Quality and Empowerment Framework
Contents

Introduction ........................................................................................................................................3
Background .......................................................................................................................................5
  Why is quality important? ..................................................................................................................5
  Embedding a quality culture ..............................................................................................................6
  Excellence in service delivery ............................................................................................................6
  Satisfying people’s expectations ........................................................................................................6
  Individual, family and staff empowerment .........................................................................................6
The framework ....................................................................................................................................7
  Quality management principles ........................................................................................................8
  Components of the framework .........................................................................................................9
  Embedding the framework ..............................................................................................................12
Glossary of terms ...............................................................................................................................14
Introduction

With the launch of National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), Yooralla must understand fully how to respond flexibly to customer needs, choices and aspirations. At the same time Yooralla needs to deliver quality services in a cost-effective manner. As such, our focus should be on organisational performance and organisational health. Organisational health is about having the systems today that create the conditions for high performance tomorrow.\(^1\) Healthy organisations typically have a culture which promotes trust, openness and engagement and enables continuous learning and improvement. This in turn increases our ability to maximise customer satisfaction, loyalty and our reputation and retain a skilled and fulfilled workforce.

Quality improvement is a systematic approach to ensuring that defined service standards are met and positive outcomes for the people who use services are delivered. It involves:

- progressively increasing the value of a service or product to people through changes designed to respond to their goals, choices and aspirations
- enhancing performance against standards and benchmarks
- a commitment to identifying service and organisation opportunities for improvement in a systematic and planned way.

Three areas of focus drive the continuous improvement of support and services and ultimately underpin the management of service delivery:

- individual empowerment
- process improvement
- staff empowerment

\(^1\)http://www.institute.nhs.uk/quality_and_value/introduction/organisational_health%3A_a_new_perspective_on_performance_improvement%3F.html
Yooralla’s Quality and Empowerment Framework (the Framework) is designed to provide the organisation with a model that has a focus upon performance and health to ensure that we are delivering on customer expectations consistently.

The notion of the ‘customer’ is not new to the disability sector but it is something for which we need to be fully prepared. In a customer service model, people purchase services and products which fulfill their expectations and add value to their lives. They continue to use services with which they are satisfied and leave those that cannot or do not meet their expectations.

Throughout this document the term ‘customer’ is used to denote the purchaser-provider relationship.
Background

The statement ‘quality is everyone’s business’ reflects Yooralla’s commitment to embedding a culture of quality, continuous improvement and to safeguarding the rights of people with disability to ensure their wellbeing and safety. Quality and the empowerment of people with disability are mutually inclusive.

This Framework was originally developed to inform the work of the Quality, Innovation and Safeguards team and was quickly identified as a model that could ensure a cohesive, organisational approach to support the implementation of our quality system both from an external customer service as well as an internal customer service perspective.

The European Framework for Quality Management (EFQM), Australian Business Excellence Framework (ABEF) and ISO 9001:2008 have informed the development of this Framework.

This Framework applies the quality management principles that underpin our existing quality system, ISO 9001:2008, and relevant outcomes standards.

Why is quality important?
People make decisions every day about their lives, such as where they buy things, how much they will pay and whether they will return or go elsewhere because they didn’t like the way they were spoken to by the ‘sales-person’ or perceived value for money.

For people who use disability services this is not the case. The customer having control or decision-making power over what they purchase or from whom they receive a service is a relatively new concept for many service providers.
In some cases, people still have very little control about who they purchase from due to geography, funding constraints or perhaps limited information about alternatives. Yooralla is positioned well to adopt a customer-driven approach to service delivery.

**Embedding a quality culture**
A significant factor influencing choice is - and will continue to be - the quality of services. To ensure that Yooralla remains relevant in a market driven economy, it is critical that we invest in embedding a culture of quality.

**Excellence in service delivery**
Excellent service delivery is predicated by standards and a structure through which services can undertake ongoing quality improvement by recognising and validating good practice. Through learning, evidence, best practice and research the development of a strategy to improve workforce capacity and capability across the organisation can then occur.

**Satisfying people’s expectations**
Yooralla aims to improve the consistency of service delivery and develop clear expectations about the levels of service that can be provided and the outcomes that may be achieved. Listening to people, carers and other stakeholders allows us to understand expectations better and make informed, evidence-based decisions about services.

**Individual, family and staff empowerment**
Individual, family and staff empowerment is fundamental to ongoing quality assurance and quality enhancement. All service improvements are to be grounded in a rights-based approach so that the service experience of people with disabilities is continuously improved.
Our capacity and ability to implement change, as well as deliver the best outcomes and achieve our goals, depends upon Yooralla having a highly skilled and competent workforce, who listen to and engaging with people.

With workforce planning, leadership, monitoring, development and empowerment strategies, it will be possible to guarantee appropriate safeguards and standards of support for people who purchase our services.

**The Framework**

The Framework is a cause and effect diagram. This means that if we want to achieve a different result, we need to change something we do within the organisation.

It is also important to understand that what is considered excellent today may only be considered as adequate tomorrow. Thus it is essential to adopt a continual improvement loop, feeding back the learning from the results achieved and using creativity and innovation to drive increased value for stakeholders.

This Framework can be used to assess and improve any part of the organisation, including leadership, strategy and planning, people, information and knowledge, safety, service delivery, service quality and bottom-line results.

Additionally, the Framework provides an umbrella under which a number of business initiatives and frameworks can be integrated to form one coherent,
cohesive organisational system, as outlined in Appendix 1: Quality and Empowerment Framework.

The Framework incorporates mechanisms that promote continuous service improvement (quality improvement) as well as assure a standard of service quality (quality assurance). It is based upon:

- a cyclic process of plan, do, check and act to improve
- regular self-review for quality improvement
- an established alignment between plans, review and improvement
- monitoring from an evidence base including individuals, families, staff and other stakeholders
- use of external bodies against which to benchmark success and opportunities for improvement.

**Quality management principles**

This Quality and Empowerment Framework is underpinned by a set of internationally recognised quality management principles:

1. **Focus upon people who access our services**
   Recognise, understand and promote what is important to people with a disability, their families and supporters to develop and deliver flexible and personalised supports.

2. **Leadership**
   Promote excellence and establish a unity of purpose with a clear vision for the future and create a culture with shared values and goals.

3. **Empower customers and staff**
   Encourage and support the active participation of individuals, families, carers and staff to improve services.

4. **Use a process approach**
   Plan, manage and review services and resources as a process.

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2 Adapted from ISO9000:2005 Quality Management Systems – Fundamentals and vocabulary
5. **Take a systems approach**
   Adopt an holistic and integrated approach to monitoring and reviewing all aspects of the organisation as a related system.

6. **Encourage continuous improvement**
   Promote a culture of learning, reflective practice and innovation to improve service responsiveness and flexibility.

7. **Make decisions based upon data, feedback and evidence**
   Collect, analyse and use accurate data and information to make effective strategic and operational decisions.

8. **Work collaboratively with other service providers and the community**
   Establish collaborative relationships and partnerships to make a positive contribution and enhance the capacity of the community to support better outcomes for people with a disability.

## Components of the Framework

While Framework principles provide overarching values for continuous improvement, the following components provide guidelines based on what is considered to be good practice. The subcomponents describe further how the guidelines look in practice.

These components combined express the overarching values that must guide all policies, services, practices, tools, infrastructure and supports for continuous quality improvement to occur. They are interrelated and work together dynamically and are relevant to all parts of the organisation. They are not ordered in priority, as all are equally important to an effective continuous improvement system.
Our organisational culture supports and actively promotes continuous quality improvement.

- Our leaders support a continuous learning environment and set clear directions and expectations for outcomes and goals.

- Our supervisors, managers, and other leaders are champions of continuous quality improvement work, as reflected by their decision-making and communications with staff.

- We have dedicated continuous quality improvement roles within the organisation who can facilitate the collection, collation, analysis and use of data and information to support practice and systemic improvements across Yooralla.

- Our leaders provide time for staff at all levels to be engaged in continuous improvement processes and activities.

- Our strategic plans, business plans and projects include and support continuous improvement.

- Clear communication and regular feedback occurs between all levels of leadership, staff, individuals, families and other stakeholders.

- There is an understanding that all employees, individuals, families and other stakeholders work together and strive for excellence.

We adopt specific outcomes, indicators and practice standards that are grounded in our values and principles.

- We all adopt Yooralla’s values and principles within the organisation and to the broader community.

- Employees, individuals, families and other stakeholders assist in the development and adoption of outcomes, indicators and practice standards that connect to Yooralla’s values and principles.

- Continuous quality improvement structures and processes inform service outcomes and standards.

- We all communicate routinely with our teams to emphasise outcomes, indicators and standards that reflect Yooralla values and principles.

- Yooralla reviews outcomes, indicators, and standards routinely and revises them as appropriate.
Our leaders possess the skills and competencies needed to participate actively in continuous improvement.

- Our leaders receive training and support in continuous quality improvement methods including the use of data to inform practice and policies.
- Staff, individuals, families and other stakeholders participate in active advisory capacities throughout the organisation and their recommendations are used to inform Yooralla’s strategic and operational plans.
- Our leaders provide opportunities and resources for staff and individuals to participate in continuous improvement training activities.
- Staff with specialised responsibilities for data collection, entry and analysis, receive training and support.

We collect qualitative, quantitative and anecdotal data from and for individuals, families and staff.

- User-friendly information systems facilitate the collection of various types of relevant data about individuals and families, including characteristics, experiences and outcomes.
- User-friendly information systems facilitate the collection of various types of relevant data about staff, including competence, workload and satisfaction.
- Data collected from and about families and individuals relates to identified outcomes, indicators, standards and their direct experiences with Yooralla and broader service system.
- Practice reviews occur consistently and regularly.
- Data collection and data entry are accurate, applied consistently, in real time and are reliable.
- Yooralla requests regular feedback from individuals, families, staff and other stakeholders in a respectful manner.

We review, analyse, and interpret qualitative, quantitative and anecdotal data to inform practices, policies, and services.

- Qualitative and quantitative approaches will be used to understand what occurs in practice and policy.
- Dedicated staff and resources lead and facilitate qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis.
- Managers participate actively in analysing and interpreting data, utilising data to inform practice and identifying trends and key learning.

- Yooralla creates and releases de-identifiable data analyses, reports, and presentations in usable formats for a variety of audiences, including individuals, families, staff and other stakeholders.

- Data review and analysis is an iterative and continuous process.

**We use continuous improvement results to improve our policies, practices and services.**

- Leaders set expectations that staff use results to improve practice.

- Leaders identify strengths and best practices from the analyses and prioritise these practices for implementation.

- Leaders empower supervisors and staff to advocate for, test, and implement changes in policy, practices, services, and/or training, based upon priorities and best practice standards.

- Clear and user-friendly communication channels publicise successful changes and learning broadly across Yooralla and with individuals, families, staff and other stakeholders.

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**Embedding the Framework**

Improvement is always possible in every aspect of our business and in the way that we work to support people with a disability and their family members and carers. With a focus on quality an organisation can operate at its best into the long term.

The intent and application of this Framework is that it is embedded in the work of all staff of Yooralla.

- **Our leaders** need to inspire trust at all times and role model Yooralla’s values and integrity. They need to have a clear vision for the future,
develop the strategies that will achieve our goals and engage all stakeholders to join them on the journey.

- **Our managers** have the responsibility to monitor, check and ensure that all elements of the Framework are implemented within their area of responsibility.

- **Our staff** are responsible for ensuring that the principles and components within this Framework are applied in their daily work.

- **Individuals, families and other stakeholders** are encouraged to provide feedback to the organisation regarding its processes and practices, so that we can learn and improve on what we do.
# Glossary of terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individuals</strong></td>
<td>people with disability and their unpaid carers.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Customer</strong></td>
<td>is the recipient of goods, services, products or idea, obtained from a seller or supplier for a monetary or other valuable consideration.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Continuous quality improvement</strong></td>
<td>the process of identifying, describing, and analysing strengths and problems, then testing, implementing, learning from and revising solutions.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Corrective and preventative actions</strong></td>
<td>improvements to an organisation's processes to eliminate causes of non-conformities or other undesirable situations.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Customer satisfaction</strong></td>
<td>the number of customers or percentage of total customers, whose reported experience with a company, its products, or its services (ratings) exceeds specified satisfaction goals.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Customer service</strong></td>
<td>a series of activities designed to enhance the level of customer satisfaction</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Empowerment</strong></td>
<td>promotes independence, autonomy and other ideas related to people taking control of their own lives.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Framework</strong></td>
<td>a structure to hold together or support something; an underlying set of ideas, principles, agreements and indeed rules that provide the basis and outline for something (in this case ‘quality’ and ‘empowerment’) intended to be continuously developed and improved over time.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Quality</strong></td>
<td>meeting or exceeding individual’s expectations and consistently delivering on what you promise. Expectations will vary depending on whether the individual is external (customers, families and stakeholders) or internal (staff/services).</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Quality assurance</strong></td>
<td>the activity of providing evidence needed to establish that activities that are being performed effectively.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Quality management</strong></td>
<td>the activities of the overall management function that determine the quality policy, objectives and responsibilities; and implement them through quality planning, quality control, quality assurance and quality improvement within the quality system.</td>
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Appendix 1

Quality and Empowerment Framework
Continuous Quality Improvement

PRACTICE FRAMEWORKS

- Safeguarding Rights Framework
- Research & Innovation Framework
- Other Frameworks to be Developed

Learning Opportunities
Innovation
Service Improvement Initiatives
Corrective and Preventative

Trends and Themes

- Incident Data: Client, Critical Incidents, Service Experiences, Advancing Events, OHS Incidents/Near Misses, WorkCover Claims, Insurance Claims
- Client, family, Stakeholder Feedback: Complaints, Complaints, Suggestions, Satisfaction
- Staff Feedback: Complaints, Suggestions, Suggestions, Satisfaction
- Internal Reviews: Self Reviews, Peer Reviews, Practice Review, Internal Audit
- External Reviews: Practice Reviews, Accreditation Reviews, Community Wiqnesses, Disability Services, Commissioner, Quality of Support

Service Delivery and Practice

Organisational Management Systems and Processes
(Financial, People & Culture, Business Strategy and Planning, Information Communication Technology, Quality and Empowerment, Risk, Safety, Customer Service, Marketing/Communications)