needs and preferences.

**3. Present the list of available agencies to the client.**

You may discuss in detail what the referral will add to their care to ensure that they understand the reason for the referral. Encourage the client to bring up any concerns or questions regarding the referral. For example, a client expresses concern about paying for a particular service. You may discuss the available financial assistance and what documentation they must provide.

**4. Once the client agrees to an agency, contact the agency on their behalf with a warm referral.**

Provide them with relevant information about the client's support needs and current situation. Usually, a written referral form must be submitted when contacting an agency. Make sure to check with the agency you refer to on what information you must include in the form.

**5. Define the role of the agency.**

Clarify what you are asking from them. You may be asking them to evaluate and see if a referral is necessary or perform a specific procedure. For example, you may refer a speech therapist to aid a nonverbal client in social communication development. On the other hand, a psychologist may be referred to only assess a client exhibiting signs of depression. They will still have to determine if treatment is necessary.

**6. Record and report the referrals.**

Ensure that the referral you made has been completed. The agency should keep you updated on the client's progress. You may also follow up with the client to see how the referral is working out from their perspective. Recording referrals may include developing shared review tools for you and the referred network or service.



As a support worker, you must follow your organisation's policy regarding roles for referrals. For example, there may be a:

Support co-ordinator who can link the client to various services

House manager who may be required to authorise certain recommendations

You must also follow your organisation's procedures for referrals. For example, say that your client needs the support of a speech pathologist. You may not have the authority to make this referral. However, you can make an initial appointment with the client's general practitioner to have this referral completed.

Make sure to refer to your organisation's policies and procedures when referring clients to other external stakeholders.



### Lotus Compassionate Care

Access and review Lotus Compassionate Care Handbook for the policies and procedures on coordinating with other community service providers through the link below:

[Lotus Compassionate Care Handbook](#)

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## Checkpoint! Let's Review



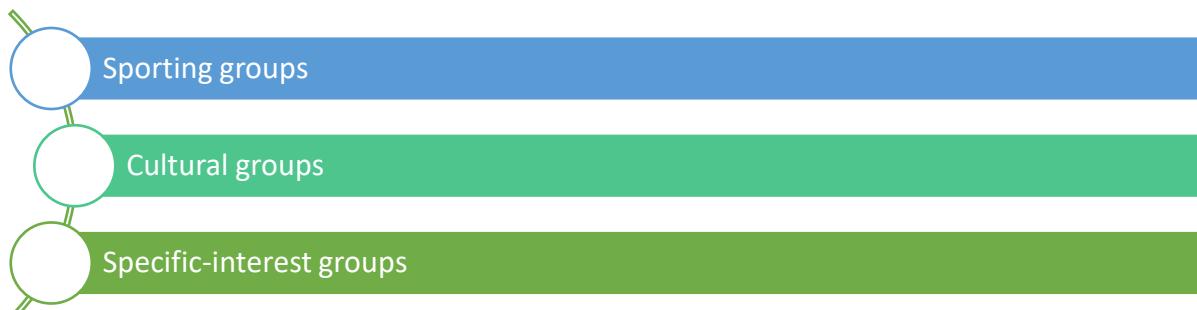
1. To work with your clients to identify and access community options, you must do the following:
  - Let clients choose how their needs should be addressed and what options will meet their needs and preferences.
  - Inform clients of risky programmes and activities.
  - Encourage clients to be vocal and bring up questions or concerns they might have.
  - Provide necessary assistance to clients according to their disability.
2. Consider seeking services from other community participation agencies to meet these needs. You may do so by making referrals.



## 2.2 Support the Person With Disability in Establishing Connections Through Shared Interests

*Shared interests* mean that a person's interests are similar to others. They can establish connections through shared interests by engaging with others in various social networks. In these social networks, the person can join groups that share their interests.

Recall the interest groups as discussed in Section 1.3.2 of this Learner Guide. The interests of persons with disability may fall under the following groups:



As a support worker, you should support your clients as they access community inclusion opportunities. Failure to support and guide clients in accessing opportunities may result in the following:

- Difficulty for the client to socialise with others due to their impairments
- Too many options that the client can no longer decide what is appropriate for them
- Missed opportunities for the client to socialise with others
- The client not being able to connect with others on the social networks
- Isolation and non-engagement in their activities and programmes



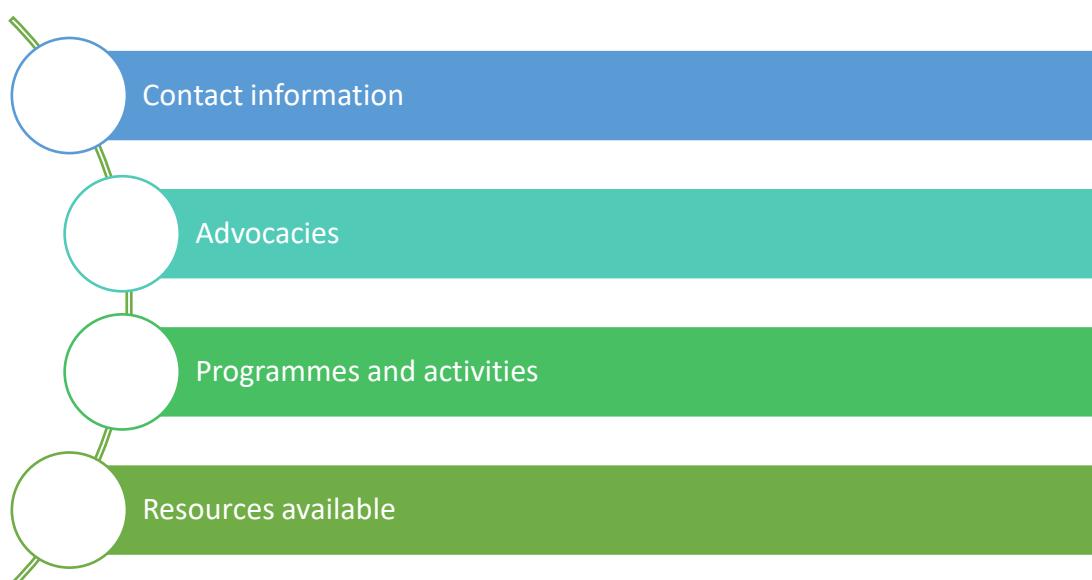
To support clients in accessing opportunities to establish connections through shared interests, consider the strategies below:

- **Consult with the client to determine current interests.**

Interests change frequently. That is why it is crucial for you to ask your clients about their interests regularly. This allows you to ensure that they can connect with others with topics that genuinely interest them.

- **Find appropriate social networks for the client.**

There are many networks (national, local or community) the client can be a part of. Providing them for the client makes them even more accessible. You can provide the client with information about the networks, such as the following:



Doing this makes it easier for the client to connect to their preferred networks.

- **Conduct further studies on social networks.**

Make sure that the network is one that the client will be comfortable interacting with. The network should be inclusive. It should allow the client to enjoy it without any reservations completely. Remember that the client is only socially included when they can participate in the same way as others.

- **Seek the client's feedback.**

Take time to see if they have encountered anything that may hinder them from establishing connections. Doing so ensures that the client can completely engage in the community without anything holding them back. Strategies on how you can seek feedback from clients will be discussed in Subchapter 2.5.

Consider the case study below to help you further understand the process of supporting clients in accessing opportunities to connect with others through shared interests.

### Mr Carter's Old Hobby

Olivia is the new support worker for Mr Carter. Mr Carter has a hearing difficulty that makes it hard for him to mingle with others. He wears a hearing aid that assists him with his daily interactions.

When Olivia talked to Mr Carter, the elderly patient mentioned that he has always loved playing the guitar. He just could not do it before because he was so busy that he hardly had time for things that were not work-related.

*'But now that I'm old and I'm just sitting around all day, I really wish I could go back to playing.'* Mr Carter said.

Olivia then looked for places that cater to Mr Carter's request. Luckily, she was able to find a music studio nearby where people could go and play with others every Wednesday and Thursday night.



When Olivia did her research, it turned out that the studio had been around for almost ten years already. The studio owners are persons with disability who have a genuine love for music. It is a place filled with people whose hobby is similar to Mr Carter's.

Olivia did not have to think twice. She immediately told Mr Carter about the music studio that she found. He immediately agreed to sign up, and just two days later, Mr Carter got to play the guitar again after a while.

From time to time, Olivia asks Mr Carter about his Wednesday and Thursday nights.

*'I couldn't be happier! It's like I'm a teenager excited for Friday night's gig all over again. I met so many cool people! I never thought I'd be able to do this again at my age.'* he said with a huge smile on his face.

In this situation, the support worker supported the client in establishing connections through consultation. She identified the client's interests in order to find potential social networks for him. She also researched if the network was a good fit for the client. Lastly, the support worker sought feedback from the client to make sure that he was happy and met their goal to meet others with similar interests.

## Checkpoint! Let's Review



1. Shared interests mean that a person's interests are similar to others. They can establish connections through shared interests by engaging with others in various social networks. In these social networks, the person can join groups that share their interests.
2. Failure to support and guide clients in accessing opportunities may result in the following:
  - Difficulty for the client to socialise with others due to their impairments
  - Too many options that the client can no longer decide what is appropriate for them
  - Missed opportunities for the client to socialise with others
  - The client not being able to connect with others on the social networks
  - Isolation and perception of exclusion



## 2.3 Support the Work Participation of the Person With Disability and Assist Employer for Inclusion

The workplace is one of the most common and important settings for a person to build a community or social network. Since most jobs require people to stay at work 37.5 hours per week, colleagues spend a lot of time together. They bond over their successes and struggles in their job. This encourages people to build connections with one another at the workplace.

This is why it is essential for persons with disability to feel engaged and included in the workplace. Being isolated or discriminated against for 37.5 hours a week may damage a person's mental health. This isolation or discrimination also greatly diminishes their general quality of life.

As such, you must support your clients to access opportunities for participation at work. This support also includes assisting their employers in easing the clients' participation and inclusion.



### 2.3.1 Assisting Employers to Facilitate the Inclusion and Engagement of the Person With Disability in the Workplace

Your role involves assisting your clients' employers in facilitating their participation and inclusion in the workplace. Doing so will aid in identifying opportunities for the clients' participation at work. Below are some ways for you to help employers facilitate inclusion:

- **Provide the employer with information on national and international policies regarding persons with disability, especially in connection to employment.**

These policies include the CRPD and any other law passed by the national and local governments.

- **Give feedback on the company policies and procedures on how they check up on employee conditions.**

Suggest company policies that will accommodate the needs of a person with disability. This may mean implementing a flexible schedule for the client or all employees, adding facilities in the workplace to resolve barriers and applying leniency for important and unavoidable appointments such as medical check-ups.

- **Advise the employer and management to create events that encourage socialising with co-workers.**

Suggest company events that encourage teamwork and socialisation amongst colleagues. This includes lunch gatherings, out-of-work events and team-building activities.



You must also help employers to encourage clients to engage or participate more in workplace tasks. Some ways include the following:

- **Suggest revising company policies as needed to accommodate the client's needs.**  
Suggest company policies that will accommodate the needs of a person with disability. This may mean implementing a flexible schedule for the client or all employees, adding facilities in the workplace to resolve barriers and applying leniency for important and unavoidable appointments, such as medical check-ups.
- **Review company requirements involving persons with disability.**  
Provide the employer with information on national and international policies regarding persons with disability, especially in connection to employment.
- **Obtain feedback on the company policies and procedures on how they check up on employee conditions.**  
Ask the client about their experiences with the management and how their concerns were dealt with and resolved. Review the company's staff handbook and the client's employment contract to evaluate the company's existing actions to accommodate persons with disability.

Once the employer and the management implement these changes and accommodations, the client is more likely to engage with colleagues and reduce unfair treatment. Creating socialising events and fostering teamwork among employees have the greatest impact with regard to minimising the client's isolation.

### 2.3.2 Supporting the Person With Disability to Access Opportunities for Work Participation

Once participation opportunities are present in the workplace, you also have a role in assisting the person with disability in accessing them. Assisting the employer in adjusting company policies for persons with disability is in itself already a huge part of that. However, the person with disability may still need further assistance with the implementation of the specific activities themselves.



In these cases, you can support clients to access opportunities for participation at work with the following strategies:

- **Keep open communication and close contact.**

Stay updated on the client's situation at work and advise them and the employer on their progress as needed.

- **Assist the client in accessing their needs and resolving barriers as often as needed.**

They may encounter situations where they could struggle despite the adjustments made for them. This requires direct intervention, whether by you or by your colleagues. In case other people take up this role in your stead, your duty is to provide them with the necessary advice and information to succeed.

- **Apply the steps and strategies in the individualised plan.**

The workplace is only a specific setting for community participation and social inclusion. On that note, it is not different from other participation and inclusion activities programmed in the plan and should also follow the steps and factors there.

## Multimedia



The following link is a video about a business owner empowering persons with disability:

[Coffee shop employs and empowers persons with disability | ABC Australia](#)



## Checkpoint! Let's Review

1. The workplace is one of the most common and important settings for a person to build a community or social network.
2. You have a role in assisting the employer in facilitating your clients' participation and inclusion at work.

## 2.4 Support the Use of Assistive Technologies of the Person With Disability

*Assistive technology* refers to the devices and equipment designed to support persons with disability. These technologies help people live independent lives. Using assistive technology can do the following:

- **Positively impact the health and wellbeing of the person with disability.**

For example, assistive technology allows older individuals to continue living in their homes. The use delays or even prevents the need for long-term care.

- **Promote the independence of the person with disability.**

Assistive technologies lessen the reliance of persons with disability on other people (e.g. their carers) by allowing them to do tasks or activities they otherwise cannot do or find challenging to do.

- **Maintain the independence of the person with disability.**

Continued use of assistive technology helps persons with disability perform routine tasks independently. As the person with disability adapts to the use of assistive technology, it will benefit in maintaining independence and reducing reliance on external supports. This may also reduce entry into care homes or hospitals.

- **Enable the person with disability to be included in various activities available for all people.**

Assistive technologies help persons with disability feel included in society when they gain the specific skill or ability to take part in various activities that would otherwise not be available to them. Furthermore, it gives them the confidence and assurance that some may not possess due to their impairment.



- **Allows the person with disability to participate in their community fully.**

Without assistive technology, a person with disability may become isolated and excluded from participating in various opportunities in the community. They will not be able to participate fully in social activities because of a lack of confidence, doubt in their abilities, fear of being inept, etc. These increase the impact of the disability on person with disability, their family and society.

- **Ease the process of making choices and decisions for the person with disability.**

Assistive technology can help person with disability understand and communicate their choice. For example, a person with complete vision loss will need legal documents in braille. This is for them to be fully aware of the content.

### 2.4.1 Scope and Breadth of Assistive Technology

As a support worker, you must understand the scope and breadth of assistive technologies. Doing so allows you to identify what devices or equipment your clients need. Once identified, you will support them in using said technology to meet their individual needs.

*Scope* refers to the activities where a person with disability can use assistive technology. On the other hand, *breadth* refers to the range of devices and equipment used explicitly for an activity.

#### Communication

One of the common individual needs of a person with disability is the need to communicate and interact with others. Aside from nonverbal communication techniques, a person with disability may use assistive devices to communicate.

The following tables list the breadth of assistive technology used for communication. These are according to a person's impairment:

Impairment	Breadth of Assistive Technology
Hearing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>FM systems</b> – These are wireless devices that use radio signals to connect a microphone to hearing aids or receivers.</li> <li>▪ <b>Closed-captioning software</b> – This converts speech and sounds into text for persons with hearing impairments to follow along with the programme.</li> <li>▪ <b>Heading aids</b> – These help persons with hearing impediments regain some level of hearing.</li> </ul>
Speech	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Communicators</b> – These are devices used for communication. These devices can range from simple notepads to electronic communication boards and keyboards.</li> <li>▪ <b>Eye gaze</b> – This is an electronic device that allows the person to communicate by looking at words or commands on a screen.</li> <li>▪ <b>Text-to-speech software (TTS)</b> – This allows the person to type out what they want to say, and the device can read it aloud for others to hear.</li> <li>▪ <b>Notepads</b> – These allow the person to communicate with others through writing.</li> </ul>

Impairment	Breadth of Assistive Technology
Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Alternative print materials</b> – These are books, manuals and handouts printed in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ High-contrast text for a client with partial vision loss</li> <li>○ Braille for a client with complete vision loss</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <b>Pocket magnifiers</b> – These are portable lenses to make texts and objects appear larger.</li> <li>▪ <b>Audiobooks</b> – These are recordings of print materials that are read out loud.</li> <li>▪ <b>Reading gadgets</b> – These convert the text of printed materials that are usually unavailable in audio, Braille or enlarged print form into speech.</li> <li>▪ <b>Refreshable Braille displays</b> – These process information on computer screens and electronically raises and lower different combinations of pins in braille cells. Text continuously changes as the person moves the cursor around the screen.</li> <li>▪ <b>Text-to-speech (TTS)</b> – This is a feature in modern phones and computers that can read text on the screen aloud.</li> <li>▪ <b>Visual support software</b> – This can enlarge text and increase the contrast of screens to make the content easier to read.</li> </ul>
Cognition and Memory Loss	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Sensory regulators</b> – These allow the person to cope with lowered or heightened senses.</li> <li>▪ <b>Noise-cancelling headphones</b> – These reduce distracting background noises to prevent overstimulation.</li> <li>▪ <b>Memory aids</b> – These help the person recall information.</li> <li>▪ <b>Word prediction software</b> – This is a kind of software that aids the person with writing and spelling difficulties by recalling required words that can improve their grammar and sentence structure.</li> <li>▪ <b>Autocomplete feature</b> – This can help predict words that a person may type.</li> </ul>

## Daily Living Activities

*Daily living* refers to the self-care activities people do every day to keep themselves safe, healthy and feeling good. These activities are usually done in the home of the person with disability. They are also done independently by the person with disability.

There are two kinds of activities for daily living:

- **Activities of daily living (ADL)**

These include the following self-care tasks at home, either in their personal home or care residences:

- Continence (e.g. using the toilet)
- Hygiene (e.g. bathing, brushing and styling hair, shaving, dressing)
- Mobility and transferring (e.g. walking, getting in and out of bed)
- Eating and drinking
- Pressure area management
- Carer support (i.e. alerting carers if there is a problem)

- **Instrumental activities of daily living (IADL)**

These refer to activities for maintaining an independent life in other environments (e.g. outdoors, shops, etc.), such as the following:



The following table lists the breadth of assistive technology used for activities for daily living:

ADL/IADL	Breadth of Assistive Technology
Continence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Bedpans</b> – These are receptacles used for a bedridden patient in a healthcare facility. They can be used for both urinary and faecal discharge.</li> <li>▪ <b>Bedside commodes</b> – These provide a safer alternative for persons with disability who are at risk of falling or slipping in the bathroom.</li> <li>▪ <b>Bed and chair pads</b> – These are absorbent pads placed discreetly on top of a chair or bed. They can be either disposable or washable.</li> <li>▪ <b>Toilet seat raisers</b> – These increase the height of the toilet pan, which makes it easier for a person to sit down on and stand up from the toilet.</li> <li>▪ <b>Urine drainage bags</b> – These collect urine by attaching the bag to a catheter tube inside a person's bladder.</li> </ul>
Self-Care and Hygiene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Grab bars</b> – These are bars installed in a shower or next to a bathtub. These support a person when going in and out of the shower or bathtub.</li> <li>▪ <b>Shower chairs or benches</b> – These provide support to persons with disability with balance issues and help prevent falling.</li> <li>▪ <b>Anti-slip mats</b> – These help make wet surfaces less slippery to prevent falls.</li> <li>▪ <b>Button hooks</b> – These help the person with disability with dexterity problems in buttoning or unbuttoning clothes.</li> <li>▪ <b>Toothbrush grips</b> – These help prevent the person with disability from dropping the toothbrush.</li> <li>▪ <b>Night lights</b> – These help prevent falls by illuminating dim areas at home during the night.</li> </ul>

ADL/IADL	Breadth of Assistive Technology
<b>Mobility</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Walking sticks, walkers, crutches, and canes</b> – These are devices designed to support a person's balance while standing or walking. These devices take away some pressure off of one or both legs.</li> <li>▪ <b>Wheelchairs</b> – These provide wheeled movement and seating support.</li> <li>▪ <b>Prosthetic arms/legs</b> – These replace missing body parts and allow independent movement to the person with disability.</li> <li>▪ <b>Walking stick</b> – This helps the person navigate their way in the park.</li> <li>▪ <b>Reachers</b> – These help the person reach items without bending over or raising their arms.</li> </ul>
<b>Transferring</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Slide sheets</b> – These allow easy repositioning on the bed with less friction.</li> <li>▪ <b>Transfer belts</b> – These are used for easy transferring and assisted walking.</li> <li>▪ <b>Transfer boards</b> – These are full-body-length boards used to transfer a person from one surface to another.</li> <li>▪ <b>Slings</b> – These are fabric support used to carry a person.</li> <li>▪ <b>Stretchers</b> – These are rigid frames used to carry a person in a lying position. Stretchers are often used to transfer people to different locations.</li> <li>▪ <b>Hoists</b> – These have three kinds—mobile, standing and ceiling. Mobile and ceiling hoists are used to lift a person inside a sling or stretcher. Standing hoists are used to assist a person in sitting or standing.</li> <li>▪ <b>Ramps</b> – These help persons with disability using wheelchairs to move through different places easily.</li> </ul>

ADL/IADL	Breadth of Assistive Technology
Eating and Drinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Adaptive dinnerware</b> – These are plates and bowls designed to ensure that food will not slide around and fall out. Dinnerware can also be modified to have grip bottoms to not slide around a table.</li> <li>▪ <b>Assistive utensils</b> – These are forks, knives and spoons that are adapted to the needs of an individual. For example, weighted utensils are designed for a person who has hand tremors.</li> <li>▪ <b>Utensil holders</b> – These are for people who find holding utensils challenging. Utensil holders include straps, clips, and foam handles. Foam handles assist a person who can hold utensils but has a problem with their grip.</li> <li>▪ <b>Weighted utensils</b> – These minimise tremors while eating.</li> <li>▪ <b>Non-skid plates</b> – These prevent the plate from moving around while eating.</li> <li>▪ <b>Feeding devices</b> – These are designed to allow a person who cannot self-feed to eat independently. There are manual and powered feeders that a person may use.</li> <li>▪ <b>Assistive cups and mugs</b> – Like adaptive dinnerware, these can assist a person. The most common assistive drinking utensil is drinking straws.</li> <li>▪ <b>Straws</b> – These help prevent spillage when drinking.</li> <li>▪ <b>No-spill lids</b> – These prevent spillage when a glass gets knocked over.</li> <li>▪ <b>Jar openers</b> – These help the person open jars without exerting too much effort.</li> </ul>
Pressure Area Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Protectors</b> – These are devices that help reduce injuries caused by friction. The most common locations for protectors are the elbows and heels of a person.</li> <li>▪ <b>Cushions</b> – These help lessen the risk of developing pressure ulcers for those who spend long periods in bed or sitting down.</li> <li>▪ <b>Offloading footwear</b> – This is a type of footwear designed to redistribute pressure.</li> <li>▪ <b>Sleep positioners</b> – These are pillows, rolls and soft rails adjusted to redistribute pressure and keep a person from falling out of bed.</li> <li>▪ <b>Electronic bed frames</b> – These help change the pressure distribution for people who are bedridden.</li> </ul>

ADL/IADL	Breadth of Assistive Technology
Carer Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Fall detectors</b> – These alert a carer if the person with disability has taken a fall.</li> <li>▪ <b>Passive infrared detectors</b> – These are devices that monitor activity at the home of the person. They can tell a carer whether the person is active, where they are, and if someone has entered the home.</li> <li>▪ <b>Panic buttons</b> – These are alarm buttons used in the event of a break-in or if someone threatening approaches the home of the person.</li> <li>▪ <b>Personal alarms</b> – These are devices that people can press when they need help or when they need to contact the carer.</li> <li>▪ <b>Smart plugs</b> – These are devices used to monitor the use of household appliances and send an alert to a carer.</li> </ul>
Recreation and Leisure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Adapted equipment</b> – This is equipment that has been modified according to the needs of a person. These include sporting equipment, gardening tools, board games and card holders.</li> <li>▪ <b>Magnetic board game pieces</b> – These prevent the pieces from getting moved around and lost while playing.</li> <li>▪ <b>All-terrain wheelchairs</b> – These provide mobility on different surfaces for recreational activities.</li> <li>▪ <b>Self-driving cars</b> – These allow the person to go from one place to another with fewer risks associated with driving the car themselves.</li> </ul>
Education and Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Ergonomic furniture</b> – This is designed to support both function and comfort.</li> <li>▪ <b>Pen/pencil grips</b> – These are tools that help improve handwriting, give more control, and reduce hand fatigue.</li> <li>▪ <b>Alternative print materials</b> – These help the person read necessary educational materials more easily.</li> <li>▪ <b>Audio recordings</b> – These are recordings of classes, meetings and print materials read out loud.</li> <li>▪ <b>Speech-to-text software</b> – This allows the person with disability to answer materials even if they have difficulty in writing or typing.</li> <li>▪ <b>Physical modifications to the environment</b> – These are modifications that enable access to buildings, such as ramps and wider doorways.</li> <li>▪ <b>Elevators</b> – These help persons with disability move up floors in places of employment, especially multi-storey facilities, without getting tired quickly.</li> </ul>

The assistive technology that has been discussed provides persons with disability support in various life activities. Consider the examples below:

- **Maintaining independence**

- **Prosthetic arms/legs** – These help the person move on their own as they would without the disability.
- **Grab bars** – These allow the person to take a bath by themselves with reduced risk of slipping in the bathroom.

- **Promoting independence**

- **Weighted utensils** – These allow the person to feed themselves without having to rely on other people.
- **Cane** – This supports a person's balance while walking or standing, so they rely on little assistance from others.

- **Enabling inclusion**

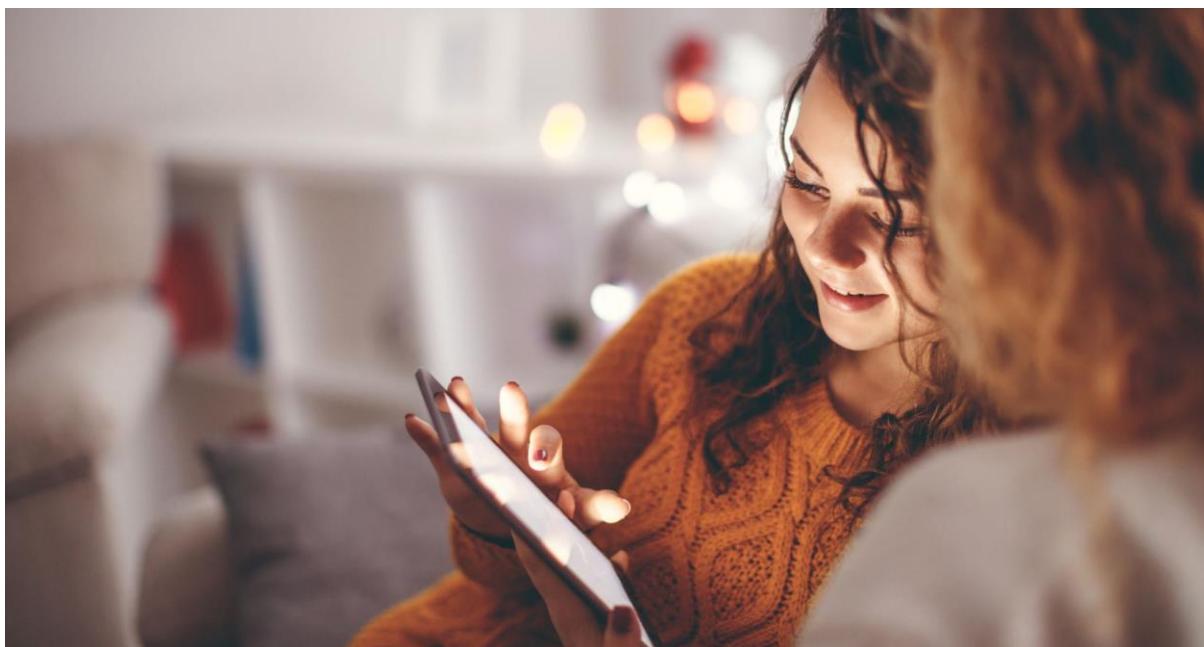
- **Closed captioning** – This allows the person to follow the flow of a show or programme despite difficulties in hearing.
- **Ramp** – This allows the person using a wheelchair to move through elevated facilities more easily.

- **Enabling participation**

- **Adapted sports equipment** – These allow the person to play sports with other people.
- **Alternative print materials** – These allow the person who may have vision impairment to gain knowledge and information.



## 2.4.2 Support the Use of Assistive Technology of the Person With Disability



As a support worker, you must aid your clients when they are using assistive technology.

In aiding your clients' use to meet their individual needs, you need to take into consideration the following:

- **Make sure that assistive devices and equipment are available.**  
You can consult with the following staff to ensure the availability of equipment and resources:
  - Assistive technology technicians
  - Disability support workers
  - School support staff
  - Recreation, development and employment officers
- **Make sure that assistive devices and equipment align with the individual needs of your clients.**  
For example, a client who has hand tremors needs assistance in holding a book and turning pages. With this in mind, you can consider reading gadgets that read the text aloud or audiobooks for the client to listen to.
- **Consider the budget of your clients.**  
This can help filter out devices and equipment outside your client's price range. Depending on your client's needs, you may access them for free or with financial aid through government programmes.

- **Consider your clients' environments.**

For more extensive equipment, consider space for your clients to use and store them. You may also think about how easy or difficult it is to move the equipment.



- **Determine if your clients need custom-made equipment.**

Some assistive technology can be adapted according to your clients' needs. For example, wheelchairs can be adapted to your clients' body shapes and increase their mobility.

- **Ensure that your clients understand how to use the assistive technology.**

If your clients are not familiar with a particular device or equipment, provide instructions on using them. For example, a technician can teach a client who has never used a refreshable Braille display how to use it.

- **Make sure that assistive devices and equipment are well-maintained.**

This maintenance means inspecting the devices or equipment for signs of damage. Equipment that is damaged beyond repair should be replaced to avoid situations that can harm your clients. For example, a faulty FM system may send howling feedback to hearing aids that can damage a client's hearing.

## Multimedia



This video provides a case study of how a person with disability may use assistive technology. The video's focus is on a person with cerebral palsy who uses equipment for communication.

[Assistive Technology in Action - Meet Elle](#)

## Checkpoint! Let's Review



1. As a support worker, you must understand the scope and breadth of assistive technology. With this understanding, you will be able to support the use of the technology of the person with disability to meet their individual needs.
2. Communication is one of the common individual needs of a person with disability. Aside from nonverbal communication techniques, a person with disability may use assistive technologies to communicate.
3. Daily living refers to the self-care activities people do every day to keep themselves safe, healthy and feeling good. The kinds of activities of daily living include the following:
  - Activities of daily living (ADL)
  - Instrumental activities of daily living (IADL)
4. In supporting your clients' use of assistive technology, you need to take into consideration the following:
  - Make sure that assistive devices and equipment are available.
  - Make sure that assistive devices and equipment align with the individual needs of your clients.
  - Consider the budget of your clients.
  - Consider your clients' environments.
  - Determine if your clients need custom-made equipment.
  - Ensure that your clients understand how to use the assistive technology.
  - Make sure that assistive devices and equipment are well-maintained.

## 2.5 Seek Feedback From the Person With Disability and Others on Meeting the Person’s Needs and Preferences

By now, you have identified strategies that have not met the needs and preferences of the person with disability. With your findings, you can adjust these strategies for community participation and inclusion. One of your duties as a support worker is to ensure that the support provided to clients meets their current and changing needs and preferences.

*Current needs and preferences* refer to what has already been identified. These needs and preferences are already documented within the individualised plan. On the other hand, changing needs of the person with disability can include the following:

Change in barriers

Change in interests

- **Change in barriers**

Recall the social model of disability as discussed in Section 1.1.1 of this Learner Guide. The model contextualises disability as the barriers people face socially due to their impairments. Further discussion on these barriers can be found in Section 3.1.1 of this Learner Guide. Barriers prevent persons with disability from taking an active part in society and their lives. Therefore, if there are any barriers your clients face, you must modify the responses according to these changes.

For example, say that a client who uses a wheelchair has to move to a new apartment building that does not have ramps to enter the building. This presents a new physical barrier to the client. You or other relevant personnel may request that the building add ramps for the client.

On the other hand, a student with a hearing impairment may encounter learning video materials that do not include captioning. As this presents a communication barrier for the student, you may respond by asking the school support staff to address the challenge.

- **Change in interests**

As mentioned before, goals do not depend solely on the skills of the person with disability to live a quality life. They also rely on the level of interest of the person with disability.

The goals set can become less critical to a client over time. When they lose their importance, they may begin to feel burdensome to achieve. This leads to the person with disability losing their motivation to accomplish the less exciting goals.

If you notice that a client has second thoughts on a particular goal, it is best to pause the plan. This is so that you can realign their goals to their new interests. This way, you can adjust their plan according to what they currently value.

For example, say that a client originally wanted to improve their physical health by joining a gym. However, the client realises that they lost interest in going to the gym over time. To address this change, you may ask the client what exercises they enjoyed while in the gym. This is so that either you or another support worker may assist the client in doing the exercises at home instead.



You need to make sure that the level of support you provide still matches what is required. To do this, seek feedback from the client and the others involved in their individualised plan.

Feedback, when appropriately provided, is a powerful tool. It offers an overview of the performance observed. Using this overview, those involved will be able to improve their actions. This is to make sure that the client is moving towards their goals for community participation and social inclusion. If your observation shows that the strategies implemented have little to no success, you must seek feedback from those involved. This is for necessary changes to happen in the plan. Not seeking feedback may lead to the client being unable to participate in their communities and social networks fully. They may also feel like they have failed themselves and those who support them.

### **2.5.1 Role of Stakeholders in Supporting and Facilitating Community Participation and Social Inclusion**

Recall who is involved in the individualised plan as discussed in the introduction of this chapter. Aside from the person with disability, those involved include the following:

The family of the person with disability

The carer of the person with disability

Others identified by the person with disability

You can consider these people as part of stakeholders of the individualised plan of the person with disability.

## The Family of the Person With Disability

It is the family that spends the most time with the person with disability. Therefore, they play the most important role in ensuring that the needs and preferences of the person with disability are always met. The social inclusion of persons with disability must begin at home, which means that:



The person with disability does not feel like an 'outcast'



The person with disability is treated exactly how the other members of the family are treated

The family is also the legal guardian of the person with disability and therefore has the means to decide for the person with disability, especially on the financial side of things. You should also reach out to the family if there are requirements such as paperwork, documents, etc.

Most importantly, aside from the persons with disability themselves, the family knows the ever-changing needs and preferences of the person with disability, which are critical in the community participation and social inclusion of persons with disability.



### Lotus Compassionate Care

Access and review Lotus Compassionate Care Handbook for the policies and procedures on working with families through the link below:

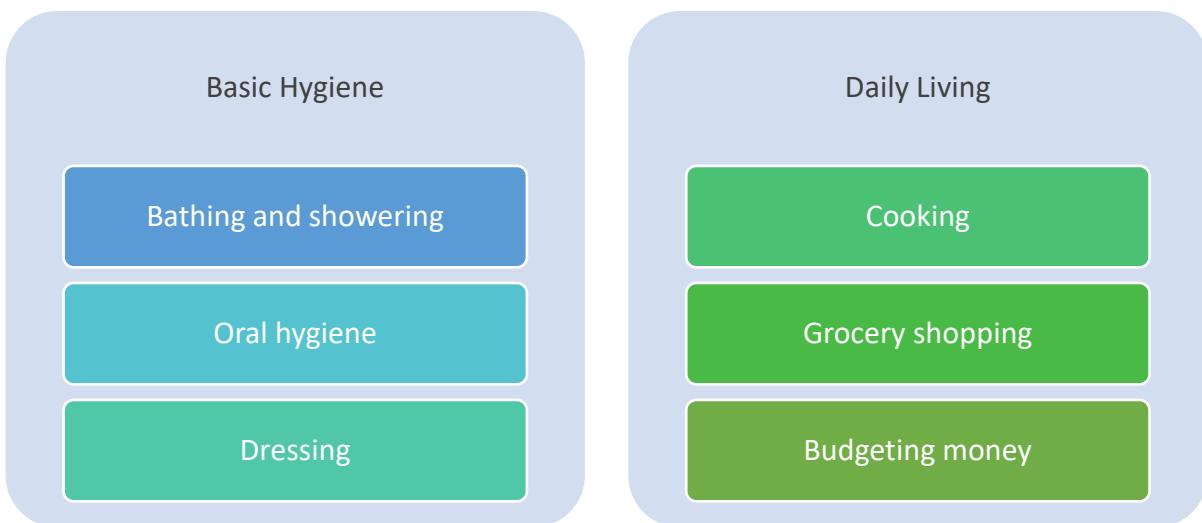
[Lotus Compassionate Care Handbook](#)

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## The Carer of the Person With Disability

The carer is the one that fully supports the person with disability in their daily living. A carer can be a relative, a friend, or someone the person with disability hired for assistance. Basically, the carer keeps the person with disability safe and cared for.

Carer helps the person with disability with personal needs, including the following:



Obviously, the role of the carer is equally important as the family. The carer knows the changing needs and preferences of the person with disability. The carer, who is with the person with disability for the most part of the day, should know them well.

### **Others Identified by the Person With Disability**

Stakeholders of the individualised plan of the person with disability may include the following:

- Partners or significant others
- Close friends
- Other carers

Stakeholders are not limited to the family, friends, and primary caregivers of the person with disability. The group may also include other external stakeholders involved in the care, schooling, and employment of persons with disability. As long as the person with disability trusts and wants them involved, they must be included in strategies for community participation and social inclusion.

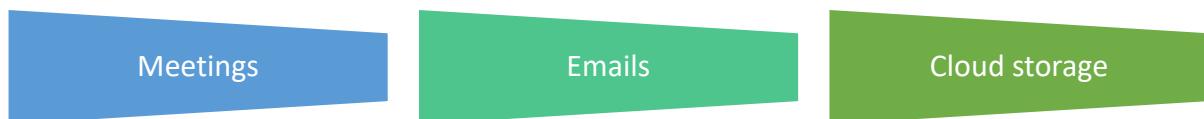
Aside from these stakeholders, your colleagues and supervisors can also aid you in ensuring support continues to meet the current and changing needs and preferences of your clients. Colleagues and supervisors can give you the constant support you need in the workplace. They can also provide you with recommendations, best practices, tips and advice that should help you out along the way.

Consider the table below for an example of roles stakeholders may have in the context of community participation and social inclusion:

Stakeholders	Role in Supporting Community and Social Inclusion	Role in Facilitating Community Participation and Social Inclusion
<b>Carer</b>	The carer works as the assistant of the client to keep them safe while doing tasks.	The carer works as the assistant of persons with disability in doing activities of daily living.
<b>Family</b>	The family serves as legal guardians who may decide for the client.	The family is a contributor to the individualised plan of the client, especially with the client's needs and preferences.
<b>Friends of the Client</b>	Friends serve as companions while doing activities related to community participation.	Friends from the client's social circle
<b>Colleagues</b>	Colleagues provide recommendations, best practices, tips and advice.	Colleagues ensure that the school/workplace of the client is conducive to activities related to community participation and social inclusion.

### 2.5.2 Seeking Feedback From Stakeholders

Listed below are some ways you can seek feedback from all stakeholders of the client's individualised plan:



- **Meetings**

Meetings are a great avenue to consult with the client and other stakeholders. In meetings, you can ask for feedback from all stakeholders regarding the strategy. A good meeting should provide a promising avenue for everyone to express themselves fully. This includes any questions, concerns or clarifications they may have. These can then be addressed without further delay.

Usually, meetings are done face-to-face. However, these can also be done through video conferencing, which requires using the internet.

Before the meeting, you may create a checklist of questions to ask as a guide for discussion. You can include the following questions:

#### For the client

- Did the strategies for community participation and inclusion meet your needs and preferences?
- What need or preference was not met by the strategies implemented?
- What do you think should be done to address the unmet need or preference?

#### For the other stakeholders

- Were there any issues regarding staff availability or resources needed?
- How do the issues impact the effectiveness of the strategies implemented?
- What are your observations of the client during the strategies implemented?
- What do you think should be done to address the client's unmet need or preference?

#### For your colleagues and supervisor

- What are your insights on what the client and other stakeholders have shared?
- What do you think should be done to address the client's unmet need or preference?



### Lotus Compassionate Care

Access and review Lotus Compassionate Care's forms for a meeting minutes template through the link below:

#### Forms and Templates

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- **Emails**

Emails are a great avenue to communicate with all stakeholders formally. Important files and documentation can be sent to the client and other stakeholders involved in their individualised plans.

Emails are also effective in storing information that everyone can refer to at any time, such as:

- Correspondence between you and all stakeholders
- Meeting minutes
- Updated information regarding the client's individualised plan

- **Cloud storage**

*Cloud storage* is an online-based computer model for quick storage and access to files and documents. Cloud storage allows you to store large-sized files or documentation. These include files such as images, videos, and other graphics. Moreover, all stakeholders can access the stored documentation at any time. This is done using the internet.

As you will be handling the client's personal information, you must know your organisation's guidelines on disclosure. These guidelines should contain the complete specifications of what you need to follow.

Once you have acquired the feedback from the stakeholders, you must process the feedback. Here are some ways you can process feedback effectively:

Pay attention to the critique

Ask questions if you need to

Do not take anything personally

Respond appropriately

Do a follow-through

- **Pay attention to the critique.**

This is especially important for face-to-face feedback. Actively listening to what the other person says shows that you truly care and that their voice matters to you.

- **Ask questions if you need to.**

There may be times when you do not understand or see the person's point providing the feedback. Asking clarifying questions saves you from misunderstanding. Also, it allows you to understand where the other person is coming from completely.

- **Do not take anything personally.**

Assume that feedback is always in good faith and that it is put out there with the sole purpose of seeking improvement and nothing else. This helps you avoid reacting negatively and feeling hurt.

- **Respond appropriately.**

Thank the person for the feedback. Then, you have the freedom to decide what you would like to do with the feedback. If you think it is valuable to your improvement as a support worker, you may heed the feedback. You can say something like, '*I understand and thank you for letting me know. I'll be sure to be more mindful of that next time.*'.

Otherwise, you can respond respectfully if you have concerns about the feedback. For example, if this is a request or demand you simply cannot give, talk to them and help them understand your reason. It could be something like, '*I totally understand where this is coming from. However, I want to explain...*' or '*I'd like to apologise if this has made you uncomfortable. Let me tell you why I had to do that...*'.

- **Do a follow-through.**

This may not be applicable all the time, but it is still worth mentioning. If there are action plans set to aid improvement, it is best to address them in follow-throughs. It reflects your commitment and your willingness to revamp your style of support.



## 2.5.3 Strategies to Address Negative Attitudes Expressed by Stakeholders Regarding Community Participation and Social Inclusion

Sometimes, a stakeholder may express negative attitudes towards the community participation and social inclusion of persons with disability. These negative attitudes may even present themselves as barriers to persons with disability, which is further discussed in Section 3.1.1 of this Learner Guide. They may also come from a place of fear that the person with disability may be discriminated against, made fun of or even hurt.

When a stakeholder displays a negative attitude, here are some strategies you may use to address it:



- **Find out the reason behind the negative attitude.**

The person concerned may have an underlying issue that causes the negative attitude.

You can:

- Observe the person during the strategies for community participation and social inclusion
- Set a meeting with the person to discuss why they have a negative reaction regarding the client's community participation and social inclusion

- **Focus on the behaviour of the person concerned when discussing the negative attitude.**

Keep your emotions in check. Do not use the discussion as a cover for judging or being critical of the person concerned. Judgement is only your opinion of the person's character and is not neutral. Make sure to pause and think about where the feedback is coming from and how positively the person can receive it.

- **Be specific and precise.**

Addressing the negative attitudes should be solution-oriented and to the point. Offering general and vague comments can leave the person confused about what they have to work on. Provide straightforward examples of the action in question.

- **Make conversations a two-way street.**

Take time to engage with the person concerned and check for their understanding. Let the person respond to what you said and allow them to ask follow-up questions. This shows your respect for the person's opinions. It can also clear any misunderstandings you might have about their attitudes.

Consider the table below for examples of how you can address the negative attitudes of a stakeholder in the client's individualised plan:

Stakeholders Who May Express Negative Attitudes	Negative Attitude That the Stakeholder May Express	Strategies to Address the Negative Attitude
<b>Carer</b>	Carers may see the client's life as something with less intrinsic value.	Have discussions on how to respectfully view, understand and work with persons with disability.
<b>Family</b>	Family may still use slurs or ableist remarks, such as 'retard', 'moron' or 'idiot'.	Correct the family members when they mention casual ableist remarks.
<b>Employer</b>	Employers may still have a stigma against persons with disability and have a negative view of someone because of a characteristic or disability they have.	Identify barriers that might lead to the client's poor performance, which could result in a negative perspective from the employer.
<b>Healthcare Worker</b>	Healthcare workers may be paternalistic and decide on a choice on behalf of the client instead of asking for the client's opinions.	Inform the client of the different options they have and their right to choose.

## Multimedia



This animated video below describes effective feedback, how it is used, and how it can encourage people to achieve their goals:

[Effective feedback animation](#)



## Checkpoint! Let's Review

1. Current needs and preferences refer to what has already been identified. These needs and preferences are already documented within the individualised plan.
2. Changing needs and preferences can include the following:
  - Changes in barriers
  - Changes in interest



## 2.6 Ensure Strategies Are Regularly Reviewed With the Person With Disability and Supervisor

As a support worker, you must regularly review the strategies for community participation and social inclusion being implemented. This is to know if it is good or not. You may think that a strategy will work great for your client. However, this may not actually work for them in the long run.

That is why it is important to ask your client and supervisor for their opinion on the strategies being implemented. It is also essential to ask for their opinion multiple times because it might change over time. You must also make your own observations to see if your client is doing well when interacting with others.

You will do all these to facilitate positive outcomes with regard to the client's community participation and social inclusion. *Positive outcomes* mean that your clients remain happy, comfortable and fulfilled when they are participating in their communities and social networks. These also mean continuous improvement in the quality of their life.

As such, you must regularly review the strategies to ensure that they:

-  Are in line with your organisation's policies and procedures
-  Meet the person's interests and goals
-  Meet the person's current needs and preferences
-  Are updated to meet any changed needs, interests or preferences

### Reviewing of Strategies for Community Participation and Social Inclusion

Here are some ways to regularly review strategies with your client and supervisor:

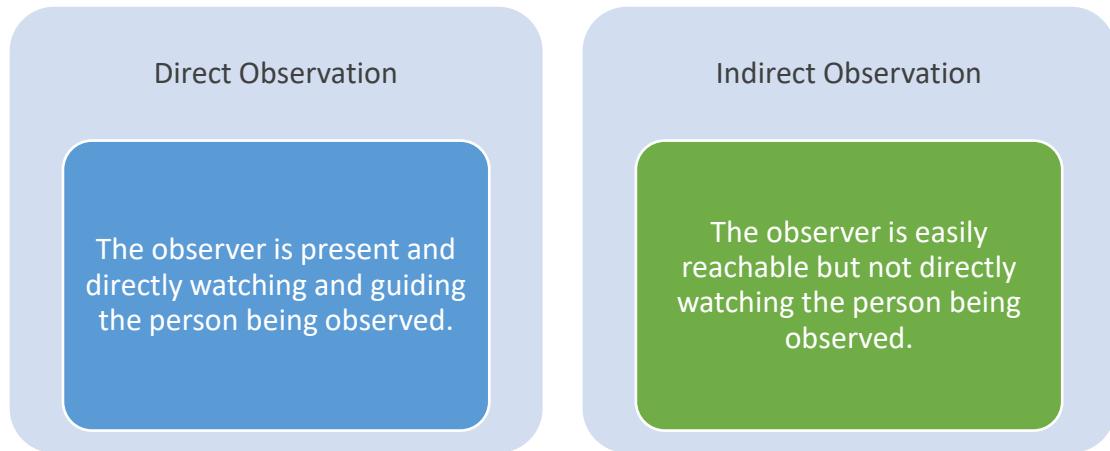
- **Self-evaluation**

*Self-evaluation* refers to the process where you observe and analyse your performance. This is to identify your strengths and areas for improvement when it comes to implementing the strategies. These areas of improvement refer to any skills or abilities you may lack and have room for growth. Examples of areas for improvement include experience, communication and reception to feedback. Data from self-evaluation can be obtained from feedback forms or surveys.

- **Observation**

When reviewing strategies, you may observe how they are implemented during the client's activities within their communities or social networks. Your supervisor may also observe how you implement the strategies and address any issues you may face during the implementation.

Listed below are the two types of observation:



Observation involves watching:

- How other support workers perform their tasks
- How other support workers interact with your clients
- How your clients interact with other people
- How other support workers or clients behave in specific situations

You can collect data from direct observation through tools, such as the following:

- Observational checklists
- Video and audio recordings
- Photographs
- Notes

- **Client feedback**

Your clients are the primary target of your service delivery. That is why their feedback should be sought when implementing strategies for community participation and social inclusion. Their feedback will be crucial in determining what strategies are effective and what should be changed. When seeking feedback from clients, you may have formal and informal interviews with them. You may also survey clients to ask them about the strategies being implemented.

In your questionnaire or interview, you may ask clients questions like the following:

How well were you supported during your activities within your community or social network?

Did your support workers communicate with you clearly?

Were you assisted by your support workers in understanding tasks or activities that you found challenging?

Were all the assistive technology you need available for your use?

Were you properly trained and assisted in using these assistive technology?

Your organisation may have their own policies and procedures for the strategies mentioned. For example, your organisation may have a policy on how you must complete data collection and provide clients with feedback and complaint forms. Make sure to review these policies and procedures to ensure your review is in line with your organisation's standards.

You must review the implemented strategies once you have identified that your client's requirements have changed. As you review, it would be best to be flexible and collaborate with your clients and supervisors. Additional best practices may be identified over time. You and your organisation must then remain flexible to make any changes necessary for client satisfaction. Doing so will aid you in identifying and ensuring the best form of treatment and support for your clients.



### Checkpoint! Let's Review

1. As a support worker, you must regularly review the strategies for community participation and social inclusion being implemented. This is to know if it is good or not.
2. Positive outcomes mean that your clients remain happy, comfortable, and fulfilled when they are participating in their communities and social networks. These also mean continuous improvement in the quality of their lives.

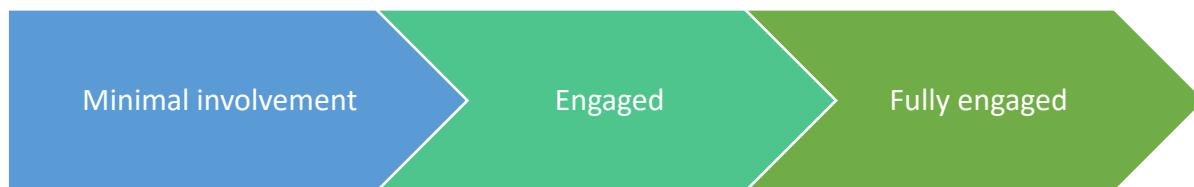
## 2.7 Monitor the Level of Engagement in Community and Social Networks of the Person With Disability

The *level of the person's engagement* refers to the extent the person with disability can commit to the community as well as to their social networks. As discussed in Subchapter 1.2, social networks that persons with disability can commit to including support groups, work groups, and community centres. Monitoring the level of the engagement of persons with disability is important for the following reasons:

- It reflects the level of appropriateness or enjoyment of the person with disability in the activity, which increases their participation in the community and social networks.
- It dictates the community participation's impact on the quality of life of the person with disability.

### The Levels of Engagement

The three levels of engagement are as follows:



#### 1. Minimal involvement

This means the person with disability has minimal involvement with the community and its members, including the social networks the person with disability is in. The relationship of the person with disability with the community is passive, which means it does not matter that much for the person with disability. The person with disability can stay at this level for the following reasons:

- The person with disability does not share interests with them.
- The person with disability had a negative experience with them and hence did not feel included.
- The person with disability does not have enough *time* and *opportunity* to participate.

All these can be addressed before providing recommendations to the person with disability. These are discussed in Subchapter 1.3, so be sure to consider them.

## 2. Engaged

At this level, the person with disability begins to actively navigate through the entirety of the community—who they are, what they are, and what they stand for. The person with disability also starts identifying with the community and slowly establishes meaningful relationships with others.

## 3. Fully engaged

Here, the person with disability forms deep connections among the members of the community, which often leads to the commitment of persons with disability to engage. The person with disability also becomes willing to sustain that commitment. This is mainly because they have already formed meaningful relationships with others.

Consider the case study below that fully illustrates the mentioned levels of engagement.

### Victoria Volunteering at the Community Kitchen

Victoria is a non-verbal college student. Despite her impairment, Victoria loves to meet different people and help them whenever she can. At the suggestion of the disability support worker in her college, Victoria decided to volunteer at the community kitchen that employs non-verbal people and people who know sign language. This allows her to meet other non-verbal people and provide support to those who need it.

During her first week of volunteering, Victoria felt very shy with the people around her. She timidly did the tasks that were assigned to her. These tasks were serving the food and cleaning the dishes. Victoria found it difficult to start conversations with her co-volunteers and the people she was serving, as she did not know sign language. She was more comfortable conversing with pen and paper. As such, she spent most of her time in the community kitchen by herself.

In her second week, Victoria started to feel more comfortable with the people around her. Her co-volunteers were also respectful of her individual space. They began teaching her sign language so that she would have an easier time conversing with others. With this, Victoria was able to build casual relationships with her co-volunteers and people who regularly came to the community kitchen. Victoria would listen to their life stories and share stories of her own. Whenever possible, Victoria is able to offer her help to those who need it in the soup kitchen. She was soon assigned to cook the meals to be served, something she had always wanted to do.

After a month of volunteering, Victoria is an active volunteer in the community kitchen. She became good friends with her co-volunteers and the regulars of the community kitchen. She also got better at conversing with sign language. Victoria is always present when her help is needed. She thinks being active is a good thing since she discovers that she enjoys cooking for others.



In this situation, the person with disability had minimal involvement with others as she found it difficult to begin conversations due to a barrier in communication. As she continued to volunteer at the community kitchen, she began to engage with those around her by learning how to converse in sign language. This allowed her to build meaningful relationships with others.

### 2.7.1 Monitoring the Level of Engagement of the Person With Disability

As a support worker, you must monitor your client's level of engagement. To do so, use the following strategies:

- **Observe the client during skill development activities** – As you aid the client during their activities, note your observations. These observations can include the following:

How well the client is interacting with others in the community

Whether the client is having a negative experience with others in the community

Whether the client has enough resources for their community participation

- **Ask relevant personnel for their observations** – There are community participation activities that you cannot be present in. As such, make sure to ask for the comments of those present. These can include supervisors, colleagues, the client's carers, and other staff.
- **Have informal conversations with the client** – You can directly ask the client what they like and dislike about the activities or programmes. This is needed to ensure that changes to be made in the plan suit their preferences. Make sure to ask the client in a casual tone for them to be comfortable in sharing their opinions.
- **Interview the client's family and friends** – You may also ask about the observations of the client's family and friends. They are most likely with the client after engaging with their community and social networks. You may conduct formal or informal interviews as long as they can share their observations.

## 2.7.2 Consulting With the Person With Disability and Supervisor

You must communicate with the client and your supervisor as you monitor their level of engagement. Doing so can confirm whether the client is fully engaging with their community and social networks. If there is miscommunication among those involved, it can hinder the client's progress. So, you must ensure that the client and your supervisor understand how well the client is engaging with others.



When consulting with your clients and supervisors on the level of engagement, consider the procedure below:

1. Review the strategies for community participation and social inclusion implemented for the client's individualised plan.
2. Ask the client and supervisor for their feedback on the strategies reviewed.
3. Ask the client about their experiences when engaging with their communities and social networks.
4. Share your insights on the client's level of engagement with their communities and social networks based on the experiences the clients shared.
5. Confirm the accuracy of your insights with the client and the supervisor.
6. Record what has been discussed in meeting notes. (Refer to Subchapter 2.5 for further discussion.)

## Checkpoint! Let's Review



1. The *level of the person's engagement* refers to the extent the person with disability can commit to the community as well as to their social networks.
2. You must communicate with the client and your supervisor as you monitor their level of engagement. Doing so can confirm whether the client is fully engaging with their community and social networks.



## Learning Activity for Chapter 2

Well done completing this chapter. You may now proceed to your **Learning Activity Booklet** (provided along with this Learner Guide) and complete the learning activities associated with this chapter.

Please coordinate with your trainer/training organisation for additional instructions and guidance in completing these practical activities.

## III. Identify, Address and Monitor Barriers to Community Participation and Social Inclusion

The previous chapters talked about opportunities and strategies to facilitate the community participation and social inclusion of persons with disability.

Now, to ensure that the person with disability can participate in the community, you identify and monitor barriers they may have. *Barriers* refer to the factors that stop persons with disability from community participation and social inclusion.



Barriers come in forms such as the following:

- Lack of access to persons with disability -inclusive stairways, building entrances, parking areas, etc.
- Limited access to training, employment and education

Identifying and addressing these barriers together with the person with disability ensure that their community participation is successful and sustainable.

In this chapter, you will learn how to:

- Identify barriers to community participation and social inclusion
- Identify and report gaps in assistive technology needs
- Identify solutions to overcome barriers
- Implement strategies to address barriers to community participation
- Identify need for advocacy in relation to the participation of the person with disability
- Monitor the effectiveness of strategies
- Identify own limitations in addressing issues and seek advice from supervisor

## 3.1 Identify Barriers to Community Participation and Social Inclusion

Recall the social model of disability as discussed in Section 1.1.1 of this Learner Guide. The model defines disability as the relationship between a person with an impairment and the barriers set by society. One of your responsibilities as a support worker is to identify the barriers to community participation and social inclusion. To do this, you must understand various concepts of barriers persons with disability may face.

### 3.1.1 Common Barriers Persons With Disability May Face

The following are common barriers that persons with disability may face:

- **Physical barriers** – These barriers are structural obstacles that can affect one's ability to move freely. These barriers are found in the person's environment. The following are examples of physical barriers:
  - Steps that prevent a person who uses a wheelchair from entering a building
  - Sidewalks or doorways that are too narrow for a wheelchair or walker
  - Doorknobs or containers that are difficult to grasp for a person with hand impairments
- **Systemic barriers** – These barriers are related to laws or policies that discriminate against persons with impairment. These contribute to the individual and emotional obstacles a person may experience. The following are examples of these barriers:
  - Denying qualified people the opportunity to benefit from federally funded programmes or services
  - Denying reasonable adjustments to qualified people



*Based on [Common Barriers to Participation Experienced by People with Disabilities](#). Source: CDC*

*Reference to specific commercial products, manufacturers, companies, or trademarks does not constitute its endorsement or recommendation by the U.S. Government, Department of Health and Human Services, or Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Material is otherwise available on the agency website for no charge.*

Aside from what has been mentioned, persons with disability may also encounter the following barriers to community participation and social inclusion:

- Personal barriers**
- Skill barriers**
- Structural barriers**
- Resource barriers**
- Psychological barriers**
- Stigma and self-stigma**
- Discrimination**

### **Personal Barriers**

A person's cultural background may affect their ability to take part in activities. For example, language barriers may make it hard for them to ask for the services they need. People from minority groups may feel nervous or afraid to join activities where they will stand out. Some cultures may not be very accepting of disabilities. This lack of acceptance will prevent persons with disability from getting their needed services. They may believe that they do not need help or that they just need to try harder.

Aside from their cultural background, a person may also experience barriers because of their family. A person's family is usually their first and biggest supporter. Yet, some families may still hold on to negative views about disabilities. A person with disability may have family members who tend to have the following characteristics:

- Do not have enough awareness about their disability**
- Do not believe in the disability or minimise its effect**
- Do not believe in using disability services**
- Do not have enough resources to afford disability services**

These characteristics can affect a person's access to services and activities for community participation. Preventing them from receiving the services they need seriously impacts their participation in their communities.

## Skill Barriers

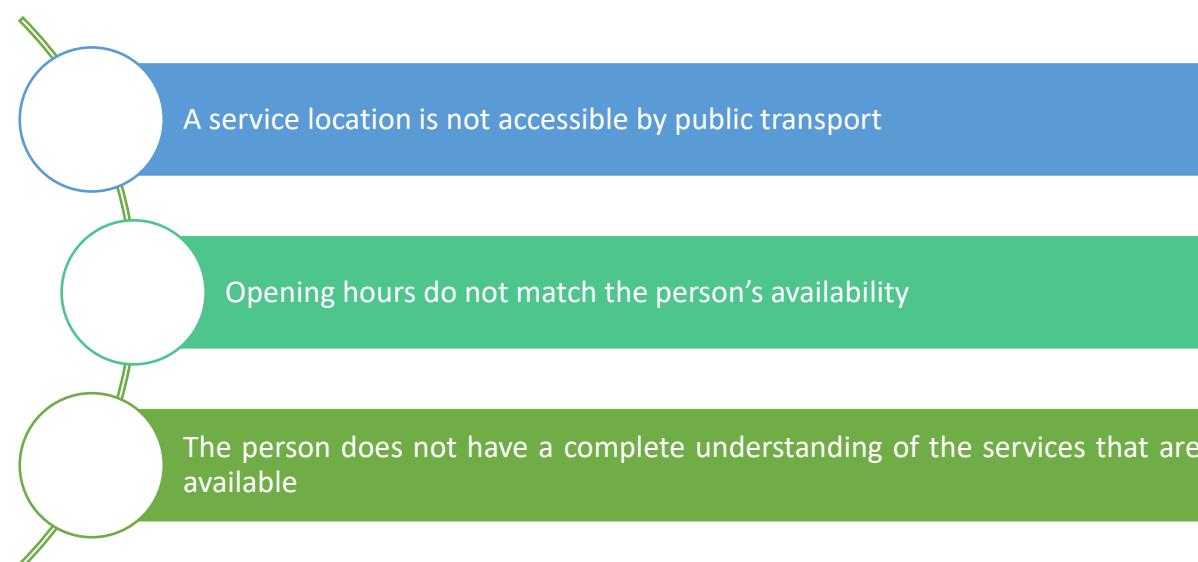
Persons with disability may be unsure about joining activities for several reasons. They may not have enough training opportunities to develop their skills because of the stigma against persons with disability. Having limited skills can restrict their opportunities to participate in other community activities. The person with disability may also feel outcasted from their peers who are able to get skills training opportunities.

Persons with disability may also fear being singled out or judged by other people due to their lack of skills. As a result, these fears may stop them from looking for or participating in their desired activities. Instead, they may choose to do solo activities or prefer to stay at home.

## Structural Barriers

Persons with disability are one of the minorities most vulnerable to structural barriers. For example, they may receive ineffective delivery from a healthcare programme due to a lack of accessible equipment.

Other structural barriers take place when:



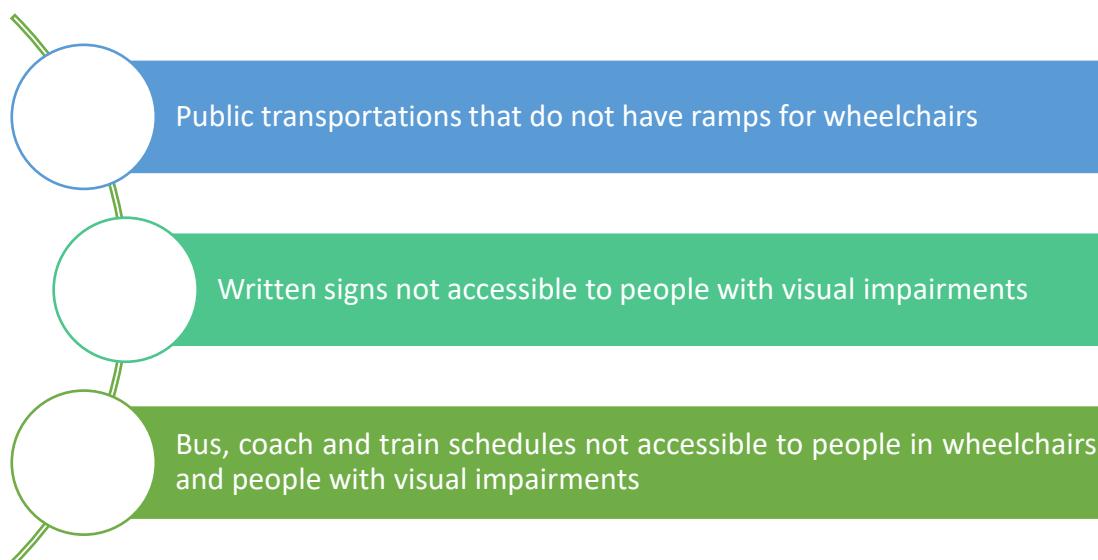
*Based on Enhancing family and relationship service accessibility and delivery to culturally and linguistically diverse families in Australia, used under CC BY 4.0. Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS) on behalf of the Commonwealth of Australia*

## Resource Barriers

Sometimes, there are simply no available resources that can meet your client's needs. Resources can be many things, such as communication and transportation resources.

Examples of lack of resources include the following:

- **Lack of communication resources**
  - Written signs are not accessible to people with visual impairments
  - Lack of sign language interpreters for people who are nonverbal or have hearing impairments
  - Lack of assistive technology for communication, such as devices with text-to-speech software installed
- **Lack of transportation resources**



### **Psychological Barriers**

*Psychological barrier* pertains to a mental state that may prevent a person from making the best decisions. Psychological obstacles also impact one's capacity for rational communication and interaction. Psychological barriers include personal perception, lack of self-confidence, low self-esteem, negative body image and the perception of others. These factors prevent many persons with disability from even considering taking part in activities such as physical activity and sports. In addition, persons with disability tend to be reluctant to try new things or be unable to tolerate typical frustration levels. They also may pretend they do not care, clown around, or become aggressive to cover up their lack of confidence.

Moreover, persons with disability who lacks confidence and self-belief may hinder themselves from performing to the best of their abilities and building relationships with other people, which can also affect their contribution to the community.

## Stigma and Self-Stigma

Persons with disability face the greatest obstacle to living ‘normal’ and productive lives: stigma. *Stigma* is labelling persons with disability in a harmful and discriminatory manner. Stigma arises when a person focuses on the person rather than focusing on their illness. For instance, they might be referred to as ‘psychotic’ instead of ‘a person experiencing psychosis’.

There are numerous causes of stigma. Some of these include the following:

- **Superstition**

These are some beliefs about what causes a condition, like the idea that mental illness or disability is a divine curse or that it happened in a previous life because of sin. For example, some societies consider persons with albinism evil, mysterious and incapable of doing things that other persons without albinism can do.

- **Lack of knowledge and misinformation**

Stigma arises from a lack of understanding, lack of education or misinformation about mental illness or other disabilities. For instance, since people have little knowledge about mental health issues, they might not understand that mental illness is a form of disability. Also, if a portion of the media relates mental illness with violence, this promotes the misconception that all persons living with mental illness are dangerous.



- **Tendency to fear and exclude people who are perceived as different**

This could be a fear of contracting an infectious (or perceived infectious) disease like leprosy, HIV/AIDS, or the majority of NTDs. Unpredictable situations might also cause fear, such as with persons with epilepsy.

Stereotyping, fear, embarrassment, rage and avoidant behaviours are all consequences of stigma. In addition to this, persons with disability may be presumed to be helpless and unable to make their own decisions. When people in the community see persons with disability as helpless individuals, who are unable to make their own decisions, persons with disability may feel shame for not being able to be included in decision-making processes in the community.

When a person internalises stigma and other negative attitudes toward them, they start believing in the negative stereotypes that have been prescribed to them. The self-esteem of persons with disability may be reduced due to internalising stigma. This results in *self-stigma*. With self-stigma, persons with disability may lose self-confidence, which can prevent them from contributing to community activities, and they may not include themselves anymore in social gatherings in the community.

Self-stigma is measured using four categories, including the following:

#### Alienation

- Persons with disability may feel embarrassed, inferior, or disappointed in themselves for being ill. They may think that their illness is their fault. They might also have the impression that other people cannot comprehend them.

#### Stereotype endorsement

- Persons with disability might put stereotypes about themselves, such as that they cannot live a good or fulfilling life, that they cannot do certain everyday things (like get married, work a steady job, help society, etc.), and that they cannot make their own decisions.

#### Discrimination experience

- Persons with disability may feel being discriminated against, ignored, or not taken seriously. They might think people would not want a relationship with them or feel like they cannot do much.

#### Social withdrawal

- Persons with disability might have felt like a burden, out of place, or inadequate, as well as a potential embarrassment to loved ones. Thus, they avoid socialising with people who do not have disabilities.

Some of the harmful effects of stigma and self-stigma include the following:

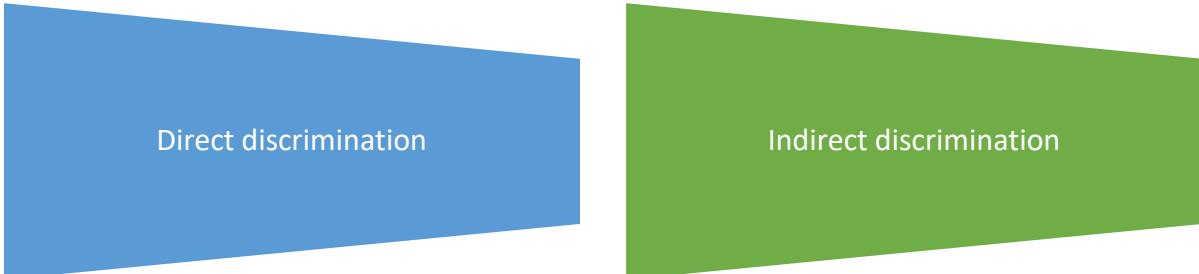
- Feelings of shame, hopelessness, and isolation
- Reluctance to ask for help or to get treatment
- Lack of understanding by family, friends, or others
- Fewer opportunities for employment or social interaction
- Bullying, physical violence or harassment
- Self-doubt, i.e. the belief that you will never overcome your illness or be able to achieve what you want in life

*Based on Stigma, discrimination and mental illness. ©State of Victoria 2021*

## Discrimination

It is common for persons with disability to experience *disability discrimination*. It happens when a person with disability is poorly treated or does not get the same opportunities as others in the same situation. It can also occur when an unreasonable policy or rule applies to everyone but unfairly affects people with a particular disability.

Disability discrimination can be as follows:



Direct discrimination

Indirect discrimination

- **Direct discrimination**

This happens when someone mistreats you due to your disability compared to others in a similar circumstance. For example, during an interview, a job applicant tells a potential employer that he has multiple sclerosis. Even though he is the best candidate they interviewed, the employer does not hire him because they think he will need a lot of sick time. Another example of direct discrimination is when a restaurant refused the entry of a person who is blind and has a guide dog.

- **Indirect discrimination**

Indirect discrimination happens when an organisation has a specific strategy or approach to working that worsens people with disability contrasted with those who are not. For instance, it could be indirect disability discrimination if the only way to enter a public building is by a set of stairs because persons who use wheelchairs would be unable to enter the building. Another example is implementing a policy about the limited use of an elevator. Employees with mobility impairment will not benefit from the newly implemented policy, and it will just hinder them from performing to the best of their abilities and receiving equal opportunities in the workplace.

*Based on Disability Discrimination, used under CC BY 4.0. © Australian Human Rights Commission 2017.*

Discrimination makes the person with disability confused and feel broken. Some may take alcohol or drugs or may form negative impressions of other people. Others even develop hatred for others or withdraw themselves from people. These may lead to losing their job, quitting, or doing poorly at school.

### 3.1.2 Recognising Barriers Clients Are Facing

Here are some strategies you can follow to recognise barriers your clients may face:

- **Review the individualised plan of the client.**

The individualised plan should outline the client's needs, interests, abilities and preferences. It should also contain social, religious and cultural beliefs. Make sure to review the client's individualised plan.

- **See if the client can physically access a service or amenity.**

This means checking if the client can independently get to and enter a place.

- **See if the environment of the client is accessible.**

This means checking if the space includes, but is not limited to, the following:

Enough space for any mobility aid the client may have

Enough light for clients with low vision

Easy-to-grasp doorknobs and other items for clients with arthritis

An accessible bathroom

- **Interview the client.**

Remember that the client is both the recipient and source of their service delivery. They know and understand their own experiences better than anyone. Make sure to ask the client what barriers they have experienced when socialising with others.

- **Interview the family, friends and carers of the client.**

These people can examine the barriers the client faces when socialising with others. As such, make sure to ask the client's family, friends and carers for their observations on what may impact the client's community participation and social inclusion.

#### Checkpoint! Let's Review



1. There are different barriers to community participation and social inclusion.
2. There are ways for you to recognise these barriers.

## 3.2 Identify and Report Gaps in Assistive Technology Needs



Recall the discussion of assistive technology in Subchapter 2.4 of this Learner Guide. Using assistive technology enables a person with disability to:

- Improve their independence by easing the decision-making process
- Take care of themselves and others despite their impairment
- Participate in their community fully by allowing them to work and volunteer independently

Assistive technology is vital in promoting and maintaining the independence of persons with disability in society. The technology either enables or eases the process for a person with disability to perform a task. It minimises the impact of their impairment and increases their safety. The scope and breadth of assistive technology for various tasks were further discussed in Section 2.4.1 of this Learner Guide.

Part of recognising the barriers to community participation your clients face is identifying gaps in their use of assistive technology. This identification must be made in consultation with persons with disability. *Gaps* refer to areas where assistive technology fails to meet the individual needs of a person with disability. These gaps must be reported according to your organisation's policies and procedures. Doing so ensures that your clients will have the optimal ability to live an independent life in their community.

Here are some examples of gaps in a client's use of assistive technology:

- **Lack of appropriate training for support staff to assist the client's use of assistive technology**

There are times when devices and equipment are prescribed to a client that their support staff may not be familiar with. This lack of familiarity may lead to instances where a staff member may not respond to the client. An example of this would be when the assistive device or equipment does not function as expected. An untrained support staff member would be unable to troubleshoot the issue with the client.

- **Lack of access to assistive technology**

This lack of access can include the following:

- Lack of financial assistance to acquire assistive devices or equipment
- Difficulty or inability to loan assistive devices or equipment
- Lack of space in their home or workplace to use the assistive device or equipment
- Lack of ongoing service support for assistive devices or equipment

- **Lack of adaptation to the client's changing needs**

As assistive technology is used to aid clients in their daily tasks, they must adapt to their changing needs and preferences. For example, a client with total vision loss uses a Braille keyboard for their work. They may decide that they would prefer to use speech-to-text software instead to increase their productivity.

When consulting with your clients to identify gaps in assistive technology, you may consider the following strategies:

- **Ask for feedback from the client.**

Know the answer to the following questions:

- Which of your current assistive devices and equipment do you need assistance with?
- What kind of assistance do you need with your assistive device or equipment?
- Do you think that your support staff will be able to assist you with your assistive device or equipment?
- Does the assistive device or equipment still address your needs? Are there any new needs that you have that the assistive device or equipment does not meet?



- **Observe the client.**

Note your observations of how your client interacts with the assistive technology.

These observations can include instances where:

- The client faces challenges in using their assistive device or equipment
- The carer or support worker is unable to assist the client in troubleshooting issues
- The client no longer wants to use the assistive device or equipment

- **Ask the client's family, carers and other relevant personnel for their observations.**

There are times that you cannot be present to assist the client with their assistive technology. As such, make sure to ask for the comments of those present. These can include the family and carers, and healthcare professionals. You may also consult with your supervisor and colleagues for their observations.

Once you have acquired enough information on the gaps in assistive technology, you must report these gaps accordingly. There may be some gaps that you may not be able to address as they are outside of your capabilities. For example, a client expresses that their hearing aids need troubleshooting. If you have no prior knowledge of this assistive device, you should report the concern to a technician. On the other hand, a client may request assistance in acquiring funding for their assistive technology. You may report this request to a social worker who can aid them in applying for programmes such as the NDIS.

### **3.2.1 Report Gaps in Assistive Technology According to Organisational Policies and Procedures**

Once you have identified gaps in the client's use of assistive technology, you should report these gaps. Reporting can be done in two ways:

Verbal report to supervisor

Written report for documentation

- **Verbal report to supervisor**

- Inform your supervisor about the gaps in assistive technology you have identified.
- Provide information about the factors that may have caused the gap in assistive technology.
- Consult with your supervisor about the steps that you can take to address the identified gap.

- **Written report for documentation**

- After reporting the identified gaps to your supervisor, document them in the client's records.
- Your report must include the following:
  - The gaps in the client's use of assistive technology
  - When you observed these gaps
  - How these changes affect the client and others around them
  - Factors that may have caused these changes
  - Steps taken to address the factors that caused the changes
- Save copies of your report according to organisational procedures.

As a support worker, you must be familiar with your organisation's policies and procedures for reporting. These include the following guidelines:

- **Style guide**

A style guide sets the standards to follow when completing written reports. The guide helps maintain a consistent style, voice and tone in all documents used. This consistency makes the documents easier to read by others. You need to keep this in mind, as other stakeholders will use their records for their care.

Style guides for reports may vary depending on the organisation you belong to. So, remember to check your organisation's style guide before you complete the written report regarding the identified gaps.

- **Records storage**

As a support worker, it is part of your responsibility to securely store all of your reports regarding the client within your organisation's database. These include reports regarding the gaps identified in assistive technology. This is to prevent unauthorised access, damage, destruction or loss of your client's information.



As with the style guide, requirements for storing your clients' documents depend on your organisation. Make sure to check these requirements once you have finished documenting your findings.

- **Privacy and confidentiality**

Persons with disability have the right to decide what information others can know and what should be kept confidential. As you will be handling your clients' information, you must ensure that they remain confidential. All reports should be free of information that are not relevant for the organisation to use. As such, you must remember to adhere to your organisation's privacy policy when completing your reports.

- **Organisational chart**

An organisational chart refers to the structure of an organisation. This chart tells you to whom you will report within your workplace. It also helps you define your role and identify who is supposed to supervise you. Organisational charts differ between organisations. As such, make sure to refer to your organisation's workplace chart. These usually include the steps for reporting to your supervisors.



### **Lotus Compassionate Care**

Access and review Lotus Compassionate Care Handbook for the policies and procedures for reporting and notification through the link below:

[Lotus Compassionate Care Handbook](#)

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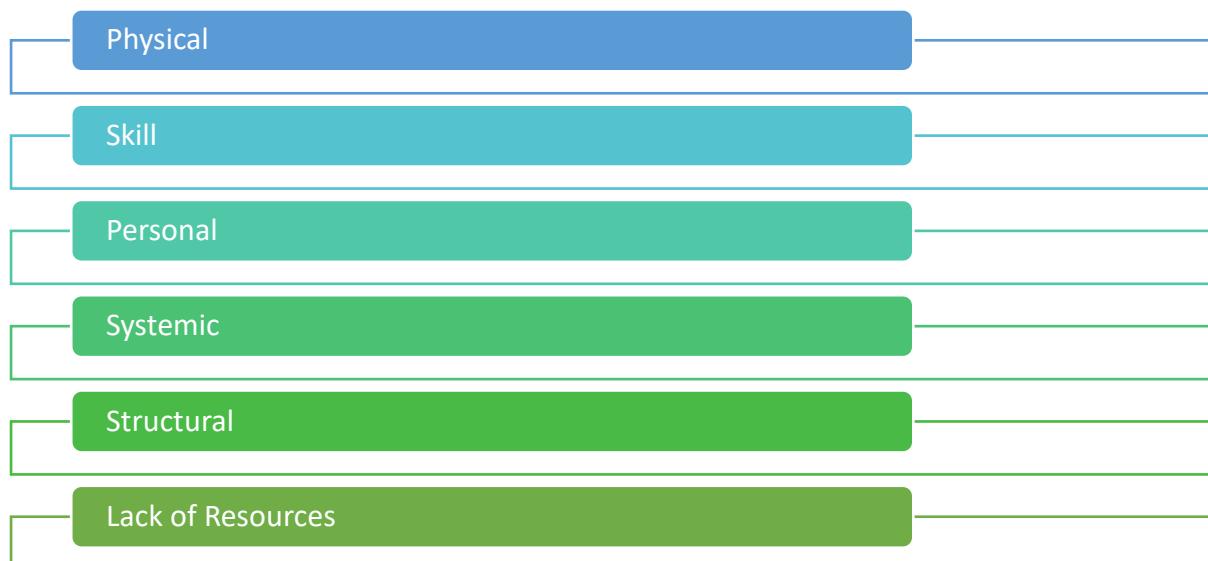
### **Checkpoint! Let's Review**

1. Examples of gaps in a client's use of assistive technology include the following:
  - Lack of appropriate training for support staff to assist the client's use of assistive technology
  - Lack of access to assistive technology
  - Lack of adaptation to the client's changing needs
2. There may be some gaps that you may not be able to address as they are outside of your capabilities. Therefore, you must report these gaps once you have acquired enough information from the client.

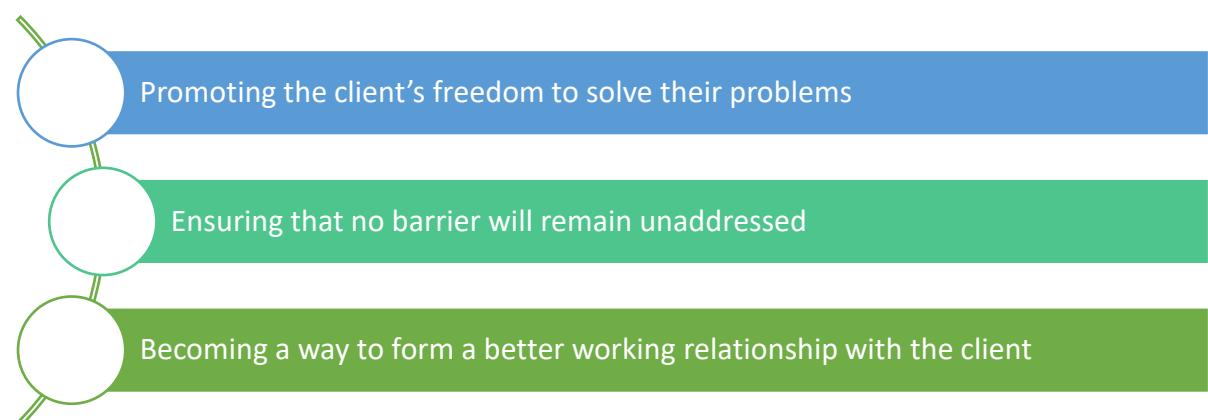
### 3.3 Identify Solutions to Overcome Barriers

Recall the principles of person-centred practices as discussed in Section 1.1.2 of this Learner Guide. A person-centred approach requires collaboration between you, the person with disability and your organisation (specifically your supervisor). You all work towards the same goal: for the person with disability to participate in the community freely and for the person with disability to feel socially included.

In achieving this, you must reduce or try to remove barriers that may come along the way. In Subchapter 3.1, you have identified the possible barriers to the community participation and social inclusion of persons with disability. As discussed, these barriers could be any of the following:



As a support worker, you must collaborate with your clients to identify solutions to overcome their identified barriers. Collaborating with clients brings many advantages, such as:



### 3.3.1 Collaborating With the Person With Disability to Find Solutions

*Collaboration* means working with another person with disability or group to achieve a goal. *Effective collaboration* simply means achieving the goals set by the collaborating teams. In this context, your goal in collaborating with your clients is to come up with solutions to overcome their identified barriers.

Here are some strategies to identify solutions in collaboration with your clients:

- **Review the client's individualised plan.**

Evaluating what works and does not work well helps identify solutions to overcome the identified barriers.

These solutions may include the following:

Ways to strengthen community participation and social inclusion strategies currently in place

Changes in the strategies that are not working for your clients

- **Assess the reasonable adjustments.**

Recall the social model of disability as discussed in Section 1.1.1 of this Learner Guide. In summary, the social model states that disabilities are not borne as a result of physical conditions. Instead, biological and medical conditions only contribute towards the creation of impairments. Disabilities are caused by barriers, attitudes, and exclusive practices by society. A person with disability is only disabled if the community chooses to exclude them and withhold assistance.

Under the CRPD, persons with disability are entitled to reasonable adjustments to participate in their communities on the same basis as others. This means ensuring that there are adjustments made to aid the person with disability in overcoming barriers to their participation.

An adjustment is reasonable if it:

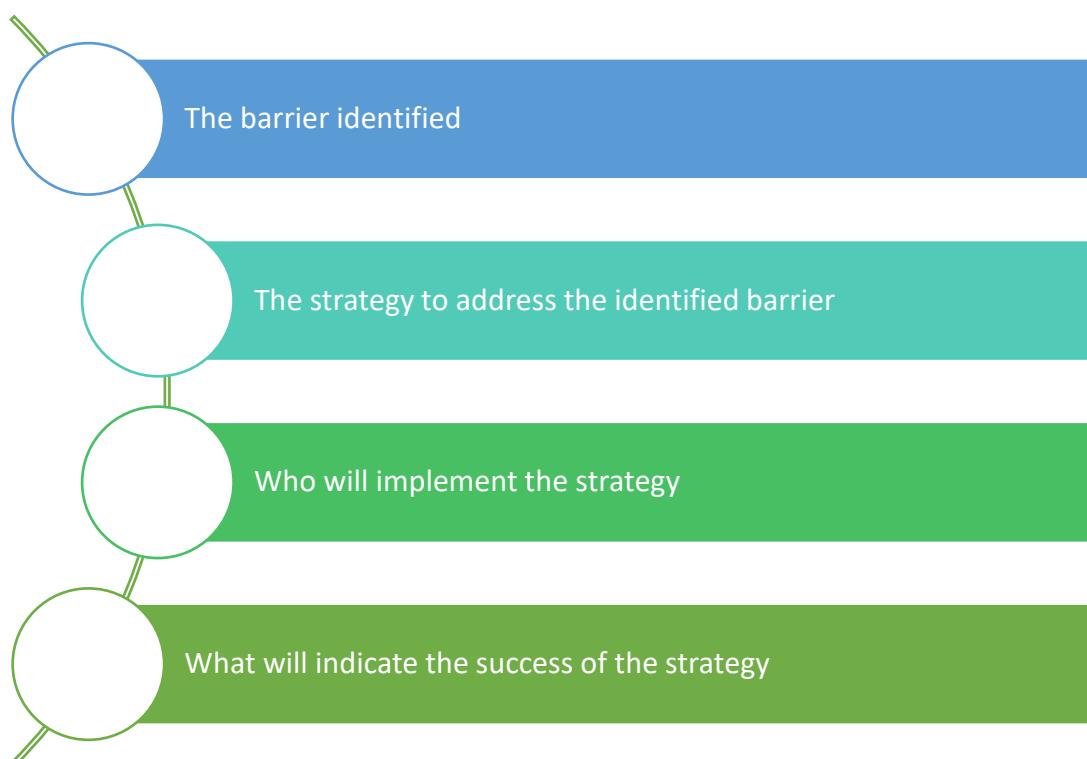
- Supports the person with disability to participate in skills development on the same basis as other people
- Takes the needs of the person with disability into account
- Balances the interest, including safety, of all parties (e.g. the person with disability, staff members and others)

*Based on content from What's reasonable?, used under CC BY 4.0. Education Services Australia Ltd*

- **Make an action plan.**

Finally, there must be an action plan. The action plan should contain strategies to resolve the barriers keeping the person with disability from being in the community. Collaborating with the person with disability on making an action plan helps identify the most beneficial solutions for the person with disability.

The action plan may include the following:



Your action plan to overcome barriers could then look like this:

Action Plan			
Barrier Identified	Action Taken	Who Will Implement	Achievement Milestones

The case study on the next page demonstrates how you can collaborate with your clients to identify solutions to overcome barriers.

## Ryan's Efforts to Overcome PTSD

Ryan is a 42-year-old man who has had PTSD ever since a tragic car accident that left him extremely injured. Due to his PTSD, he often suffers from sensory overload. This has resulted in him struggling when going about his daily routine, especially when he has to go outside and do errands. He has also stopped interacting with anyone except for close family and friends.

Max is the support worker tasked to help Ryan with his community participation and social inclusion. For the sake of improving Ryan's participation, Max needs to determine the various existing barriers that give Ryan a hard time so they can solve them together. To do this, Max would usually observe Ryan while he is on his daily routine so Max could determine immediately present barriers and note them down. Through observations, he noticed the following:

- Ryan has a hard time going outside because multiple sounds and noises in his surroundings make him feel overwhelmed.
- He avoids places with a lot of people because they make him feel claustrophobic, and the noise makes him anxious.
- He refuses to go to small or cramped rooms because of his claustrophobia.



Max also sits with Ryan to discuss other barriers he is facing. Max uses a set of questions to help Ryan identify and explain these barriers. After that, he records all answers in a secure document.

Max also discovers that Ryan has experienced a few grocery stores asking him to leave after he either snapped at another customer for being too noisy or because he looked suspicious for blanking out and standing in one spot for too long.

Ryan has stopped interacting with his neighbours and meeting new people since he always feels irritated, and this has caused him to lack social exposure for months. He is also struggling to interact with his two children, who are 11 and eight years old, because of how noisy and hyperactive they usually are.

He also mentions that he used to be an office worker, but he had to take a break because the facilities felt uncomfortable and the background noises (keyboard and mouse clicking, co-workers talking, chairs moving, etc.) made him anxious. He also had trouble sleeping, which kept him from coming to work on time on many occasions.

After gathering these pieces of information, Max and Ryan talk about solutions they can immediately think of. Max consults with Ryan about therapy and getting assistive devices such as noise-cancelling headphones.

Ryan is worried about costs, so Max notes down that he has to take the budget into consideration when accessing these solutions.

After their brainstorming, Max also approaches his co-workers, connections, and PTSD experts to ask for advice on Ryan's condition. He notes down all details in an action plan and asks Ryan for his opinions on each piece of advice. After getting Ryan's approval, Max proceeds to help him implement these solutions.

The case study shows how the support worker identifies solutions to overcome barriers by collaborating with the client. After identifying the barriers, the support worker discusses with the client solutions they could immediately think of. During this discussion, the support worker ensures that the solutions are accessible to the client. The support worker also takes note of the solutions considered in an action plan.



### Lotus Compassionate Care

Access and review Lotus Compassionate Care's forms for an action plan template through the link below:

[Forms and Templates](#)

(username: newusername password: new password)



### Checkpoint! Let's Review

1. As a support worker, you must collaborate with your clients to identify solutions to overcome their identified barriers. Collaborating with clients brings many advantages, such as:
  - Promoting the client's freedom to solve their problems
  - Ensuring that no barrier will remain unaddressed
  - Becoming a way to form a better working relationship with the client
2. Effective collaboration means achieving the goals set by the collaborating teams. In this context, your goal in collaborating with your clients is to come up with solutions to overcome their identified barriers.

## 3.4 Implement Strategies to Address Barriers to Community Participation

As a support worker, you must treat persons with disability with compassion, dignity and respect. This means that you must support the person with disability in a way that:

Respects the person to increase their self-worth

Motivates the person to achieve their goals

Empowers the person to improve their lives

You must know how to respect, motivate and empower as they implement strategies to address barriers to community participation. Not doing so will severely limit the quality of support you can provide to them. It will also make your job more difficult. This is because you will be caring for someone who lacks the initiative to help themselves. Additionally, not providing respect, motivation and empowerment can affect your relationship with the people under your care.

### 3.4.1 Respecting the Person With Disability to Increase Their Self-Worth

*Respect* refers to believing that a person with disability is valued. This involves providing support that recognises the individuality and preferences of the person with disability. Respectfully interacting with the person with disability can increase their self-worth. This leads to the person with disability being positively seen by those around them.

As a support worker, you must respect the person with disability by building their feelings of trust, safety and wellbeing. When the person with disability feels that they are safe and well-valued, they can express themselves more.

To respectfully implement strategies to overcome barriers to community participation, you must be able to do the following:

- **Treat the client as you would anyone else.**

Interact with the client as you would with anyone else while making reasonable accommodations.

- **Use people-first language.**

Always use positive language that identifies the client as a person first. An example would be calling a client ‘a person who needs mobility assistance’ instead of ‘crippled’.

- **Do not make assumptions for the client.**

Always ask the client if they need or want your help before assisting them. Be polite and patient when offering assistance and wait for a response. If they accept your offer for help, listen or ask for specific instructions. However, be prepared for your suggestion to be refused even if it looks like the client is struggling.

- **Avoid patronising the client.**

Persons with disability are not victims or incompetent to handle their care. When interacting with the person with disability, avoid using baby talk or treating them as though they are children.

- **Support the client's choices and decisions.**

Do not tell the client what to do. Provide them with every option you would provide those without impairments. If the opportunity they choose presents a challenge concerning their impairment, make sure to discuss ways to modify or adapt their choice.

### **3.4.2 Motivating the Person With Disability to Achieve Their Goals**

*Motivation* is an essential aspect of the wellbeing of persons with disability. Motivation allows a person with disability to engage in activities and become receptive to strategies. These strategies are designed to assist them in overcoming barriers to participating in their communities fully.

There are two kinds of motivation. These are the following:

#### **Internal motivation**

- Satisfaction of applying oneself is enough to encourage a person to accomplish their goals
- Determined by the values and goals of the person

#### **External motivation**

- External rewards such as praise and approval are used as motivators
- Determined by the values and goals of others (e.g. family, friends, caregivers, etc.)

To implement strategies that motivate clients to overcome barriers to community participation, you must be able to do the following:

- **Determine what motivates the client.**

Figuring out what kind of motivation the client has can inform how you implement the strategies to overcome barriers.

- **If the client has an internal motivation, you can help maintain their cause by:**

- Making sure that they enjoy the activities within their communities and social networks

- Reducing any activities they seem to dislike

- **If the client has an external motivation, ensure that:**

- You give them positive reinforcement such as verbal praise or any type of rewards system

- They have positive social feedback, with their peers recognising their strengths and abilities

- **Foster a growth mindset.**

A growth mindset means that client can improve their abilities through hard work. Encouraging the client to see struggles as necessary parts of growth can motivate them not to shy away from challenges. Instead of praising their abilities, you must praise their efforts. For example, saying '*I can tell you have been practising your reading*' is better than '*You are an incredible reader*'.

- **Develop meaningful relationships with the client.**

To truly motivate the client, you should know them personally. Understanding their interests, hobbies, fears, and what gets them excited will help you determine what strategies might work to overcome their barriers to community participation and social inclusion.



### 3.4.3 Empowering the Person With Disability to Improve Their Lives

*Empowering* means giving the person with disability the power to control their lives. It involves investing valuable time, effort and resources to become stronger and more confident. When empowered, the person with disability will require significantly less assistance. This is because they will be more willing to take the initiative to improve their lives.

As a support worker, you must ensure that the clients can exercise their independence when interacting with their communities and social networks. To do this, you may follow the principles of the human rights framework. Doing so will help improve the confidence and independence of persons with disability.

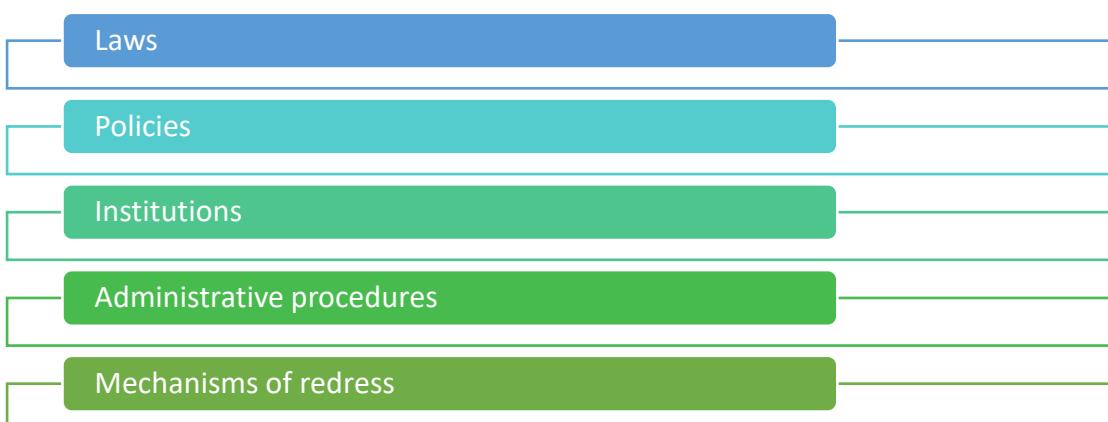
#### The Principles of a Human Rights-Based Approach

A *human rights-based approach* turns human rights into actual policies and practices. It transcends the ‘what’ of human rights and focuses more on the ‘how’. The approach mainly uses human rights as a basis for overcoming barriers to community participation and social inclusion.

The approach has five common principles. These are the following:

- **Participation** – A human rights-based approach means that everyone has to take part in decisions that affect their human rights. Participation must give attention to issues of accessibility. These issues include the lack of access to information in an easily understandable form and language.
- **Accountability** – A human rights-based approach requires effective monitoring of compliance with the following:
  - Human rights standards
  - Achievement of human rights goals
  - Effective remedies for breaches of human rights

For effective monitoring of compliance, the following must be appropriately in place:



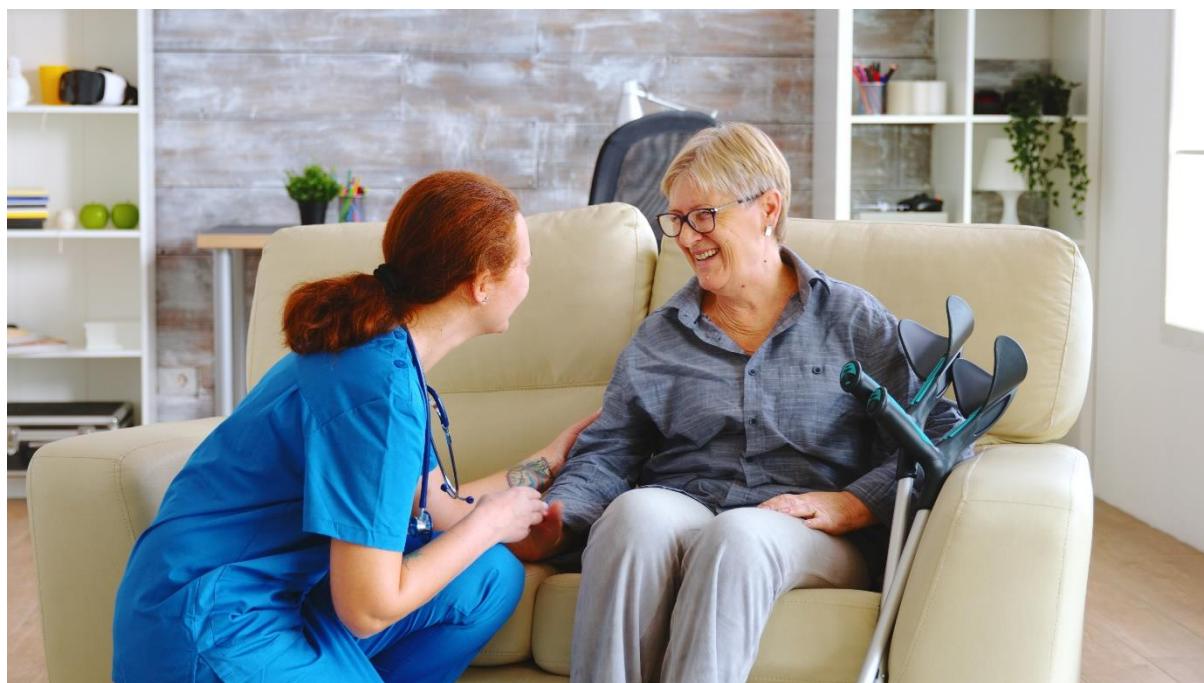
- **Non-discrimination and equality** – A human rights-based approach must prevent discrimination. Priority should be given to marginalised communities. Marginalised communities are groups of people who are excluded due to age, race, disability and more. Due to this exclusion, these communities face the biggest barriers when realising their rights.
- **Empowerment** – A human rights-based approach means that everyone is entitled to exercise their rights. Individuals and communities must be able to understand their rights and freedoms. Doing so will allow them to take part in the development of policies and practices that may affect their lives.
- **Legality** – A human rights-based approach requires the law to:
  - Recognise and enforce human rights and freedoms
  - Be consistent with human rights principles



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As you use the human rights-based approach, always be mindful of a client's needs and behaviours. Doing so will aid you in looking for signs that they are not fully aware of their rights. Listen to their stories and see how they interact with others to look for cues that they need assistance with when interacting with others.



## Social and Emotional Wellbeing Framework

Social emotions are your emotions that depend upon the thoughts, feelings, or actions of other people, for example, embarrassment, grief, shame, jealousy, envy, empathy and pride. It affects your social and emotional wellbeing or your emotional interconnectedness with others. It includes understanding how your actions affect your family, friends, and communities. It contributes to your ability to develop meaningful and lasting friendships and partnerships. It gives you a sense of authenticity, worth, connection, and belongingness.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), social and emotional wellbeing are closely related to the concept of mental health. A person with stable mental health has the capacity to do the following:

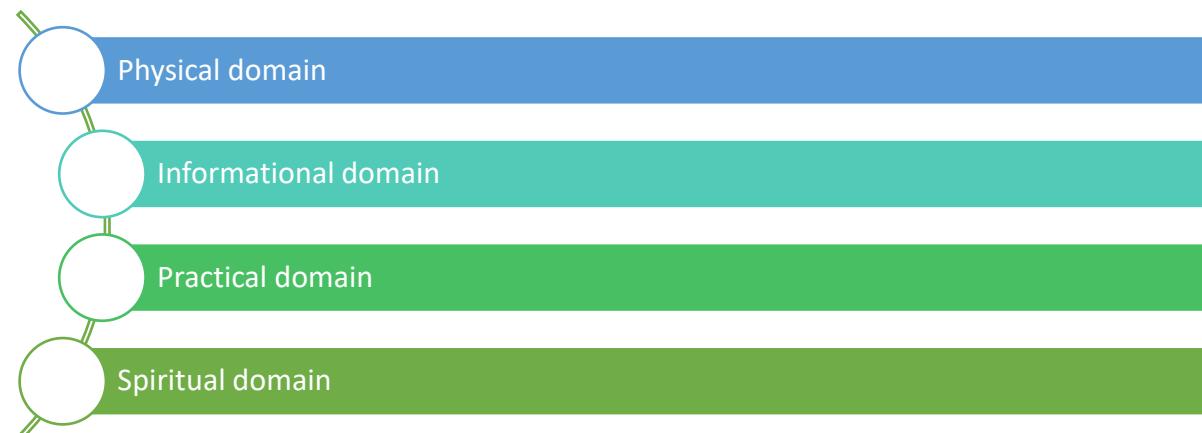
Can realise own abilities

Can cope with the everyday stresses of life

Can work productively

Can contribute to the community

A person with disability achieves good mental, social and emotional wellbeing when their needs relevant to building relationships and emotional fulfilment are met and when distress arising from unmet needs in other domains are minimised. The other domains include the following:



These domains may be affected by different types of disability, which may include the following:

Intellectual

Physical

Acquired brain injury

Neurological

Dual sensory

Vision

Hearing

Speech

Psychiatric

Developmental delay

- **Intellectual** – These are conditions that appear during the developmental period. When compared to others of the same age, persons with this disability have decreased mental functions. They also have difficulties learning and performing certain daily life skills and have limitations in adaptive skills in community environments.
- **Physical** – These are conditions that affect the ability to perform physical activities. Physical disability often includes impairments of the neuromusculoskeletal systems, including the effects of muscular dystrophy, neuromuscular disorders, paraplegia, quadriplegia, absence or deformities of limbs, arthritis and back disorders.
- **Acquired brain injury** – These different disabilities brought on by brain damage acquired after birth. The result is diminished cognitive, physical, emotional, and independent functioning. It may be a result of stroke, brain tumours, infection, poisoning, or degenerative neurological disorder.
- **Neurological** – These are impairments of the nervous system that occur after birth, for example, epilepsy, Alzheimer's disease and Parkinson's disease.
- **Dual sensory** – This is a dual sensory impairment that results in difficulty in communication and participation in community life. An example is being deafblind.

- **Vision** – These are vision impairments and blindness that can cause severe restrictions in mobility, communication, and the ability to participate in community life.
- **Hearing** – This is hearing impairment and deafness.
- **Speech** – This is speech impairment or speech loss.
- **Psychiatric** – This includes recognisable symptoms and behaviour patterns frequently associated with distress, which may impair personal functioning in normal social activity.
- **Developmental delay** – This applies to children aged 0 to 5 where conditions have appeared in the early developmental period, but no specific diagnosis has been made, and the specific disability is not yet known.

These categorisations of disabilities are influenced by the following factors:

- **Underlying health conditions** –Also known as chronic diseases, these are medical conditions that interfere with your daily life. It requires long-term and continuous medical attention. When you have an underlying health condition, you may feel constant worries, frustrations and stress when dealing with pain and treatments.
- **Impairments** – These are the disabilities that affect your physical and cognitive functions. It includes loss of vision, speech, limb or memory. When you have an impairment, you may feel that you do not belong to the community and may see yourself as less of a person.
- **Activity limitations** – When you have a disability, there are things that you will not be able to do. Due to the limitations that your disability will bring, you may experience difficulty doing daily activities, which can later lead to dependency. You may even think that you are causing a burden to other people.
- **Restrictions on participation** – Persons with disability may have participation restrictions. When you are a person with disability, engaging in the following may be more challenging for you:



When you are denied opportunities to participate, It may feel that you are not included, which can lead to developing low self-esteem.

Your client's social and emotional wellbeing is essential. It promotes the social and emotional relationships between them, their families and their community. The ability to develop skills that will help persons with disability cope with stressors can be dependent on these connections. When these connections are disrupted, it can lead to difficulties in developing skills because their self-perception of their abilities is affected.

When your client develops a sense of belonging to the community and the ability to handle their own emotions, they can build confidence and higher self-esteem. When this happens, they can set specific goals and engage in more activities to develop their skills.

Aside from empowering your client by upholding their rights, you can also promote the quality of their life by presenting them with social and emotional wellbeing frameworks. These frameworks include policies or strategies that aim to create an inclusive community. Here are some examples of these frameworks:

- Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031
- Disability Gateway
- Psychosocial Recovery-Oriented Framework

### **Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031**

This provides policies for the overall wellbeing of a person with disability. These policies aim to promote the different aspects of their life. It includes the following:

Employment and financial security

Inclusive homes and communities

Safety, rights and justice

Personal and community support

Education and learning

Health and wellbeing

Community attitudes

This discussion will focus on relevant policies that can help promote your client's social and emotional wellbeing, which are the following:

- Personal and community support
- Health and wellbeing

- **Personal and community support**



The policies under personal and community support aim to enable persons with disability to have access to a range of supports to assist them in living independently and engaging in their communities. Here are the policies:

- **Persons with disability are able to access support that meets their needs.**

Like all Australians, persons with disability need access to personal and community support. This includes both disability services and mainstream services. Mainstream services such as relationship or financial counselling, parenting support and crisis services. They all need to be universally available and accessible to all people in the community, including persons with disability.
- **The NDIS provides eligible persons with permanent and significant disability with access to reasonable and necessary disability support.**

As a world-first approach to providing disability support, the NDIS enables people with disability to receive the reasonable and necessary package of flexible support that help people pursue their goals and aspirations. In putting people at the centre of NDIS decision-making, persons with disability can exercise choice and control as they seek to live an ordinary life like any other member of the Australian community.

- **The role of informal support is acknowledged and supported.**

The informal support provided by parents, siblings, kinship guardians, other family members and friends is vitally important to persons with disability. In addition to providing practical and emotional support, they can also represent the interests and rights of the person they support. The informal support provided by voluntary organisations is also essential to enriching the lives of persons with disability. Acknowledging and supporting individuals and organisations that provide informal care and support can increase the participation of persons with disability in community life.

- **Persons with disability are supported to access assistive technology.**

Assistive technology is any device or system people use to make tasks easier. Most people use assistive technology in their daily lives, such as smartphones or remote controls. Assistive technology also includes grab rails, hoists, wheelchairs, hearing aids, text captioning services, home modifications, digital assistive technology, prosthetics and devices to support memory. For persons with disability, assistive technology supports inclusion, participation, communication and engagement in family, community and all areas of society, including political, economic and social spheres.



- **Health and wellbeing**



The policies under health and wellbeing aim to enable persons with disability to attain the highest possible health and wellbeing outcomes throughout their lives. The policies include the following:

- **All health service providers have the capabilities to meet the needs of persons with disability.**

Persons with disability experience poorer health and wellbeing than those persons without disability. It can result from inadequate access to health care or substandard care provided by health care workers. It can be prevented by promoting access to health services, the appropriateness of equipment, training or facilities; the operation of health systems and processes and personnel and provider attitudes.

- **Prevention and early intervention health services are timely, comprehensive, appropriate and effective in supporting better overall health and wellbeing.**

Prevention and early intervention health services are important to lifelong health and wellbeing. Persons with disability continue to experience preventable health conditions and comorbidities at higher rates than persons without disability. This places persons with disability at a significantly higher risk of adverse health outcomes. Better outcomes are achieved for persons with disability when health providers understand their individual situation and circumstances, communicate well, do not allow disability to overshadow health issues, and provide services, premises and facilities that are accessible and appropriate.

- **Mental health supports and services are appropriate, effective and accessible for persons with disability.**



Mental health is a major factor in the ability to live a productive and fulfilling life. Persons with disability who have adequate mental health support can develop skills with the self-awareness to their own strengths.

An inclusive society and improving all outcomes for people with disability will help improve the mental health and general wellbeing of persons with disability. Here are the things that must be promoted for an inclusive society:

- Persons with disability-accessible community facilities
- Social and community engagement
- Education
- Employment and housing outcomes
- Accessible mental health support and services
- **Disaster preparedness, risk management plans and public emergency responses are inclusive of persons with disability and support their physical and mental health and wellbeing.**

The needs of persons with disability should be catered for in disaster risk management plans and public emergency responses in order to protect their mental and physical health and wellbeing.

Before, during and after emergencies, persons with disability may require targeted and accessible information and communication. They may also require additional assistance to plan and prepare for an emergency, additional assistance and appropriate support in the event of an evacuation or physical isolation, and support through the recovery process.

Organisations responsible for emergency management should also work with those responsible for urban planning and design to understand where persons with disability are at greater risk of harm during disasters and how these risks can be reduced.

Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031 sets out a plan to change the lives of persons with disability over ten years. Here are the following documents that you can access to understand better how the NDIA is planning to achieve their goals and principles:

Document	Description
Employment Targeted Action Plan	This action plan sets out key actions to improve paid employment outcomes for persons with disability.
Community attitudes Targeted Action Plan	The Community attitudes Targeted Action Plan sets out key actions to improve community attitudes towards persons with disability to influence behaviour.
Early childhood Targeted Action Plan	This action plan focuses on children from infancy to school age with disability or developmental concerns, their families and carers. It sets out key actions to strengthen early identification, information, support and pathways, as well as collaboration between programmes and services, all of which contribute to the development and wellbeing of children to help them thrive across and between life stages.
Safety Targeted Action Plan	This action plan sets out the key actions to strengthen system design and supports to enable persons with disability to receive high-quality and safe services.
Emergency management Targeted Action Plan	This action plan sets out key actions to make real progress on improving the outcomes of persons with disability affected by national emergencies.

Document	Description
<b>Reporting on Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031</b>	These high-level reports will show how the Targeted Action Plans are working, including what actions have occurred, what successes there have been, and the overall status. These reports are made after each financial year and will be published by October.
<b>Roadmap – Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031</b>	The roadmap gives an overview of the key work being done under the Strategy and shows when these will happen. It shows the timeline for the whole strategy.
<b>The Strategy and supporting documents</b>	This is a key part of the Strategy as it tracks, reports and measures the outcomes for persons with disability across all seven Outcome Areas of the Strategy. This will drive change and improvement for people with disability. It will also help us to see if the lives of persons with disability are improving over time.
<b>Engagement plan</b>	This outlines the ways persons with disability will be involved in the implementation of Australia's Disability Strategy. The features of the Engagement Plan will give persons with disability ways to influence the future direction of the policies and services that impact their lives.

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## Disability Gateway

This assists all persons with disability, their families and carers to locate and access services across Australia. Their services include providing information, support and access to the following:

Income and finance

Employment

Aids and equipment

Housing

Transport

Health and wellbeing

Everyday living

Education

Leisure

Rights and legal

This discussion will focus on the strategies that can help promote your client's social wellbeing, which is the following:

Employment

Aids and equipment

Transport

Leisure

- **Employment** – This is your source of income. It enables you to enjoy hobbies and activities that will help improve your social wellbeing. Aside from that, you can also connect with your co-workers since you can relate to each other's hardships and fulfilment from your careers. To help you develop the abilities and confidence necessary to find and keep a job, there are supports and services available. It can assist you in doing meaningful work that suits your strengths and abilities. Here are the employment services that you can access through the Disability Gateway:

- Employment training
- Finding and keeping a job
- Your employment rights

- **Aids and equipment** – Aids and equipment can help you with daily living. Including wheelchairs, scooters, hearing or vision aids, healthcare equipment, service animals and items to help you communicate better are all examples. The Disability Gateway provides links and information on the following:



- **Transport** – This is important in having a social life. Healthy social wellbeing may require activities that warrant travelling to a different place. It can be tough getting around if your mobility is limited in any way. There are several options for you to help you get to where you need to go. The Australian and state and territory governments subsidise some transport options. It includes the following:
  - Public transport discounts
  - Taxis and rideshare services
  - Community transport
  - Driver's licence and disability parking permit
- **Leisure** – These are activities that can help you improve your health and wellbeing while also allowing you to meet new people. Sports, arts and culture, community activities, and travel can all be considered leisure activities. These activities improve your experience of positive relationships and connectedness to others. The Disability Gateway offers links and information to the following:
  - Competitive and recreational sports
  - Holidays and going out
  - Community programmes
  - Social life





## Further Reading

The Disability Gateway provides information and access to services that will promote the wellbeing of persons with disability.

You can learn more about this through the link below:

[Welcome to the Disability Gateway](#)

### Psychosocial Recovery-Oriented Framework

A disability caused by a mental health problem is referred to as a *psychosocial disability*. Not everyone with a mental health condition will have a psychosocial disability, but for those who do, it can be severe, long-lasting, and interfere with their recovery. That is why the psychosocial recovery-oriented framework was created to ensure that the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is more responsive to participants with psychosocial disabilities, their families, and caregivers. Its goal is to assist participants who have a psychosocial disability in their personal recovery and living a meaningful life. Its principles include the following:

Supporting personal recovery

Valuing lived experience

NDIS and mental health services working together

Supporting informed decision-making

Being responsive to the episodic and fluctuating nature of psychosocial disability

A stronger NDIS recovery-oriented and trauma-informed workforce

Aside from these principles, the psychosocial recovery-oriented framework also aims to do the following:

Promote personal recovery by implementing service improvements

Update the existing psychosocial recovery coach support item

Develop and implement agreed-upon protocols and improved practices for better collaboration between NDIS and mental health services

Re-evaluate processes for adapting to new situations so they can better reflect the episodic and fluctuating nature of psychosocial disability

Create decision-making resources and guides, as well as evidence-based supports, for participants with psychosocial disabilities, their families, and carers



### Further Reading

The listed principles can be seen in the National Disability Insurance (NDIS) Agency's Psychosocial Recovery-Oriented Framework. You can read more about this through the link below:

[Mental health and the NDIS](#)

### 3.4.4 Increasing Independence of the Person With Disability Using Strategies Around Reasonable Adjustment

Independence for persons with disability means having individual autonomy, participating actively in decision-making, and experiencing the physical, social, economic, and cultural environment. A sense of independence will give persons with disability self-confidence and will make them feel more fulfilled and empowered. To help them increase their independence, there are some strategies around reasonable adjustment that you can consider.

*Reasonable adjustment* is a modification to a process, practice, procedure, or setting that enables a person with disability to perform their job or any activities in a way that minimises the impact of their disability. For instance, schools and workplaces must provide accessible and inclusive work or activities that enable persons with disability to participate equally in work or school life. Adjustments should be tailored to the individual's requirements and circumstances and reviewed frequently. This is to ensure that the person with disability remains safe and productive. Persons with disability must have opportunities to use their abilities or do their job responsibilities as efficiently as possible by modifying their workplace through reasonable adjustment applications.



An example of reasonable adjustment is providing an accessible car parking space near the entrance for employees or students who use a wheelchair. Another example is allowing an employee who may have an illness like epilepsy to start work later if an attack happens.

It is important to consider the practicality of implementing reasonable adjustments. There must be an assessment of any financial cost or other costs, including any potential disruption in implementing the adjustment. Remember that reasonable adjustments should not cause massive disruption or come at a very high cost. Otherwise, it will be classified as *unjustifiable hardship*. Some examples of unjustifiable hardship include unreasonable financial burden, restrictions to the amendment of a building, or an adjustment that would disadvantage others.

To determine whether an adjustment is reasonable, take note of the following:

The person's condition

What effect the adjustment will have on the participation and independence of persons with disability

How the adjustment will affect other

The costs and benefits of making the adjustment

The risk to the safety of others if the adjustment is provided

Thus, when planning a reasonable adjustment, you should take the following into consideration:

- The ability or capacity of the person with disability, and how these factors affect their participation in an activity
- What adjustments worked well in the past and what adjustments they might need
- If the adjustment will achieve its aim of ensuring that the person with disability can participate in the activity
- If the adjustment is reasonable
- If there are any other supports or adjustments that are more suitable for the needs of the person with disability

Here are some strategies around reasonable adjustment that help promote and increase independence in persons with disability.

- **Provide work/ volunteering opportunities.**

Working and volunteering give a sense of purpose in life. You can provide persons with disability with the insight that they are contributing to society and increase their independence by allowing them to find work. Volunteering or working enhances self-esteem and interpersonal skills.

Work, whether volunteer or paid, is one of the most effective strategies for encouraging persons with disability to live independently. It helps them form friendships and increases their sense of inclusion in society.

- **Promote physical independence.**

Persons with disability could feel empowered when they believe they can complete tasks on their own. For instance, being able to do basic tasks like getting in and out of bed without the help of others can develop their independence.

Giving a person with disability an option to take on daily tasks like cooking, washing, making the bed, or ironing, depending on their level of disability, is another way to encourage physical independence.

- **Support them.**

It is essential to distinguish between supporting persons with disability and exerting control over their activities. Supporting is empowering and making them feel more independent. On the other hand, controlling is restrictive, and it makes them feel they cannot make their own decisions.

The language you use makes the subtle difference between support and control. If you constantly tell a person with disability what to do, you control their life. When you make the subtle shift to asking someone what they would like to do in a particular circumstance, you give that person the power to choose.



- **Help achieve financial independence.**

It is essential for persons with disability to feel financially independent. Since money represents the ultimate form of control over one's life, it is an essential indicator of independence. Persons with disability can achieve financial freedom by having access to a regular savings account and a bank account, provided the circumstances permit it.

Alternatively, persons with disability can achieve financial independence by providing them with any money they have to spend however they please.

- **Build confidence.**

Persons with disability need to be given more self-assurance to make decisions about everything in life with more confidence. Allowing a person with disability to choose their friends and hobbies in their spare time is a great way to encourage growth and independence. In addition, allowing persons with disability to make small decisions about their day-to-day lives can gradually build confidence. For instance, making a simple decision (e.g., letting them decide what to wear, what activity they should participate in today, or what dish to have for dinner) could have a big impact on their confidence level and feeling of independence. Encouraging them to make decisions about their own lives helps them become more self-confident and feel valued by others.

- **Provide assistive technologies.**

When a person with disability is provided with assistive technologies, they can work on an activity or a task with little to no assistance. For example, if a person who has a visual impairment is provided with learning material in Braille, they can be able to gather information on their own.



- **Adapt to the physical environment.**

When the physical environment is adapted in consideration of the person's condition, they are able to complete tasks or actions they normally cannot do. For example, if a ramp is constructed on the premises, persons who use a wheelchair can be able to transfer to different areas on their own.

- **Encourage interaction with other people.**

Participating in fun social activities for persons with disability can increase happiness, satisfaction, self-confidence, and morale. Learning and confidence will grow due to social interaction with others.

Just remember that when encouraging a person with disability to interact with others, getting the person's permission first is best. This not only gives them decision-making authority but also helps them avoid anxiety. Some persons with disability tend to isolate themselves and view others' company as an unwanted intrusion.



### Checkpoint! Let's Review

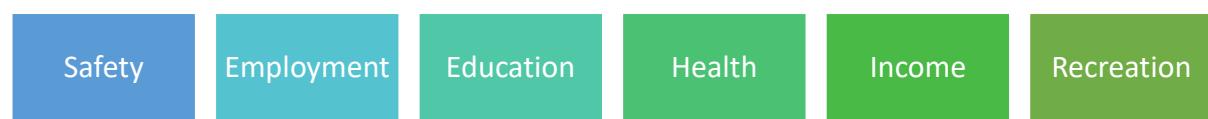
1. As a support worker, you must treat persons with disability with compassion, dignity and respect.
2. You must know how to respect, motivate, and empower as they implement strategies to address barriers to community participation. Not doing so will severely limit the quality of support you can provide to them. It will also make your job more difficult.

## 3.5 Identify Need for Advocacy in Relation to the Participation of the Person With Disability

Like everybody else, persons with disability also have the right to advocacy. They have the right to exercise their choice and control. As a support worker, you need to assist your clients in ensuring that they can practice their advocacy. You do this by consulting with the person with disability and identifying which part of their life is in need of advocacy.

### 3.5.1 Identifying the Needed Advocacy of the Person With Disability

Disability advocacy is important for the person with disability to have a good life. Persons with disability need advocacy for equality in treatment and in the accessibility of resources and opportunities. They need to have equal access to many aspects of life, including, but not limited to, the following:



As such, you need to identify any areas clients wish to have an advocate for in order to improve the quality of their community participation. These areas could be:

- How they are treated in the community (work, school, organisations, etc.)
- How systems in the community work (school systems, work systems, organisation systems, etc.)

To identify these areas where advocacy is required, you must consult with the client. The process of consulting with clients may be found in Subchapter 3.2 of this Learner Guide.

In dealing with areas where advocacy is needed, you need to learn about two among the many types of advocacies:

- **Individual advocacy**

*Individual advocacy* is a one-on-one approach to prevent or address instances of unfair treatment. This means a person with disability or a group of people advocates for one or two individuals who are:

- In situations that impact their rights or wellbeing
- At the risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation

This advocacy focuses on helping individuals to voice their concerns and access necessary resources and information.

## Multimedia



This video contains information on how individual advocacy effectively solves the community participation issue of the person with disability:

### Individual Advocacy

- **Systemic advocacy**

*Systemic advocacy* deals with changing legislation, policies or rules that impact the life of the person with disability. As such, systemic advocacy solves a problem that many persons with disability face by getting to the root of the problem—the flawed system.



## Multimedia



This video contains information on how systemic advocacy effectively solves the community participation issue of the person with disability:

### Systemic Advocacy

### 3.5.2 Strategies and Techniques for Individual Advocacy

Once you have determined the area where individual advocacy is required, consider the strategies discussed below.

#### Informal Advocacy

*Informal advocacy* is where the client chooses an advocate to speak on their behalf from other stakeholders. Advocates can be the following:

Family members

Close friends

Primary caregivers

Partners or significant others

Relevant others, e.g. any person that the clients trust to speak on their behalf

#### Formal Advocacy

*Formal advocacy* is where the client chooses an advocacy service to speak on their behalf. Advocacy services are a form of support for safeguarding the rights of a person with disability. Through advocacy services, an advocate can work with a person with disability to help them understand their rights. An advocate can also represent them in important decision-making processes.

Persons with disability can access advocacy services. They can do so under the National Disability Advocacy Program (NDAP). The NDAP has agencies that uphold and safeguard their rights and freedom to participate.

There are two types of agencies that are available through the NDAP:

- **Generalist agencies** – These provide advocacy support to persons with any type of disability or cultural background.
- **Specialist agencies** – These may provide advocacy support to persons with disability:
  - With a specific type of disability
  - With specific issues such as housing, education or employment
  - From diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds

*Based on National Disability Advocacy Program, used under CC BY 3.0 AU. © Commonwealth of Australia*

Techniques of both informal and formal advocacies include the following:

Identifying and explaining the different options available to the client

Helping the client develop their skills and knowledge for expressing themselves

Assisting the client in standing up for their rights

Speaking with service providers on behalf of the client

Relaying wishes and preferences to other service providers and institutions

Assisting the client in transitioning from one service to another

Resolving concerns or submitting complaints to service providers or authorities

### 3.5.3 Strategies and Techniques for Systemic Advocacy

As mentioned before, systemic advocacy focuses on advocating on behalf of a group. The aim of this advocacy is to enact change at a local, state or national level. Strategies for systemic advocacy include the following:

- **Policy monitoring**

*Policy monitoring* involves observing the implementation and effectiveness of policies already in place. In the context of this unit, these policies are about persons with disability and their right to participate in their communities.

Techniques for effective policy monitoring include the following:

- Having one-off investigations of the policies through data gathering
- Having annual reviews of policies for periodic monitoring
- Drawing public attention to policies that are not implemented successfully

- **Advocacy campaigns**

An *advocacy campaign* is an organised movement that aims to influence political change and bring awareness around issues to the public.

Techniques for holding an effective advocacy campaign include the following:

- Having dedicated social media accounts and posts
- Signing petitions to request certain changes by the government
- Having public events to bring awareness to the issue

## Checkpoint! Let's Review



1. Persons with disability have the right to advocacy. They have the right to exercise their choice and control. As a support worker, you need to assist your clients in ensuring that they can practice their advocacy.
2. Individual advocacy is a one-on-one approach to prevent or address instances of unfair treatment.
3. Systemic advocacy deals with changing legislation, policies or rules that impact the life of a person with disability. As such, systemic advocacy solves a problem that many persons with disability face by getting to the root of the problem—the flawed system.
4. Once you have determined the area where individual advocacy is required, consider the following strategies:
  - Informal advocacy
  - Formal advocacy
5. Strategies for systemic advocacy include the following:
  - Policy monitoring
  - Advocacy campaigns



## 3.6 Monitor the Effectiveness of Strategies

In the previous subchapters, you have learnt how to do the following:

- Identify barriers to community participation and social inclusion
- Develop solutions to overcome the identified barriers
- Implement the strategies to address the barriers to community participation

In this subchapter, you will learn how to monitor the success of the strategies implemented. This will help you identify if there are issues that your client may not have mentioned. Doing your own monitoring will also help you know if you need to make any changes. If you do not monitor the success of your strategies, you might continue using ineffective ones.

### Monitoring the Success of Strategies

To monitor the success of your strategies, look at how your clients are during their activities with their communities and social networks. You can check for effectiveness by asking the following questions:

Is my client enjoying socialising with their community or social network?

Is my client fully able to take part in their community or social network? Am I meeting all the needs of my client?

Has my client made any complaints or comments about the strategy so far? Have I addressed those complaints or comments?

Does the approach that I am using help my client socialise with others?

What are the issues I have faced so far while using this strategy?

You should evaluate your strategies regularly. You cannot just do this at the end of your relationship with your client. Regular evaluation ensures that you are able to identify issues and address them early on. It also allows you to adjust or change strategies when needed.

You will know that your strategies are meeting the needs of your clients if they do the following:

Criteria	Details
The client takes part in all aspects of the activity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ You ensure that they do not feel left out.</li> <li>▪ You provide them with all the tools they need to participate.</li> </ul>
The client finds the activity safe and enjoyable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ They are having fun.</li> <li>▪ They are not experiencing discrimination.</li> </ul>
You address the client's feedback and complaints.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ You provide solutions to the issues the client raises.</li> </ul>

### Consulting With the Client and Your Supervisor

Once you have gathered your observations on the implemented strategies, you must consult with the client and your supervisor. During the consultation, you must:

- Review the strategies implemented to address the barriers to community participation and social inclusion.
- Ask the client and your supervisor for their feedback on the strategies reviewed.
- Encourage the client to discuss whether the strategies have helped them overcome the barriers.
- Discuss your insights with the client and your supervisor regarding the success of the strategies to overcome barriers to community participation and social inclusion.
- Make sure that you, the client and your supervisor agree on whether the strategies successfully overcame barriers.



### Checkpoint! Let's Review

1. If you do not monitor the success of your strategies, you might continue using ineffective ones.
2. Regular evaluation ensures that you are able to identify issues and address them early on. It also allows you to adjust or change strategies when needed.

## 3.7 Identify Own Limitations in Addressing Issues and Seek Advice From Supervisor

By now, you may have noticed issues that are outside the scope of your job role or ability. When this happens, consider seeking advice from your supervisor to address these issues.

As a support worker, it is essential to know the scope of your role. When working with persons with disability, you should know what you are and are not qualified to do. Understanding this will help you to recognise your limitations when addressing issues. Once identified, you must seek the support of your supervisor. This will ensure that your client's needs will not be unmet.

### 3.7.1 Understanding Scope of Own Job Role or Ability

The *scope of your job role* is the limitation of your role based on your position and training. This means the scope of your responsibilities when providing support to persons with disability. You can find out your scope of practice by looking at your job position in your employee handbook. You can also check your organisation's policies regarding your role.

Going beyond your scope of practice or ability can lead to negative consequences. You may accidentally cause harm to your clients if you do something outside of your work role or training. That is why it is essential to recognise your limitations in addressing issues.

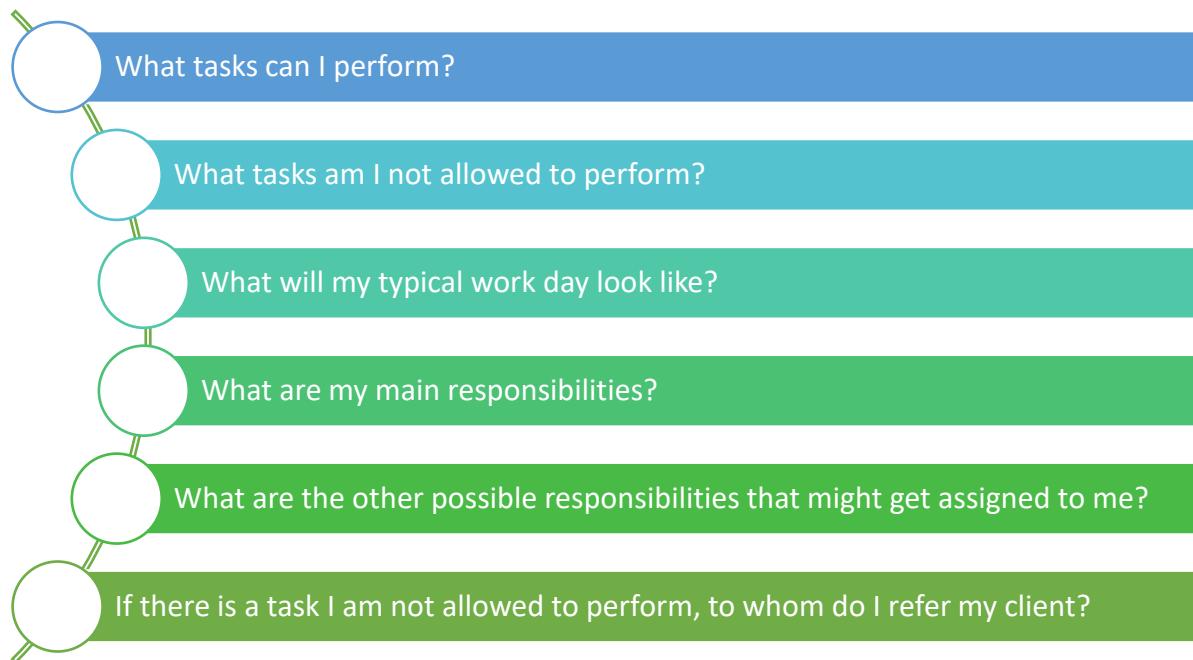
To recognise issues that are outside the scope of your job role or ability, you must confirm your responsibilities and expectations with your supervisor.

Your supervisor is responsible for the following:



If you do not confirm the scope of your role with your supervisor, you cannot confirm if your interpretation is correct. You might make assumptions about requirements that you are not qualified to perform.

When identifying limitations with your supervisor, you may ask them the following questions:



Once confirmed, you can identify what issues are outside of the scope of your role or ability. For example, suppose you are a disability support worker tasked with assisting a person with cerebral palsy. You would have the following responsibilities:

- Help the client with simple maintenance for their specialised wheelchair.
- Accompany the client to the park every morning for fresh air.
- Prepare the client for visitors whenever needed.
- Write a daily report of your observations about the client.

Given these responsibilities, you can see which tasks you cannot perform. Below are some examples of requirements that are outside of your responsibilities:

- The client has gotten aggressive and is throwing things at people. You need someone who can de-escalate the situation and calm them down.
- The client requires exercises to strengthen their muscles. You need someone qualified to provide physical therapy.
- The client's specialised wheelchair requires a repair that cannot easily be repaired at their home. You need someone qualified to provide assistive technology assistance.

If you perform the tasks in these examples, you may end up causing harm to the client. That is why it is important to know the limits of your role. This way, you can seek advice from your supervisor and ensure your client receives their appropriate care.



## Lotus Compassionate Care

Access and review Lotus Compassionate Care Handbook for the roles and responsibilities of a disability support worker through the link below:

[Lotus Compassionate Care Handbook](#)

(username: newusername password: new password)

### 3.7.2 Seeking Advice From Supervisor

You can refer to the following strategies when seeking advice from your supervisor:

- **Identify the part of your client's care that falls outside your job role or ability.**  
Did you receive training on how to support the person with disability with specific impairments? Are you getting overwhelmed by your work tasks?
- **Consider the best time to seek your supervisor's advice.**  
If you do not have any one-on-one meetings scheduled with your supervisor, you can request one to discuss your work role requirements and seek their advice.
- **State what you need clearly, briefly and honestly.**  
Do not use euphemisms or overly long explanations. Instead, state your concerns in as few words as possible, with enough details. For example, you can simply say, '*I need more training to provide better support to my clients.*' or '*I am not sure I can perform this task for my client.*'.
- **Communicate any new information regarding the client's care.**

This may include the following:

Changes to the client's health and wellbeing

Situations of harm or risk

Issues and other concerns not covered in disability support

Feedback from the client on the activities within their communities or social networks

Signs of changing needs or preferences

## Further Reading



This policy brief describes the importance of supportive supervision within the health sector. It also describes the challenges in its implementation. You may access the brief through the link below:

[Strengthening Supportive Supervision at the District Health Level in the Pacific: Health Workforce Management Policy Brief](#)



## Checkpoint! Let's Review

1. As a support worker, it is essential to know the scope of your role. When working with persons with disability, you should know what you are and are not qualified to do.
2. To identify requirements outside of the scope of your job role, you must first determine the limits of your role. To do this, you must confirm your responsibilities and expectations with your supervisor.
3. If you do not confirm the scope of your role with your supervisor, you cannot confirm if your interpretation is correct. You might make assumptions about requirements that you are not qualified to perform.



## Learning Activity for Chapter 3

Well done completing this chapter. You may now proceed to your **Learning Activity Booklet** (provided along with this Learner Guide) and complete the learning activities associated with this chapter.

Please coordinate with your trainer/training organisation for additional instructions and guidance in completing these practical activities.

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