



Team Approach Model to Service Delivery at Neami

In April 2002 Neami adopted a team approach to service delivery improvement, which results in practical benefits for consumers and a learning environment for employees. Neami seeks to build upon existing strengths to improve practice in the provision of rehabilitation and support to consumers and to support staff teams at Neami service sites to take up collective responsibility to all consumers.

Team Approach Model

Neami has moved to a team approach to individual support work. This involves a set group of workers being collectively responsible for the support of a specific group of consumers. The team approach will provide a model for:

- Increased consistency and continuity of service to consumers (Group rather than individual providing service).
- Expand the working relationship with individual consumers to the range of workers in a Neami team.
- Increase flexibility in service delivery drawing on several workers' skills rather than just one.
- Increase the shared responsibility for consumers leading to reduction of "burn out".
- Improve worker skill base drawing on different disciplines and levels of experience within the team.

Improve communication with other agencies. A number of workers having an understanding of a consumer's care plan. (quicker/effective response).

1. Team Structure

- Management of the teams will be overseen by existing line managers, whose role will be to facilitate communication and best practice.
- Number of workers in each group should be no larger than seven and no smaller than four to ensure effective level of communication and ability to cover all forms of leave. There may be a requirement to look at gender, age, ethnic background etc in the formation of teams.
- Number of clients will be evenly allocated between teams. It may be useful to look at geographical breakdown when allocating consumers to a support team.
- Each service will develop their own reflective practice process to build on their skills in the delivery of support to consumers.
- It is viewed that there is little need for increased time spent in meetings and most likely there will be less time required for staff meetings.
- Key Worker Role will be enhanced under the team approach. The role of Key Support Worker - whether it be day program or home based outreach - does not necessarily alter under a team approach. Consumers will still be allocated a key support worker. The difference lies in the sharing of

information about the work with individual consumers so that when a key worker is unable to fulfil their role or it is decided that another worker has different skills and / or experience required - the team can step in and provide that support. The other team members replace the secondary worker.

2. Communication

Communication is a vital factor in moving to a team approach. A team is based on open and respectful communication and collaboration in all that it plans, does and reviews. The following elements of communication must clearly be observable parts of team life.

- Open and honest sharing of consumer plans and changes to those plans.
- Collaboration in planning, implementing and reviewing work with consumers.
- Commitment to and immediate implementation of reflective practice.
- Teams will decide what will be communicated within each meeting - emphasis will be placed on important issues that may have arisen and a sharing of relevant information. It may be that a consumer has had a significant experience but it may not be relevant to the team.
- This model is not problem focused and the team should address all aspects of every consumer not just the problem.
- Open and clear communication between teams.

Communication with consumers regarding the implementation of a team approach has occurred with support workers explaining that Neami has implemented a team approach. It is important to relay service approach to consumers and carers in an open and honest way.

3. Evaluation

The focus of evaluation for the team approach will be based on Neami's preferred style of case studies. The process is one of developing case studies of perception of change by the range of stakeholders involved. Stakeholders include consumers, support workers, referral agencies and care givers. It is envisaged that this evaluation will take place regularly. Each staff team will discuss progress within their service teams on a regular basis as the team approach model is further refined and developed