

Information, Linkages and Capacity Building Policy Feedback form

The Department of Social Services is seeking your feedback on the ILC Policy Framework.

Key focus areas have been developed which aim to provide insights into implementation challenges, scope of supports and stakeholder expectations of ILC.

We encourage your response to be guided by these focus areas, in addition to any other issues you would like to raise.

1. Please tell us your name and organisation

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2. What are the most important elements of ILC? *

LGNSW sees the ILC model as sustainable in the long term by building the capacity of the community to support the inclusion of people with disability. The ILC will be accessible for all people, not just those receiving an Individualised Package, ensuring broad inclusion.

3. What is missing from the ILC Policy Framework? *

The ILC function does not provide any support for disability or mainstream service providers through network activities or sector development resources and training.

4. How will we know the ILC streams are meeting their objectives/vision? *

The effectiveness of the ILC will need to be assessed through regular evaluations of outcomes which have been agreed prior to the establishment of the ILC. These could include measures such as: how and what type of consultation has been conducted with people with disability and their families and service providers; survey of awareness of inclusion among mainstream community services, representation of people with disability on local planning groups, such as council access advisory committees.

5. What would be the implementation challenges? *

LGNSW sees one of the major challenges to the effective implementation of the ILC as ensuring that full geographic coverage is achieved— especially in remote areas. There is also a challenge to ensure that the experience of people with disability, their families and carers in engaging with the ILC is consistent and equitable, regardless of where they live.

LGNSW believes that councils are best placed to perform the ILC function. They are the only organisation that guarantees geographic coverage of the whole country. People use councils as a source of information already and trust councils to be independent. In the Hunter trial, councils have experienced increases in demands for information about accessible facilities, activities and supports. This is likely to increase once the NDIS is fully understood by the mainstream community.

Other challenges relate to ensuring that the ILC can provide culturally appropriate linkages and support and that there is outreach to people with disability who may be isolated, particularly if they are not receiving any disability specific service supports.

6. Which aspects of a person's life do you think ILC could have the greatest impact on? *

The ILC will be important for the participation and engagement of people with disability into their local community. People with disability who do not receive any support from the disability service system and who may be socially isolated will benefit from interaction with the ILC. There should be flow on impacts to their perceptions of their personal safety and security, their health and wellbeing and their economic participation.

7. What are some of the principles that should guide investment across ILC streams? *

LGNSW believes the principles of Social Justice should underpin investment across the ILC streams. For Local Government 'social justice' is based on the application of the following four principles:

- *Equity* - fairness in the distribution of resources, particularly for those in need
- *Rights* - equality of rights established and promoted for all people
- *Access* - fair access for all people to economic resources, services and rights essential to their quality of life
- *Participation* - opportunity for all people to genuinely participate in the community and be consulted on decisions which affect their lives.

These principles underpin the planning and services of Local Government in NSW.

Other principles guiding investment across ILC streams should recognise the social and geographic characteristics of an area and provide adequate resources to ensure that the social justice principles are met. This could include additional funding to cover the costs of travelling large distances or to provide culturally appropriate supplements to ILC functions. Other factors that should be considered to ensure equity and access include the availability of services existing in an area and an understanding of the role of Local Government as an independent and trusted source of information.

8. How do you see the interface between ILC functions and activities and the interaction with the mainstream service system? (i.e. housing, education, employment, health, family, accessibility and transport) *

The interface of mainstream services which are provided by government, such as housing, education, employment, health and transport should be though a consistent Commonwealth or State government philosophy and approach to inclusion which is driven by their commitment to the National Disability Strategy. Similarly, at a local level, Local Government will continue to play an important role in ensuring inclusive and accessible local communities, especially through the services they provide, such as parks, leisure centres, libraries and their staff at these facilities. Local Government also plays an important role in engaging and educating local businesses to be more accessible and inclusive. Councils often promote inclusion by making Access Awards of Excellence for local businesses.

9. Other comments (optional)

Councils are not acknowledged as currently providing a range of services that fall within the scope of the 'Information, Linkages and Coordination' framework proposed in the discussion paper. The paper does identify the importance of local supports through capacity building, networking, coordination and

the provision of low level individual support that could reduce the impact on the need for (Tier 1) 'individualised funded packages' service provision. This includes the local social capital and volunteer networks that are often supported, coordinated and facilitated by Local Government.

With the introduction of the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014 and the requirement for NSW councils to prepare Disability Inclusion Action Plans, councils are well placed to support the delivery of the ILC framework and local coordination. The framework offers an opportunity for councils to play a key role 'to enable an effective, integrated response to disability which supports the choice and control of people with disability, their families and carers'.

The discussion paper identifies the nature of community support required to be implemented over time at the local level to ensure the full introduction of the National Disability Insurance Scheme. The ILC framework outlines the principles of this support as well as the five 'streams of service' designed to deliver effective outcomes. Local Councils can support this process through their community engagement, capacity building, networking and coordination activities with residents and services in their local communities.

Many councils already allocate significant general revenue funds to ILC type activities. For example in one large western Sydney council, two positions are general revenue funded. In addition, when they host major inclusion and capacity building events for people with disability, a number of other staff across the council (media, other Community and Cultural Development staff etc) assist as well. It is important to recognise that smaller rural councils may not have the resources to fund these functions from their current budgets.