

Medical Board of Western Australia



Disability Access and Inclusion Plan

2008-2012

This document is available upon request in alternative formats such as electronic format, hardcopy format (in both standard and large print), or audio.

To obtain the plan in another format, please contact this office on 08 6380 3500 or email info@wa.medicalboard.com.au

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Background

Overview of the Medical Board of Western Australia

The Board is an independent statutory authority responsible for overseeing the Medical Act 1894 (WA) ("the Act") in Western Australia.

The principal aim of the Medical Board is to ensure that the people of Western Australia receive the highest possible standard of medical care through the fair and effective administration of the Medical Act. This aim is achieved by ensuring that appropriate standards of entry onto the Medical Register are maintained, and that instances of misconduct, incompetence, or impairment are dealt with in a timely and appropriate manner.

Statutory Functions

The Responsibilities of the Medical Board

The Medical Board ensures that medicine is practised in Western Australia according to the requirements of the Act. These responsibilities include:

1. Ensuring that all medical practitioners registered in Western Australia are suitably qualified.
2. Ensuring that interns are appropriately trained before they begin to work in the community.
3. Investigating complaints about doctors and taking appropriate action against those found to be in breach of the Act.
4. Liaising with national organisations such as the Australian Medical Council to ensure that standards and procedures in Western Australia are generally consistent with those in other States.
5. Ensuring that people not registered as doctors do not practise medicine or convey to the general public the impression that they are doing so.

Planning for Better Access

In the 2003 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) *Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers*, it was found that one in five people (approximately 20%) in Australia had a reported disability. A disability was defined as any limitation, restriction or impairment, which has lasted, or is likely to last, for at least six months and restricts everyday activities.

The Disability Services Act, 1993 defines disability as a condition that:

- is attributable to an intellectual, cognitive, neurological, sensory or physical impairment or a combination of those impairments;
- is permanent; and
- may or may not be episodic in nature.

For the Board to be compliant with the Disability Services Act 1993, the Board is required to develop and implement a Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (“DAIP”) to outline the ways in which the Board it will ensure that people with disabilities are provided with the same opportunities to access the Board’s facilities and services.

This is the Board’s first Disability Access and Inclusion Plan.

Access and Inclusion Policy Statement

The Board is committed to ensuring that people with disabilities, their families and carers have the same opportunities, rights and responsibilities enjoyed by all other people in the community, to access the Board’s services and any information required from the Board.

The Board intends on achieving this by ensuring that the following desired DAIP outcomes are adhered to:

1. People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised by, a public authority.
2. People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities of a public authority.
3. People with disabilities receive information from a public authority in a format that will enable them to access the information as readily as other people are able to access it.
4. People with disabilities receive the same level and quality of service from the staff of a public authority as other people receive from the staff of that public authority.

5. People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to a public authority.
6. People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by a public authority.

Development of the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan

Responsibility for the Planning Process

The Board is in the process of developing and implementing the Disability Access and Inclusion plan. As this is the first plan prepared by the Board, staff comments and recommendations will be considered when reviewing and evaluating the plan and a review is proposed to occur on an annual basis.

Consultation Process

The Board intends to inform the public through its website, that it is developing a DAIP to address the obstacles that people with disabilities, their families and carers experience in accessing the Board's services. The Board will a draft DAIP and include a feedback form to invite the public to provide any feedback and suggestions.

Responsibility for Implementing the DAIP

It is a requirement of the Disability Services Act 1993 that a public authority that has a DAIP must take all practicable measures to ensure that the plan is implemented by the public authority and its officers, employees, agents or contractors.

Implementation of the DAIP is therefore the responsibility of all areas of the Board. This includes the Board members, all staff and contractors. Some of the actions of the plan will apply to the Board as a whole and others are Department specific. The Implementation Plan sets out who is responsible for each action.

Communicating the plan to staff and people with disabilities

The Board will review all public comments and feedback to finalise its DAIP which it will:

- submit to the Commission;
- make available on its public website (in both standard and large print); and
- include in its Policy and Procedures manual for staff.

The public will be advised (through the website) that requests can be made for a copy of the DAIP in other formats also, such as electronic format and audio format.

The DAIP be raised at an internal staff meeting and further meetings will be held when any amendments are made to the plan. Amendments will also be included on the website to notify the public.

Review and Evaluation Mechanisms

The Disability Services Act 1993 sets out the minimum review requirements for public authorities in relation to DAIPs.

Review and Monitoring

The Board will comply with the Act's review requirements by:

- reviewing its DAIP at least every five years;
- reviewing and/or amending its DAIP at any time to reflect any developments made and any issues that may arise;
- holding a meeting with staff on a six monthly basis to review progress of the implementation of the strategies identified in the DAIP;
- if the Board prepares or amends a DAIP in a year ending 30 June, it will report about the implementation of the plan to the Commission within two months after the end of that year.
- amendments will be included on the Board's website; meetings held with staff; and included in the internal policy and procedures manual.
- A report on the DAIPs implementation will be included in the Board's annual report.

Evaluation

Evaluation of the Board's DAIP will be undertaken through:

- The CEO will endorse any reports on the DAIP.

- On an annual basis, prior to 31 July, the Board will seek feedback from the public on the effectiveness of strategies that have been implemented.
- A notice will be placed on the Board's website to notify public of the evaluation.
- Staff will be requested to provide feedback also on whether the strategies are being implemented successfully and whether they have any suggestions for improvements. Any additional barriers identified will also be addressed.
- Implementation Plans will be amended in accordance with the feedback received through the public and staff.

Reporting on the DAIP

The Disability Services Act 1993 sets out the minimum reporting requirements for public authorities in relation to DAIPs

The Board will report on the implementation of its DAIP through its Annual Report as required by the Act.

The Board will also report to the Commission the preparation or amendments to a DAIP in a year ending 30 June, within two months after that year.

The Board is not required to report under the Financial Management Act 2006.

Strategies of the Board to achieve desired outcomes

As mentioned previously, there are six desired outcomes that the Board is addressing to improve access and inclusion for people with disabilities.

Outcome 1: People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to access the Board's services and any events organised by it.

Strategy	Timeline
Ensure all policies, procedures forming part of the Board's activities to be compliant with the Act	June 2009
Provide opportunities for the public to comment and provide feedback on the access of services and information provided by the Board.	Ongoing
Ensure that any forms are accessible to people with disabilities	June 2008
Ensure that the DAIP and any information relating to it is included on the Board's public website	Ongoing
Ensure that Board members, employees and contractors are aware of the Board's DAIP	Ongoing

Outcome 2: People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to access the Board's office and other facilities.

Strategy	Timeline
Ensure the Board's office is accessible to people with disabilities	Ongoing
Ensure the Board's employees are aware of facilities available to people with disabilities (e.g. ramp on entry)	Ongoing

Outcome 3: People with disabilities receive information from the Board that will enable them to access the information readily as other people are able to access it.

Strategy	Timeline
Improve community awareness that the Board's information and forms are available in alternative formats upon request	June 2008
Ensure that the Board's website clearly identifies that information is available in other formats and how it can be obtained	June 2008
Improve employee awareness of alternative formats to be made available to people with disabilities, their carers and families.	Ongoing
Be responsive to requests for information and services from people with disabilities, their carers and families.	Ongoing

Outcome 4: People with disabilities receive the same level and quality of service from the Board's employees as other people receive.

Strategy	Timeline
Provide staff training in providing assistance and information to people with disabilities.	Ongoing
Hold staff meetings to discuss and review disability and access issues.	Ongoing
New staff to be provided details of disability and access issues and policies during induction.	Ongoing
Promote equality in service provided by staff to people with disabilities	Ongoing

Outcome 5: People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to the Board.

Strategy	Timeline
Complaint forms and information to be available in alternative formats for people with disabilities	June 2008
Ensure that the Complaints Department staff provide assistance to people with disabilities.	Ongoing

Outcome 6: People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation the Board undertakes.

Strategy	Timeline
Promote public feedback on the Board's services and facilities	June 2009
Continually (six monthly) monitor and review the DAIP to ensure implementation and satisfactory outcomes	December 2008

FEEDBACK FORM