



Fact sheet

Practice reviews:

How to do a practice review

About this fact sheet

This fact sheet outlines the steps involved in doing a practice review.

It is not intended to be prescriptive; it offers suggestions that providers can change or adapt.

This fact sheet is one in a series of resources about practice reviews, and should be read in conjunction with other NDIS Commission fact sheets and publications about practice reviews. As a minimum, it is suggested that you also read the *Practice Review Framework for NDIS Providers*, and the *What is a Practice Review* fact sheet.

Key messages

A practice review is a reflective process that examines a provider's engagement with a group of participants, and improvements that can be made to their experience of service, often with a focus on a particular practice area, a cluster of services, and/or a particular team of support workers.

Know the facts that have led to the practice review happening, as much as you can, before you start the practice review process.

A practice review may not always include all of the activities and steps outlined below. You should develop your practice review Terms of Reference (ToR) according to the scope of your organisation, how well-developed or established your systems are (e.g. how much data and information you have access to), and available resources.



How, why, and what?

As outlined in *What is a practice review?* fact sheet, the three reflective lenses to guide your practice review are: how, what, and why.

How did this situation/series of events come about? You will probably have some idea of the ‘how’ before you start a practice review; the indicators that prompted the practice review will tell you a lot about “how” events unfolded. You may however need to gather more information about the practice you are looking into before starting the practice review. Familiarise yourself with findings and recommendations from other activities related to the issue or issues prompting the practice review.

Why did this situation/series of events come about? You may also be aware of some of the ‘why’; however, it is likely further aspects will need to be uncovered during the practice review. Asking the stakeholders involved about ‘why’ something happened is an important component of a practice review as it provides insight into decision making and workplace culture.

What can we do to make things better/improve the situation? Engaging people in the ‘what’ is critical to gain buy-in to potential change arising from the practice review. It is also essential that participants are encouraged to take part in practice reviews, to reflect on their service experience, and provide ideas on how to improve it. Similarly, frontline workers and managers are well placed to provide insights into how their interactions with participants can be improved.

Activities of a practice review

There are various activities involved in a practice review. Table 1 below is not necessarily exhaustive. You should draw upon your organisation’s existing continuous improvement activities to inform the practice review. Refer to *The continuous improvement continuum* fact sheet for more information about how practice reviews relate to other activities you may be undertaking in your organisation.

How much of each activity you need to do depends on the context of the service being delivered, and the issues being considered.

For example, you may already have a lot of data about the issues of concern from previous incident and complaint investigation reports – which may be what has triggered the practice review – so you may not need to do much more digging into the data before you begin.

Regardless of your pre-existing knowledge of an issue, it is however helpful to remind yourself of what has previously been recommended, and perhaps already actioned.

It is important, too, that you consider the people you will be talking to. Learn a bit about them before you talk to them – both participants and workers. You will learn more if you are forearmed with information (e.g. about people’s support needs, likes/dislikes, routines, people’s history with your organisation etc.).



Activities of a practice review

How did that practice happen?

Data interrogation – look at previous audits, incident reports etc. Desktop review of relevant documentation

Why did that practice happen?

Organisational values reminder – make sure you understand the underlying principles driving decision-making and behaviour in the organisation. Observation and interviews – explore gaps, barriers, attitudes, and opportunities

What could we do better? What else could we be doing?

Good practice research and subject matter expertise Reflection. Action planning

Steps in a practice review

Here outlines the steps of a practice review, and suggests examples of activities in each

1. Identify the issue

Usually through existing continuous improvement activities - e.g. audits, risk reports, investigation reports etc.

2. Interrogate the data

Look at all the available information about the issue/s you want to review - e.g. previous investigations, audits, complaints, grievances, incident reviews, etc.

3. Develop Terms of Reference

Ensure the scope of the review specifically reflects whatever has triggered the review Decide on a panel or single reviewer, and an internal or external reviewer

You may want to link the practice review to the service's practice framework if you have one (e.g. person-centred practice, active support, positive behaviour support)

4. Get buy-in

Engage your stakeholders at all levels of the organisation - Board, CEO, Executive team, senior managers, frontline managers and workers, participants and their representatives. Ensure sufficient resources are allocated to the practice review

5. Prepare

Invite review participants and organise any necessary support

Review information about the people involved in the review - e.g. support plans, progress notes, previous reports and recommendations Ensure subject matter expertise and good practice research is available if necessary



6. Do the review

Visit the service outlets/sites if possible; a practice review is not a desktop activity Talk to people and observe what is going on

7. Suggest action

Make sure suggested actions are practical and achievable

Consider what needs to change to prevent same issues/situation happening again

Consider organisational and industry benchmarking relevancy - e.g. is this an issue across other services or organisations

Recommend formal investigation only if necessary, to establish facts or identify what has occurred in relation to a specific event or incident

8. Report

Document what you learned through the practice review Encourage review participants to reflect on what they learned

Encourage your Board/CEO/Executive to think about how the findings of the review reflect the organisation's values or expose where there are gaps/differences

9. Reflect

Think about what you learned through the practice review Encourage review participants to reflect on what they learned

Encourage your Board/CEO/Executive to think about on how the findings of the review reflect the organisation's values or expose where there are gaps/differences



Related resources

Refer to the *Practice Review Framework for NDIS Providers* for a complete list of documents related to this series.



Practice
Review
Framework
for NDIS
Providers



What is a
practice
review?



The continuous
improvement
continuum



How to engage
people in a
practice
review



Questions and
prompts to
use in a
practice
review with
people with
disability



Consulting
with people
with disability
during a
practice
review



Reflection
exercise for
reviewers

Contact Us

Call: 1800 035 544 (free call from landlines).

Our contact centre is open 9.00am to 5.00pm (9.00am to 4.30pm in the NT), Monday to Friday, excluding public holidays.

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