

Stakeholder Management and Advocacy

Every day Aspect engages with a broad range of stakeholders across all areas of the organisation. These stakeholders are key to the organisation's success and the achievement of the organisational vision, mission, purpose and strategic goals.

Our Stakeholders

Stakeholder group	Aspect's aim
People on the autism spectrum and the Autistic community	To effectively work in partnership with Autistic and non-autistic people in governance, service design, research, delivery and monitoring. This includes Autistic people from diverse backgrounds and intersectional identities (see Working in Partnership Charter)
Families, carers and circles of support of people on the autism spectrum	To collaborate with families, carers and circles of support to share information and knowledge, identify and share strengths and interests and develop person-centred comprehensive programs (see Working with Families Carers and Support Networks procedure)
Governments (state and federal)	To further promote the interests of people on the autism spectrum, provide feedback on how policies are affecting users of Aspect's services; and provide information about people on the autism spectrum and their needs
Funding bodies	To effectively meet our reporting obligations and in the case of NDIS, manage supports for participants and advocate for appropriate funding for individuals
Supporters (donors and philanthropists)	To provide regular updates on the tangible, positive impacts of financial support and donations to the lives of people with autism and their families
Members	To provide updates on strategic direction, progress and overall performance of Aspect as well as changes or updates to the organisation's constitution.
Strategic partners (organisations that Aspect develops a relationship with to achieve a mutually beneficial result)	To build capabilities in evidence-informed and evidence-based autism practices through research; increase access to high quality autism-specific services nationally; foster interagency collaboration; provide integrated service approaches; provide professional education and workshops; demonstrate innovative

	practice through model classrooms and autism friendly environments; pioneer best practice approaches; and learn from partners who have expertise outside that of Aspect. This includes other education systems and service providers, peak bodies, Autism Friendly partners, and major corporate relationships.
Aspect staff	To ensure that staff are engaged and committed, and have the necessary information they need to do their job. Aspect is committed to ensuring that each staff member receives effective support to enhance their performance, meet Aspect's strategic objectives and achieve best outcomes for participants / students and their families. (see Working at Aspect policy)

Principles for stakeholder engagement

We have 5 core principles that guide engagement activities with our stakeholders. These are the standards we set to establish and consolidate collaborative relationships with all key stakeholders, recognising that effective communication and the sharing of skills, knowledge and experience with key stakeholders and the broader community is essential to achieve optimal outcomes for Autistic people and to achieve our organisational purpose.

Principle 1 – Inclusive and collaborative

Working in partnership with people on the autism spectrum is fundamental at Aspect. We extend this partnership approach to all our stakeholders and encourage participation of all who contribute to, influence or are impacted by our work. We also understand that there are differences in language, culture and background and will adjust our communication style and approach accordingly.

Principle 2 – Respectful

We acknowledge and respect the different needs of our stakeholders as well as the expertise and experience they bring to the table. Engagement is a two-way process and Aspect welcomes different views and opinions. We ensure that Autistic voices are heard across multiple levels within the organisation.

Principle 3 – Authentic

We are open and honest in our engagement with stakeholders. We set clear expectations and ensure that everyone has access to the information and resources they need to participate in a meaningful way. We don't presume to speak on behalf of the Autistic community and therefore ensure that we involve and include the autistic voice in all we do.

Principle 4 – Timely



We involve stakeholders from the start and agree on when and how we will engage with them.

Principle 5 – Purpose-led and values-based

Our Purpose is a different brilliant® – understanding, engaging and celebrating the strengths, interests and aspirations of people on the autism spectrum. This, along with our values – we are passionate about people, about being positive and about what's possible – must guide our interactions with stakeholders at all times.

Aspect monitors its engagement with key stakeholders and the broader community throughout the year in line with its strategic and business planning processes. The results are shared with the broader community through the annual report.

Advocacy

Aspect believes that diversity and inclusion are critical to a healthy community. Aspect also believes that people on the autism spectrum deserve the same rights as everyone else and that they have a right to a life free of abuse, neglect, exploitation and mistreatment. The organisation advocates for participants and students on the autism spectrum in a number of ways.

- *Individual advocacy* – on a daily basis, staff working with participants or students work to ensure they have access to supports and services that they need to ensure they have improved social and economic participation.
- *Positional advocacy* – Aspect is a leader in autism-specific education and can take advantage of this position by providing expert opinion /advice or utilise storytelling to further promote the benefits of inclusion and diversity. Aspect also advocates by taking positions on certain topics such as neurodiversity or coproduction even without expressly advocating about these issues.
- *Systemic advocacy* – Aspect seeks to inform and influence government policy as well as educate the community through organisations such as the Australian Autism Alliance of which Aspect is a member.

Aspect will continue to gain a deeper understanding seek greater clarity of our broader role in advocacy for people on the Autism spectrum and the autistic community. We will continue to support systemic advocacy through the Australian Autism Alliance where we can leverage the strengths of a broader group.

Principles for advocacy

Principle 1 – Work in partnership

Aspect believes that it is important to work in partnership with Autistic people throughout our organisation. The same principle applies to advocacy. We believe in coproduction where Autistic and non-autistic people work together on service design, delivery and monitoring.

Principle 2 – Clarity of purpose



Aspect is clear on our aims and objectives when advocating on an issue or on behalf of a participant or student. We also understand the scope and limitations of our role as service provider and would seek to involve others where appropriate.

Principle 3 – Person-centred

Aspect is respectful of the people we support and their needs and wants. It is these needs and wants that should direct our work. We work hard to protect the rights and interests of all our participants and students.

Principle 4 – Constructive

Aspect will ensure that advocacy will be constructive and positive. Our work should bring people together rather than being divisive and confrontational.

Principle 5 – Confidential

Aspect respects individual's need for confidentiality and has policies and processes in place to support this.

Principle 6 – Strategic

Systemic advocacy pursued by Aspect should align with the organisation's overall purpose and strategic direction.

External Framework

The Stakeholder Engagement & Feedback policy upholds Aspect's commitment to the:

- NDIS Practice Standards (2018) and NDIS Code of Conduct, specifically within the NDIS Practice Standards & Quality Indicators:
 - Core Module: 1. Rights and Responsibilities, under all Outcomes.
 - Core Module: 2. Provider Governance and Operational Management, under all Outcomes.
 - Core Module: 3. Provision of Supports, under all Outcomes.
 - Supplementary Module: 2. Specialist Behaviour Support Module, under the relevant Outcomes.
 - Supplementary Module: 2a. Implementing Behaviour Support Plans, under the relevant Outcomes.
 - Supplementary Module: 3. Early Childhood Supports, under all Outcomes.
 - Supplementary Module: 4. Specialist Support Coordination, under all Outcomes.
- Disability Standards for Education (2005), specifically:
 - Part 8: Standards for Harassment and Victimisation.



- NESA Registered and Accredited Individual Non-government Schools (NSW Manual), specifically:
 - 3. Requirements for Registered Non-government Schools, under requirements for Staff; Safe and Supportive Environments; Discipline; Attendance; and Management and Operation of the School.
- Standards for Registration and Review of Registration of Schools in South Australia, specifically the relevant quality related criteria for:
 - Standard 2 Student Learning and Assessment
 - Standard 3 Student Safety, Health and Welfare

Critical Definitions

Autism spectrum - Autism is a lifelong neurodevelopmental condition that affects, among other things, the way an individual relates to his or her environment and their interaction with other people. The word 'spectrum' describes the varying degree to which autism may impact the person. Aspect recognises that people on the autism spectrum have unique strengths, interests and talents and values neurodiversity.

Legislation References

National

Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)
 Australian Education Act 2013 (Cth)
 Australian Education Amendment Bill 2017 (Cth)
 Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)
 Carer Recognition Act 2010 (Cth)
 Disability (Access to Premises- Buildings) Standards 2010 (Cth)
 Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
 Disability services and Inclusion Act 2023 (Cth)
 Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cth)
 Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Cth)
 National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 (Cth)
 National Disability Insurance Scheme Amendment (Quality and Safeguards Commission and other measures) Bill 2017 (Cth)
 Ombudsman Act 1976 (Cth)*
 Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
 Privacy Amendment (Notifiable data breaches) Act 2017 (Cth)
 Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000 (Cth)
 Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)
 Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)
 Spam Act 2003 (Cth)



New South Wales

Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW)
Community Services (Complaints, Reviews and Monitoring) Act 1993 (NSW)
Disability Inclusion Act 2014 (NSW)
Education Act 1990 (NSW)
Guardianship Act 1987 (NSW)
Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 (NSW)
Mental Health Act 2007 (NSW)
NSW Carers (Recognition) Act 2010 (NSW)
Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW)

Victoria

Carers Recognition Act 2012 (Vic)
Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (VIC)
Disability Act 2006 (Vic)
Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Vic)
Guardianship and Administration Act 1986 (Vic)
Health Records Act 2001 (Vic)
Mental Health Act 2014 (Vic)
Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)
Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 (Vic)

South Australia

Carers Recognition Act 2005 (SA)
Disability Services Act 1993 (SA)
Education (Compulsory Education Age) Amendment Act 2007 (SA)
Education Act 1972 (SA)
Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (SA)
Freedom of Information Act 1991 (SA)
Guardianship and Administration Act 1993 (SA)
Health and Community Services Complaints Act 2004 (SA)
Mental Health Act 2009 (SA)
Racial Vilification Act 1996 (SA)
State Records Act 1997 (SA)

Australian Capital Territory

Disability Services Act 1991 (ACT)
Discrimination Act 1991 (ACT)
Freedom of Information Act 1989 (ACT)
Guardianship and management of property Act 1991 (ACT)
Human Rights Commission Act 2005 (ACT)
Mental Health Act 2015 (ACT)

Queensland

Anti-discrimination Act 1991 (QLD)
Carers (Recognition) Act 2008 (Qld)
Carers (Recognition) Amendment Act 2010 (Qld)



Disability Services Act 2006 (Qld)
Guardianship and Administration Act 2000 (Qld)
Human Rights Act 2019 (Qld)
Information Privacy Act 2009 (Qld)
Mental Health Act 2016 (Qld)
Right to Information Act 2009 (Qld)

Northern Territory

Anti-Discrimination Act 1992 (NT)
Disability Services Act 1993 (NT)
Guardianship of Adults Act 2016 (NT)
Information Act 2002 (NT)
Mental Health and related services amendment act 2007 (NT)

Tasmania

Anti-Discrimination Act 1998 (Tas)
Guardianship and Administration Act 1995 (Tas)
Personal Information Protection Act 2004 (Tas)
Right to Information Act 2009 (Tas) Disability Services Act 2011 (Tas)

