

How Communication Access can contribute toward your Disability Access and Inclusion Plan Outcomes

Outcome 1. Inclusive and accessible communities

People with disability live in accessible and well-designed communities with opportunity for full inclusion in social, economic, sporting and cultural life.

- Without successful communication, inclusion is impossible. Communication access strategies and resources ensure that those services provided by your organisation are also available to those who have communication challenges, and that they can ask questions, request services and interact with service staff.
 - For example, your business may provide a place for people to eat, socialise and catch up with friends. With good communication access, a person who has communication challenges will feel confident that they can successfully read the menu and order their food.
 - Another example is a financial institution whose communication access options may include a way for all customers to indicate the purpose of their visit regardless of whether they speak their message or point to pictures to indicate.
- If your business, agency or organisation exists to provide social, economic, sporting or cultural activities for South Australians, how do you ensure that those who have communication challenges can also access these services?
- Communication access initiatives can create pathways for all people to interact with customer service staff and enjoy a more inclusive society.

Outcome 2. Economic security and employment

People with disability, their families and carers have economic security, enabling them to plan for the future and exercise choice and control over their lives.

- Economic security comes through employment but also through appropriate management of finances, insurance, and social services.
- Language and literacy challenges can hugely impact on a person's ability to meet their legal and administrative requirements for these services.
 - If those services were to provide information in easy to read documents, along with accessible help desk and support services, people with communication challenges would have a far greater chance of successfully managing their own affairs.
- Consider the implications of a person not being able to read their renewal documents, or call to update contact details when they change their address.
 - Communication access initiatives ensure that all people receive the information they need in a format that is accessible, and that if they need to visit or call those services, that they will be successful in getting their message across.



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Outcome 3. Rights protection, justice and legislation

People with disability have their rights promoted, upheld and protected.

- Communication accessible services not only ensure that people can get their message across, but they are also considered inviting and accepting.
- Communication accessible services uphold the rights of people with disabilities as noted above in terms of Article 21 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with a Disability - Freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information.

Outcome 4. Personal and community support

People with disability, their families and carers have access to a range of supports to assist them to live independently and actively engage in their communities.

- Communication access initiatives play an enormous role in the independence of people with communication challenges. With appropriate resources and trained staff in place, a person can access a service without reliance on support workers or parents.
 - For some, this is liberating - allowing them to participate within their community without full time assistance.
 - For those who still require some assistance, the accessible services may not lead to independence but could definitely support their autonomy and self determination.
 - Trained staff would know to communicate directly to the person rather than to their support person and would also have resources available so that the person can speak for themselves rather than relying on others to speak for them.

Outcome 5. Learning and skills

People with disability achieve their full potential through their participation in an inclusive high quality education system that is responsive to their needs. People with disability have opportunities to continue learning throughout their lives.

- Current learning theories emphasise the importance of interaction and discussion to successful learning.
- Communication accessible learning and education services are crucial for inclusion. Without the opportunity to ask questions, share information, or access to information in accessible formats, a person cannot participate and engage in learning activities.



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Outcome 6. Health and wellbeing

People with disability attain the highest possible health and wellbeing outcomes throughout their lives.

- Good communication access gives people with disabilities the confidence to access their community without fear of exclusion. Being able to interact with customer service points within a business or organisation without the need for a parent or support worker to speak for them ensures a greater sense of self, and confidence to participate.
 - There is a growing body of research that identifies people with communication challenges at high risk for loneliness and social isolation, and along with that, mental health conditions such as depression and anxiety.
 - Better access to their communities along with better communication to ensure they are being understood is important to their well being.
 - In addition, health outcomes improve with improved patient provider communication. The more we can gain information directly from the individual, rather than it being reported by others, the better we can support their health and/or preventative measures.
- Your organisation may contribute to the health and well being of South Australians in other ways. Eg - healthy food, positive life experiences, joining their community, etc.
- The examples above can give you some ideas around how better communication and interaction within your business can support this outcome.