

Your roles and responsibilities in providing an accessible and inclusive service

This fact sheet is for healthcare staff. Healthcare staff include administrative staff, clinical and allied health professionals.

Ensuring the human rights of WWD is everyone's responsibility

It is your responsibility as healthcare staff to:

- Treat WWD with respect and dignity.
- Defend and promote the rights of WWD.
- Provide accessible and inclusive healthcare services.

Below are some key areas to consider when reviewing your healthcare services.

Accessibility and inclusion are everyone's business

It is important that all healthcare staff and organisations:

- Are aware of the challenges WWD face when receiving healthcare.
- Know your role in creating accessible, safe, and welcoming healthcare environments.
- Provide accessible and inclusive healthcare services.

A positive healthcare experience can start with administration staff. A welcoming, accessible environment is essential in creating an atmosphere of inclusion. This includes an initial interaction with administration staff through to consults with healthcare professionals.

All services have a responsibility to be accessible. Service providers should be familiar with laws and legislation around:

- Legal requirements for physical access.
- How to support women with disabilities to access buildings and services independently.
- Workplace disability action plans.

Independent access to healthcare

WWD have the right to independently access all parts of your services and facilities. Relying on external or informal supports is not considered accessible, unless this is a WWD's preference.

To support WWD to access your services independently you can:

- Tailor your communication to the access needs of each client.
- Support health provision needs, including referrals and communication with other service providers.
- Routinely ask if clients are having trouble accessing any services or facilities, and work to fix the issues yourself.
- Work to empower WWD in their care.
- Recognise WWD and their carers may have different views.



Reflect on and provide accessibility

You should proactively:

- Consult WWD about service provision to ensure your accessibility provisions meet their needs.
- Talk with WWD about different kinds of accessibility.
- Recognise that accessibility needs differ for each individual WWD.
- Support WWD to become more proactive in their own healthcare.
- Identify and support WWD who face complex and multiple barriers to engaging in healthcare.
- Encourage each WWD to express their values, needs, concerns and goals.

Systemic inclusion

WWD are the experts in their own health. It is important that you listen to WWD and include them in all aspects of healthcare. This will support them to meet their needs and goals.

To develop a disability action plan you should:

- Include WWD and their lived experiences in the planning process.
- Make sure the plan meets WWDs' needs.
- Have dedicated resources to meet the goals of the plan.
- Include accountability measures.

You should prioritise ongoing provision of broad accessibility needs including:

- Auslan interpreters.
- Interpreters for non-English speaking clients.
- Information in appropriate accessible formats.
- Physical access.
- Temperature control.
- Flexible seating options.

Ensure inclusion and participation of WWD are central to organisational planning and delivery of accessibility. This will show:

- An ongoing commitment to inclusion.
- Best practice standards for healthcare and healthcare professionals.

You should:

- Promote the involvement of WWD in organisational governance, leadership and/or remunerated consultancy. This ensures WWD are central to organisational planning and delivery of accessibility and demonstrates commitment to inclusion.
- Consider peer support or mentorship for improving your practice

More information

You can learn more at: www.wdv.org.au



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This resource was prepared by Women with Disabilities Victoria.

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