

Infosheet 3: Learning from Feedback

How do you know what the people you support want from you? Are you giving people what they want and need?

Feedback mechanisms contribute to organisational learning which leads to service improvement and improved client outcomes. Not only do you have commitments through the NSW Disability Service Standards, the move to a market based system means a person can choose to stay or leave a service based on whether it is meeting their needs.

Understanding what feedback mechanisms work best for your organisation is an important element of planning your evaluation strategies. Organisations focused on achieving good outcomes for people they support and continuously improving rely on a range of methods and strategies to maximise opportunities to learn how and where to improve.

Here are some of feedback strategies you may wish to implement that can focus your organisation on continuous quality improvement (CQI).

Organisational Cultural Strategy and Messaging

- Webpage and annual report messaging
 - State your organisational commitment to ongoing improvement and welcomes feedback and suggestions for improvement which will drive positive change.
 - Publishing information about improvements made as a result of client feedback will demonstrate your organisation as one that is constantly improving and listening to the needs of your clients.
- CQI is regular feature of each meeting agenda at all levels in an organisation

Internal organisational resources

- Quality policy which defines your commitment to quality and identifies the strategies in your CQI plan
- Contribution to CQI is an integral part of staff performance review
- Staff recruitment - contribution to CQI is identified as a role requirement at interview
- Staff role - all staff have as a requirement of their job description are to seek, welcome and record any feedback about what could be improved.
- Staff feedback on potential improvements is regularly sought
- Monitoring of feedback - designated positions monitor and feed up suggestions to senior management/board.
- Staff training - recording mechanism is known and understood by all staff.

Feedback mechanisms-understanding current and future needs

Organisations may use a combination of more than one of the following methods. Surveys can be conducted face to face, online or by phone.

- Regular stakeholder survey: Seeks ideas for improvement/development
- Regular client/family survey: Seeks feedback on operational and outcomes
- Independent random phone client interviews : Provides an anonymous/safe environment
- Complaints analysis
- Feedback and complaints resolution results are delivered to the CQI team for action
- Client forums that are focused on organisational improvement
- Review of individual plan reviews and program reviews
- Exit interview for clients and staff - Seeks opportunity to provide ideas for improvement