



Effective communication practices

It is essential that all stakeholders commit to establishing more inclusive, collaborative and connected ways of working together to develop the future workforce through placements.

University communication strategy

Document:

- the target audience (NDIS Providers / NDIS Participants / Students)
- what information needs to be communicated to each stakeholder, including key messages
- how information will be communicated
- who is responsible for the communication
- the time frame for each communication activity

Plan to:

- address the anticipated concerns of each stakeholder early and frequently
- have a positive approach when communicating
- utilise the experience of your staff to assist with identification of issues / potential issues on the ground
- regularly monitor and reviewing to determine if the methods of communication are effective

Communicate with providers

- Provide information to provider organisations about curriculum and specific performance expectations for students
- Collaborate with placement sites to clarify these for the individual service context.
- Obtain generic information from provider organisations and share this between disciplines
- Inform NDIS providers of established processes via workshops or online resource information packages.

Communicate with students

- Share information about the placement site
- Direct them to www.futureallies.com for further detail about placements in the NDIS



NDIS Providers

- Seek information from universities regarding processes around practice education
- Provide generic information to one contact in each university to be shared between disciplines
- Develop policies and procedures to recognise and value student education and support practice educators in providing this
- Designate a senior staff member to managing student processes to ensure efficiency of communication with universities rather than adding this to the workload of practice educators/service providers
- Seek early consent from participants to work with students, enabling efficient and timely service provision

Communication with the student

Discuss with the student that good communication skills are important not only when working with participants, but also to support their own learning. Encourage students to:

- explain techniques and highlight essential points
- develop clinical reasoning
- provide feedback
- focus on their personal growth through personalised/individualised goal setting
- effectively ask questions to develop their ability to reflect and self-evaluate

Tips for optimising effective communication when communicating with students are:

- Be aware of body language: ensure the content matches the delivery
- Be clear about the message that is being communicated, use plain English
- Minimise distractions and interruptions when communicating, particularly when giving potentially uncomfortable feedback

References

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- Victorian State Government: Health and Human Services. (2015). Communication strategy guide Victorian assistant workforce model (VAWM) activity 1.5. Retrieved from <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/about/publications/policiesandguidelines/vawm-communication-guide>