



Australian Government

Department of Families,
Housing, Community Services
and Indigenous Affairs



National Disability Advocacy Program and Quality Assurance

How do I know if my disability advocacy
agency is doing a good job for me?

EASY READ BOOKLET

Improving the lives of Australians



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The document must be attributed as the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs National Disability Advocacy Program and Quality Assurance easy read booklet.

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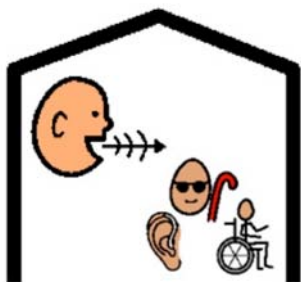
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About audits, advocacy and this booklet

Who is this booklet for?



This booklet is for people with disability who use disability advocacy agencies.

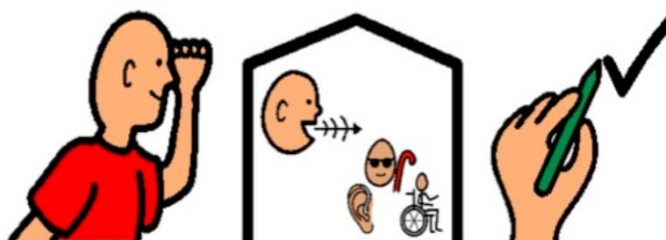
How should I read this booklet?



This booklet has words and pictures. You should look at both. The pictures will help you understand the words, and the words will help you understand the pictures.

You can ask someone you trust to help you read this booklet.

This booklet has lots of questions and answers. You can read the whole booklet, or look through to find the questions that you most want to know answers about.



What is this booklet about?

This booklet is about Quality Assurance and the audit of your disability advocacy agency.

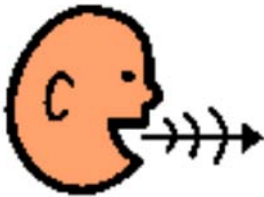


What is Quality Assurance?

Quality Assurance is the way that the government checks that your disability advocacy agency is doing a good job for you.

What is an audit?

‘Audit’ is the word for when someone comes to check that an agency is doing a good job.



What is disability advocacy?

What is a disability advocacy agency?

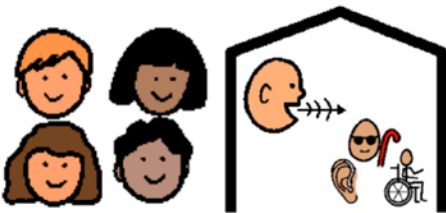
What is an advocate?

‘Disability advocacy’ means:

- ▶ Making sure that people with disability get to say what they want and need
- ▶ Making sure that other people listen
- ▶ Making sure that people with disability get help to get what they want and need.

A ‘disability advocacy agency’ is a group of people whose job it is to help you with disability advocacy. They might help you through talking, writing or taking actions.

The people who do advocacy work at the ‘disability advocacy agency’ are called ‘advocates’. Other staff also help run the ‘disability advocacy agency’.



What types of disability advocacy are there?

This page explains all the different types of advocacy. The audit happens for all of these types of disability advocacy.

Your disability advocacy agency usually does just one of these types of advocacy for you:



- ▶ ‘Individual advocacy’ is when people help you with a particular problem



- ▶ ‘Self advocacy’ is when **you** get help to learn how to do advocacy for yourself



- ▶ ‘Family advocacy’ is when your family gets help to help you



- ▶ ‘Citizen advocacy’ is when you get matched up with a person who helps you, just because they want to, not because it’s their job



- ▶ ‘Legal advocacy’ is when people help you with laws (which are rules for everyone to follow all the time)



- ▶ ‘Systemic advocacy’ is working with groups or organisations that help people with disability and trying to help all people with disability at once.

What will this booklet tell me?

This booklet will tell you about the team of people who come to check on your disability advocacy agency. They are called the audit team. The booklet will also say what you can do to help them.

Who is in the booklet?

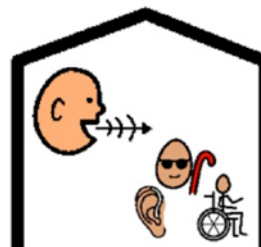
In this booklet, the audit team looks like this:



In this booklet, your advocates and the other staff at your agency look like this:



In this booklet, your disability advocacy agency looks like this:

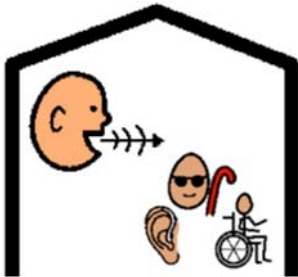


About the audit team



What is the audit team's job?

The audit team's job is to check if your disability advocacy agency is doing a good job for you. If your disability advocacy agency is doing a good job then it gets a certificate.



Who does the audit team check on?

The audit team checks on your disability advocacy agency, not on you.



Why is the certificate important?

The certificate is important because every disability advocacy agency needs to have one to say they are doing a good enough job. The certificate means the government is able to give money to help pay for running your disability advocacy agency.



Who is part of the audit team?

No one on the audit team is from your disability advocacy agency.



The audit team has people on it who have training on what good advocacy means for people with disability. One member of the audit team is a person with disability.



When does the audit team come?

The audit team comes every year. Your disability advocacy agency needs to tell you when the audit team is coming.

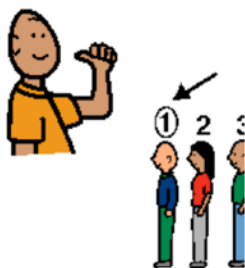
What does the audit team think ‘good job’ means?



The audit team thinks that your disability advocacy agency is doing a good job if it follows the Disability Advocacy Standards. These are rules to follow about what makes good advocacy for people with disability. To find out more about these rules, ask your advocates or the other staff at your agency.



Some of the things your disability advocacy agency needs to do for a good job are:



- ▶ Making sure you can have a say, if you want one, in what you want and need

- ▶ Making sure they put you first when they help you. This means they don't let other people's worries get mixed up with yours

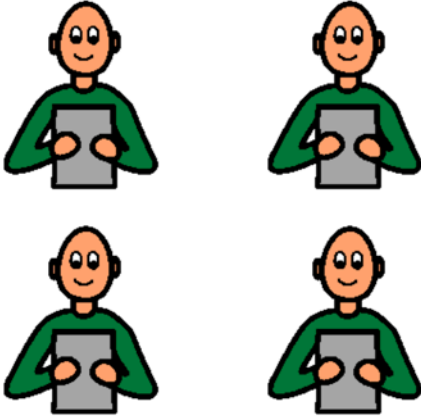


- ▶ Making sure that the advocates are taught how to help you properly



- ▶ Making sure you know how to make a complaint. They should make sure that someone does something about it for you.

Getting ready for the audit team



What does my disability advocacy agency need to do to get ready for the audit team?

Your advocates and the other staff at your agency get ready by looking at all their papers about your disability advocacy agency and working out how well they think the agency is doing so far.



Can I help my disability advocacy agency get ready?

While they are getting ready, your advocates or the other staff at your agency might ask you some questions about how well you think your disability advocacy agency is going. You can help by talking with them or writing some answers down.



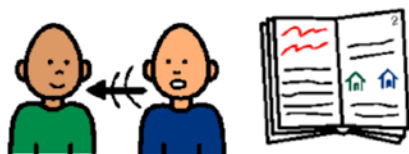
What do I need to do to get ready for the audit team? Who helps me?



You can get ready for the audit team by deciding if you want to take part in the audit.



Your advocates or other staff at your agency let you know when and why the audit team is coming, and they help you decide if you want to take part. They might do this by talking with you or by giving you easy information (like this booklet) to help you think about it.



If you need it, you can also get help to decide if you want to take part from a different advocate from another agency.



The audit team's visit and what you can do

What does the audit team do when they come to my disability advocacy agency?

When the audit team comes to check your disability advocacy agency:



- ▶ They ask you what you think about your disability advocacy agency



- ▶ They ask your advocates and the other staff at your agency what they think



- ▶ They look at all the papers about the ways your disability advocacy agency does its work



- ▶ They read some files from the people who use the disability advocacy agency, but only from people who say it is OK



- ▶ They think about how well your disability advocacy agency follows the Disability Advocacy Standards.

The audit team tries to speak to lots of different people at your disability advocacy agency.

The audit team has a list of things your disability advocacy agency should be doing. The audit team uses the list to decide if your disability advocacy agency is doing a good job.

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What can I do to help the audit team?

To help the audit team, you can:

- ▶ Answer questions about your disability advocacy agency
- ▶ Let the audit team see your file about how your disability advocacy agency has helped you.

Do I have to answer questions for the audit team?

You can decide if you want to answer the questions – yes or no. Not everyone at your disability advocacy agency needs to take part, so if you don't want to you don't have to.



What happens if I do or don't take part?

If you don't take part, no one will be upset with you. If you do take part, it won't give you any special advocacy help.

Do I have to let the audit team see my file?

You can decide if you want the audit team to see your file – yes or no. You should only let them if you want them to. If you don't say OK, they can't see your file. Usually you have to sign a form to say OK, but sometimes you can have help to say OK in another way.

What kind of questions do the audit team ask me?

The questions might be something like:



- ▶ Are you happy with your disability advocacy agency?
- ▶ Has your disability advocacy agency helped you fix problems?



- ▶ Has your disability advocacy agency helped you get what you want or need?



- ▶ Has your disability advocacy agency given you information you can understand, matched you up with helpful people or helped you learn what to do about problems?

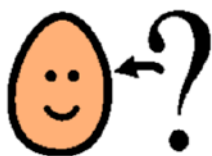
- ▶ Do you have complaints about your disability advocacy agency? Has your disability advocacy agency told you who to complain to?



- ▶ Have you got any ideas about how to make your disability advocacy agency better?

What ways I can answer the audit team's questions?

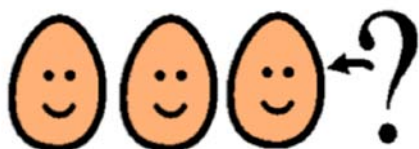
The audit team have different ways for you to answer:



- ▶ Asking questions with you by meeting you alone



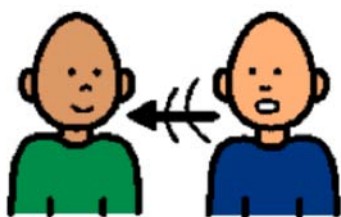
- ▶ Asking questions with you by yourself on the telephone



- ▶ Asking questions with you in a group



- ▶ Getting you to write down some things



- ▶ Just chatting with you about what you think.

You can choose which way you want to do it.



How many audit team members ask me questions?

Sometimes one audit team member asks you questions and sometimes there might be more than one audit team member there. There are always at least two people doing the whole audit.



What if I need someone to help me?

If you want someone you trust to help you decide whether or not to take part or to help you answer the audit team's questions, this is OK. This could be a:

- ▶ Family member or friend
- ▶ An advocate from a different agency
- ▶ Someone else you trust, but not from your disability advocacy agency.



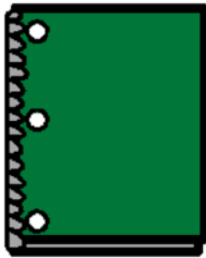
Will the audit team tell my disability advocacy agency who said what? Will they tell anyone else?

The audit team does not tell your disability advocacy agency who said what. They put everything everyone said together. They also don't tell anyone else what you said – what you say is only for the audit and the report.

At the end of the audit

What does the audit team do when they finish checking?

When they finish checking, the audit team does these things:



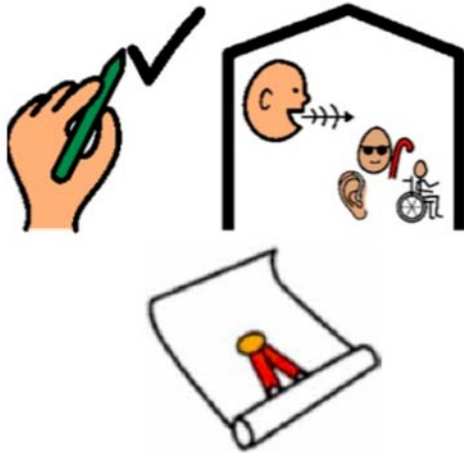
- ▶ Writes a report about your disability advocacy agency. The government and your disability advocacy agency get a copy



- ▶ Decides if your disability advocacy agency gets a certificate

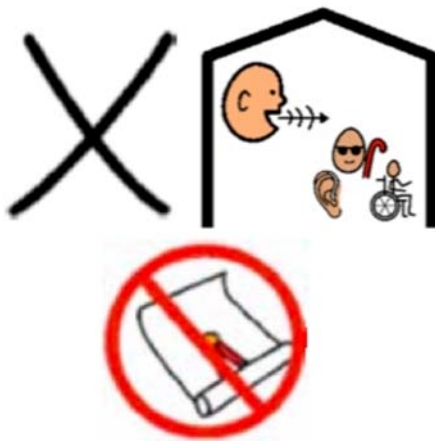


- ▶ Holds a meeting at your disability advocacy agency to tell everyone what they found out. Your advocates and the other staff at your agency go to the meeting. You can go too if you want to.



What happens if my disability advocacy agency gets a certificate?

If your disability advocacy agency gets a certificate, this means the audit team thinks they are doing a good job. The audit team might give some ideas about things your disability advocacy agency could do better, but your disability advocacy agency does not have to change anything.



What happens if my disability advocacy agency does not get a certificate?

If your disability advocacy agency does not get a certificate, this means the audit team thinks they could do a better job. The audit team tells your disability advocacy agency what they need to fix and how long they have to fix it. After they fix it, your disability advocacy agency gets a certificate.

How to say when something is wrong



What if I think the audit team did something wrong?

If you are not happy with something the audit team did, you can tell your disability advocacy agency.



What if I want to make a complaint to someone other than the audit team about my disability advocacy agency?

Sometimes you might not want to tell your disability advocacy agency or the audit team about something you are unhappy with. You can ring the **Complaints Resolution and Referral Service** instead. The phone number is **1800 880 052**.



