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Funds Management is committed to help strengthen the capacity of non-government disability service providers to provide safe, high quality services to people with disability, their families and carers.

This bulletin provides useful information about the **direct health support of people with a disability** that will help to inform and guide service providers to meet their responsibilities in the provision of health support to people with disability, including those people who have complex health support needs.

Direct Health Support of People with a Disability Policy

The [*Direct Health Support of People with a Disability Policy*](#) applies to services provided or funded by DCSI, including Disability Services and non-government disability services funded by Disability SA. The policy applies across accommodation services, day options placements, centre based day activities, recreation activities, respite services and other settings where DCSI funding is utilised and direct health support is provided.

The Policy aims to assist service providers to:

- have clear processes for assessing the level of support required by people with a disability
- enable them to define what level of training their support workers will require
- identify people who require a Registered Nurse (RN) involved in their care.

Access to skilled and experienced support workers will ensure that people with disability who have complex health support needs receive the level of care they require.

Direct Health Support of People with a Disability Guideline

The Policy is supported by the [*Direct Health Support of People with a Disability Guideline*](#). The Guideline aims to assist agencies and their support workers to plan and deliver health support to people with a disability, including those with complex health needs. The Guideline outlines assessment indicators, Registered Nurse (RN) involvement, as well as support worker competencies and training requirements. It aims to assist agencies and their support workers to plan and deliver the health support that individuals, including those with complex health needs, require.

The ongoing provision of supervision, monitoring and review of client health status and support worker competency is a shared responsibility between the provider agency and the supporting RN.

Communication between the provider agency or case manager, support workers, individuals, their families and / or carers, health professional(s), and the RN, are vital to the effective delivery of health supports to people with a disability.

As a service provider, what can you do?

It is a contractual requirement for disability service providers to comply with the [Direct Health Support of People with a Disability Policy](#) and [Direct Health Support of People with a Disability Guideline](#).

To enhance your organisation's ability to effectively manage the direct health support of people with a disability, please consider:

- whether your organisational policies and / or procedures align with, and make reference to the [Direct Health Support of People with a Disability Policy](#) and [Direct Health Support of People with a Disability Guideline](#);
- the importance of clearly defining and documenting the role and responsibilities of all parties involved;
- the different procedures that may be required to effectively manage direct health support needs compared to the response / treatment of minor injuries (e.g. written records, notification of senior management and information provision to families and carers);
- establishing and promoting clear communication pathways with clients, their families, carers and staff;
- the mechanisms needed to ensure that staff are competent and adequately informed / trained; and
- seeking feedback and / or suggestions for improvement when reviewing your organisational policies and procedures.

Establishing good practices in medication management, record keeping, treatment of minor injuries and related communication practices will ensure effective provision of direct health support.