

Carers Queensland NDIS LAC PITC

School to Adult Life Transition

Amplifying Young Voices Reference Group

Terms of Reference

According to research, it is evident that there are gaps for young people with disability in relation to transitioning from school to adult life. The NDIS *Baseline Outcomes for NDIS Participants* reports (30 June 2020 and 2021) highlight that for young people aged between 15-24 years old entering the NDIS:

- 79.8% want more choice and control in their life, while 24.0% of those who started planning for their life after school years make independent decisions (2021)
- 19.9% had no-one outside their home to call for help (2021), compared to only 2.8% of the general population aged 15-24 years old (2020); 33.4% said they did not have any friends outside of family or paid staff (2021); and 28.7% said they often feel lonely (2020)
- 73% needed support to manage finances/money, and 65.5% to 67.5% required support with transport, communication, getting out of the house and reading/writing (2020)
- 23.2% of participants were planning for a home of their own (2020)
- 67.4% rated their health as good, very good or excellent (2021), compared to 91.9% of Australians aged 15-24 years old overall (2020)
- 57.8% said they had opportunities to learn new things (2021); 36.7% said they did not have these opportunities but wanted to (2020)
- 17.5% were working in a paid job (2021); 7.5% were working in an unpaid job (2021); and 69.1% of young people with disability who did not have a job, wanted one (2020)
- 31.5% had been involved in a community, cultural or religious group in the last 12 months (2021)

References:

Baseline outcomes for NDIS participants 30 June 2020 and 2021, National Disability Insurance Scheme

Carers Queensland is working with the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) to deliver the Local Area Coordination (LAC) Partner in the Community Program, supporting Australians with disability to live fulfilling and connected lives by taking an active role in building a community that is inclusive and welcoming for people with a disability.

Carers Queensland NDIS LAC Partner in the Community (also referred to as Carers Queensland) is implementing the School to Adult Life Transition project across Carers Queensland's NDIS Services Areas. The main purpose of the project is to increase the confidence of young people with disability to make choices about their life after school and ensure a successful transition from school to adult life leading to greater social and economic outcomes. Towards this aim, Carers Queensland has initiated the *Amplifying Young Voices* Reference Group (also referred to as the 'Reference Group') which is representative of young people with disability aged 18-25 years old who have already transitioned from school, who also share this same understanding and commitment. The Reference Group will help Carers Queensland to understand what is important to young people and how we can support their journey.

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Who are we?

The *Amplifying Young Voices* Reference Group brings together people with disability aged 18-25 years old who have finished school and are now exercising choice and control at home, work and/or in the community. Collectively, members of the Reference Group will:

- Have a wide range of post school transition experience such as tertiary or vocational study; open employment, work experience or self-employment; connection with informal, community and/or government supports; social or community participation; and volunteering
- Have an interest in making a difference in the lives of other young people who are still at school
- Represent each of Carers Queensland's service regions

To be considered for membership, individual applicants need to undergo an application process including:

- Submission of an Expression of Interest
- Participation in an interview conversation (interviews will be held virtually)
 - Demonstrate interest and experience in school to adult life transition in their local community
 - Demonstrate a willingness to share their experiences and ideas, listen to others, and be solutions-focused
- Completion of a Conflict-of-Interest Declaration
- Confirmation of Volunteer Blue Card Working with Children Check (mandatory)
- Approval by Carers Queensland Executive Management

Specific requirements of approved Members are listed below in 'Our operating guidelines'.

What is our purpose?

The Reference Group will connect young adults with disability aged 18-25 years old to share their experience and ideas about the transition from school to adult life, providing insight, guidance and advice to inform the future work of Carers Queensland's School to Adult Life Transition project.

What can we do together?

To achieve our purpose, the Reference Group will:

- Provide insight into the lived experience of young people with disability with regards to leaving high school and becoming an adult
- Discuss and explore issues and learnings relating to these experiences
- Identify possible strategies to support young people with disability still at school to plan for life after school
- Identify ways to raise awareness for young people without disability, so they can be active natural supports and friends to their peers with disability

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How will we work? Our operating guidelines

Term

These Terms of Reference (ToR) are effective immediately and will be reviewed every two years by Carers Queensland senior management, with input from the Reference Group. The next review of the Terms of Reference is due in August 2025.

Membership

Membership will be comprised of young adults with disability aged 18-25 years old residing in one of Carers Queensland NDIS LAC Partner in the Community service regions. We are seeking one representative per region and a maximum of two (2) in Brisbane.

Membership is for a one-year period. Members can apply again at the end of the one-year term; however, Carers Queensland reserves the right to not fill a position if it is determined that the group could benefit from varied experience.

Members will be required to hold a current Volunteer Blue Card Working with Children Check and complete a Conflict-of-Interest Declaration form. Members will be provided with support to complete this process if needed.

Employees, or volunteers, of NDIS Registered Service Providers cannot be considered as Reference Group members.

Changes to the Reference Group

Members can choose to resign from the Reference Group if they identify they can no longer participate or provide meaningful engagement. Members are asked to give four weeks' notice prior to resignation.

Changes to the Reference Group membership (either resignations or additions) will be noted in the minutes.

When a meeting topic requires a particular subject matter expert, group members may request a subject matter expert be invited as a guest to a single meeting without applying for membership.

Meeting regularity and agenda

Communication will be via email updates and direct contact with members.

The Reference Group will initially meet monthly for 1-2 hours for the first five months. Meetings will then move to bi-monthly. This may be adjusted periodically by full agreement of the Reference Group, and with approval from Carers Queensland senior management, if needed to meet project goals.

Quorum – the Chair may decide not to proceed with a meeting if anticipated attendance is less than 50% of total members.

Members may participate in specific focus / work group meetings (outside of regular meetings, at a time convenient to the subgroup members - voluntary) as prioritised by the Reference Group.

To ensure participation of all members across the state, meetings will be held virtually via MS Teams.

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Minutes will be taken and distributed with clear action points. Copies of the minutes of meetings will be provided to all members for comment, within two weeks of meetings. Members can make comment within one week of receiving the minutes. Minutes will then be re-sent to members before the next meeting, at which these minutes (from the previous meeting) will be discussed and proposed for acceptance at the meeting. Agenda papers and related information will be provided to members (a minimum of) one week prior to each meeting.

Commitment and participation

Involvement in the Reference Group requires a willingness by all to actively participate and contribute to the shared goals and outcomes. In order to build and maintain authentic relationships, members are asked for a commitment and consistent attendance, according to individual capacity and interest.

Members are expected to:

- Bring to the group their knowledge and experience preparing for and transitioning from school.
- Actively participate in the Reference Group meetings with positive solutions-focused input.
- Participate in open and honest discussions in a respectful manner, valuing the diversity of members lived experience.
- Informally consult within their communities to ensure their input into the Reference Group is shared by others in their community.
- Attend all scheduled group meetings either using MS Teams or in person (if applicable) and arrive / log on prior to the start of each meeting. If unable to attend, the member is responsible for sending their apologies and forwarding any relevant information to the Chair to be tabled at the next meeting. Where possible, 24 hours' notice of inability to attend is requested.
- Be prepared to collaborate, workshop, problem solve, share experiences, learnings, and challenges.
- Be open and transparent, sharing anything relevant, or anything that affects the group, in a timely fashion.
- Be given reasonable time to make key decisions or to provide feedback.
- Ensure the timely completion of all actions.
- Complete meeting preparation including adding to any agenda items, completing any pre-reading, and agreed actions.
- Declare any conflict of interest prior to joining the group or as soon as identified.
- Uphold the values of Carers Queensland and those that were agreed upon within the group.
- Not delegate attendance to another person.
- Respect privacy and maintain confidentiality.

Dispute resolution

Any issues, problems, or feedback regarding any aspects of the group should be tabled with the group for open discussion. Where the matter cannot be resolved through discussion with the group, the Chair will implement Carers Queensland's External Grievance Policy and Procedures.

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Confidentiality and privacy

Members will share information and resources relevant to the shared goals and outcomes of the group. Respect should be given in relation to the re-sharing of information or resources and consideration of information that may be private or confidential.

Information and resources that are shared within the Reference Group must only be used within activities related to the group. Information is not to be used in a manner that may disadvantage another Reference Group member.

Decision making

- A minimum of 50% of total Reference Group members must be present to vote on decisions.
- Decisions/recommendations will be made by general agreement of the group.
- Reference Group members can say no to decision making if they consider the item of business not relevant to their responsibilities or a conflict of interest.

Resourcing and facilitation

The Reference Group will require limited resources and infrastructure to sustain its joint activities. Carers Queensland will host the meetings and fulfil the following responsibilities:

- **Chairperson:** Facilitate group collaboration and act as a lead for meetings and actions suggested by the Reference Group.
- **Secretariat:** Record meeting minutes and assist the Chair to distribute meeting agendas, minutes and other associated correspondence.

Financial Arrangements

- Carers Queensland will pay for any expenses related to organising meetings, such as venue and catering.
- A group member who identifies as having lived experience of disability and does not represent an organisation or business will be reimbursed for their time attending Reference Group meetings @ \$60/hr for up to 2 hours.
- Reimbursements for the member's time at Reference Group meetings should be claimed and managed through the Chair of the Reference Group. Note: Relevant claim forms will be provided by the Chair.

Changes to the Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference can only be amended, varied or modified by Carers Queensland. A review of the Terms of Reference will be conducted every two years, with input from the members of the Reference Group.

Important information

All records and documentation will be maintained and circulated by Carers Queensland.

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Member acknowledgement and agreement

Once discussed and agreed by the *Amplifying Young Voices* Reference Group, individual members will be asked to agree to the Terms of Reference by signing and returning a copy of the document.

Member name:	
Member signature:	
Date:	
Guardian / Nominee name: (if applicable)	
Guardian / Nominee signature:	
Date:	