

SHAPE DISABILITY CONSULTATION AND MEMBER PARTICIPATION POLICY

1. Purpose

Shape Disability Services has a firm commitment to consultation and member participation and recognises the need to engage people in a meaningful way to harness the knowledge and opinions of others in its decision-making processes.

The organisation is required to consult with consumers on its services with regard to access and inclusion of people with disability. Consultation and member participation provide an opportunity for the organisation to better understand community and stakeholder views and to consider these as part of its commitment to create better policy and service outcomes.

It is a requirement that any undertaking of consultation or member participation process must comply with this policy and utilise the practices outlined in the attached guidelines.

2. Scope

The Policy covers all staff, directors, contractors, volunteers, and management in Shape Disability.

3. Definitions

Information provision is a one-way process where fixed information or other data is provided through a range of channels to raise awareness or assist in understanding. (See communication policy)

Consultation is a two-way process where information is provided to gather feedback, opinions and ideas on a specific matter.

Collaboration is a process where the Organisation works directly with people to ensure the Organisation understands all relevant matters and gathers feedback, opinion and ideas from people that then inform/influence the outcomes.

Shared decision making is a process where the Organisation informs people about a specific issue and empowers them to undertake informed problem solving, define issues and develop solutions. Decision making is a shared responsibility.

Member participation is the term used to collectively describe the approaches listed above.

In the context of this policy **people** refers to people with disability, families, carers, interested persons, organisations, organisations, government and other stakeholders

Member refers to any individual or group not employed directly by the Organisation.

4. Objectives

To ensure that appropriate and reasonable opportunities for participation and engagement are provided for those most affected by the organisation's activities through effective consultation and member participation processes.

The organisation recognizes the value of lived experience and the diversity of our community and seeks to give voice to this diversity through this policy.

4. Principles

- 4.1** People affected by organisation's activities have the right to be informed about them.
- 4.2** Where feedback is sought, the organisation will actively seek the involvement of people affected and will seek many views from a range of people.
- 4.3** The organisation will provide appropriate resources for effective consultation and member participation and organisational processes will be transparent, accessible, accountable, and timely and supported by factual information.
- 4.4** Where essential and where no other alternative is appropriate, the organisation may pay individuals a contribution towards the costs associated with any formal consultation particularly those that need to travel due to distance.
- 4.5** Outcomes will be used to inform policy and program development
- 4.6** The organisation will provide timely feedback to participants including how their involvement has affected decision making.
- 4.7** All participation activities will be evaluated using the participation feedback form available in the accompanying guidelines.
- 4.8** Wherever possible, the organisation will take advantage of emerging technologies and approaches to maximise the effectiveness of consultation and member participation.
- 4.9** The organisation will maintain a register of consultation and participation that will record the contact details of individuals who have identified themselves as a person who wishes to be consulted broadly or on a particular issue. This will also help the organisation monitor the diversity of input being sought or received. This register will not be used for any other purpose and will be held in confidence by the organisation.

5. Background

The need to include stakeholders in decision making or to provide input into business decision that directly affects them is part of contemporary business.

6. Consultation

This policy is informed by the practices of Shape Disability staff and best practice consultation mechanisms. Guidelines and tools to support the implementation of this policy will be developed in collaboration with relevant staff and relevant stakeholders.

7. Communication

This policy will be available on the organisation's Google Drive and made available during induction.

8. Evaluation and review

The effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed every two years or earlier if required.

