

Releasing the power of relationships

The Nexus Practice Framework

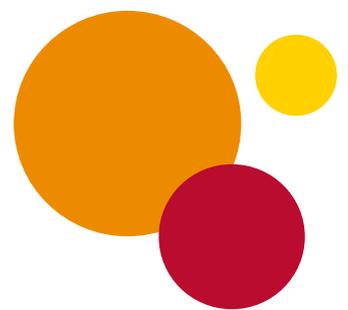
A collaboration between Nexus Inc
and the Australian Childhood
Foundation

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Prepared by – Joe Tucci (ACF), Mark Jessop (Nexus), Marina Dickson (ACF), Greg McKenna (Nexus)

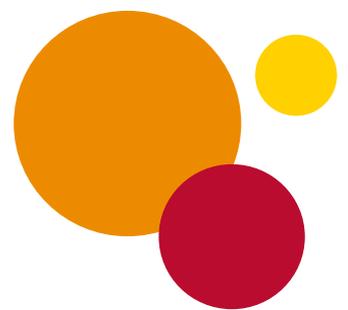
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Introduction

While we do not like to sing our own praises, Nexus is truly a remarkable organisation, working in a remarkable industry – the opportunity our staff have every minute to make a difference is what sets this industry apart from some many others.

Nexus traces its roots to the beginnings of de-institutionalisation in Tasmania in the 1980's and we continue to hold a deep connection with the community and the clients and families we support.

We hold the safety, choices, and rights at the centre of our practice. We employ people who are compassionate, honest and determined to do their best in their work. We understand how relationships are critical to the way that support is offered, accepted and used, and seek to support clients even in circumstances when others around them might not.

The “Nexus way” **is** the approach we use to provide our services. It **is** our people. It **is** the relationships we form with clients, families and the community. It **is** the inspiration and drive for creativity that sets us apart. The “Nexus way” is captured in the words of our many staff when they reflect on their experience of Nexus. For example,

“...we keep working to find a way, even if it means developing something new or creative...”

The Nexus way **is** our practice framework - a blueprint that describes the way Nexus staff undertake their work and the day to day interactions they have with clients.

This document describes the practice framework that Nexus has developed in collaboration with the Australian Childhood Foundation (ACF). It draws on the knowledge base, the values and the principles of our way of working and articulates the key actions and strategies that our staff undertake in their roles. The first section describes the elements of the practice framework. The subsequent sections explain the Nexus approach to service development and delivery.

The practice framework is underpinned by our team's unwavering belief in our shared purpose to make a valuable difference in the lives of people living with disability. It articulates our intentions to achieve our vision of a community where everyone is safe, valued and respected. The practice framework aims to support the Nexus team to achieve and maintain excellence in service delivery.

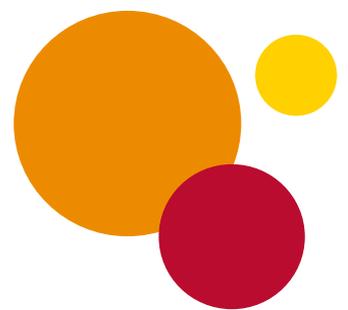
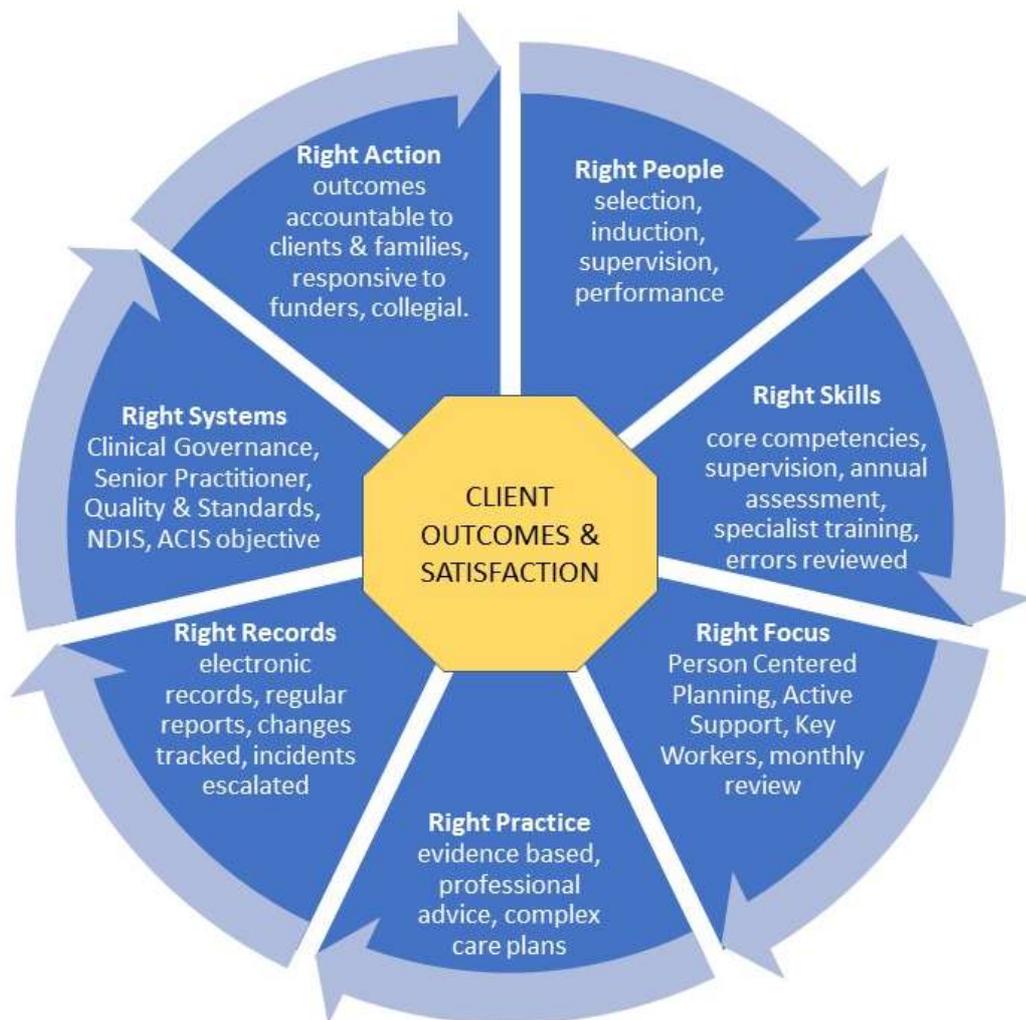
The development of this practice framework drew heavily on our existing practice approach, the experience of ACF and a review of current literature. It also relied on focus groups with Nexus staff from all levels and divisions of the organisation and with clients and stakeholders. The process was supported by feedback from Nexus senior managers and the Nexus board.

Section 1. Nexus practice in context

Nexus has an articulated service governance model which provides the overarching environment for the way that our staff deliver quality services to clients. At the core of this model is a focus on the duty of care that we have to clients, families and stakeholders.

The Nexus Governance Model relies on seven key components that combine formal strategies and actions with cultural expectations and practice standards. By achieving the aim of each component, we can ensure that the rights of clients are supported, and positive outcomes are achieved for clients, families, staff, stakeholders, the community and funders. The model also drives continuous improvement – as improving any component of the model will drive change throughout the rest of the process. Each component is detailed below in our Right Practice governance model.

Diagram 1. Nexus Right Practice Governance Model



Right People – We ensure that we employ the best people with attitudes and values consistent with the Nexus way. We also ensure that we continue to provide clear and honest support and feedback whilst they are employed with us.

Our recruitment and supervision systems ensure that staff have the appropriate qualifications and receive regular feedback and performance appraisal. When they start with Nexus, all direct care staff undergo a six-month induction contract where they undertake a package of on and off the job training to ensure they have the required skills and attitude for their role. These tasks range from online training to buddy shifts so they can be assessed as competent in all aspects of the role. Supervision of permanent staff continues every quarter with an annual performance review underpinned by clear performance goals and regular feedback.

Right Skills – We ensure that our people have the knowledge and skills they need to do their job effectively at all times.

Through our recruitment process, we ideally employ staff with a minimum of a Certificate III in a relevant field and for staff without it we support them to complete the qualification. Nexus also has four Core Skills which most support workers will need to obtain and keep current – first aid, manual handling, medication administration (including healthy body systems) and fire safety. Competency in these core skills is reassessed regularly with refresher training provided every three years. Depending on client needs, staff may also be trained and annually certified in PEGs, catheters, stoma bags, suction, infection control, diabetes management and seizure management. In addition to quarterly performance management and supervision, any non-compliance with the standards of behaviour and competency expected of staff is reported and reviewed by the program manager. All non-compliance must be addressed by staff in a timely way.

Right Focus – We maintain a commitment to our person centred principles in all of our interactions with our clients and their important network of people.

Each client has a Key Worker who manages a Person Centred Plan which is reviewed monthly in house meetings by all of their core staff. House meetings operate on Active Support principles and focus not only on the things staff need to do (medical appointments, key living tasks, and others) but also the important things to do (setting engagement goals, support, and others). Active Support ensures clients are supported to participate in their lives to the fullest extent possible. We actively listen to clients, families and stakeholders. Sometimes we listen through the voice of advocates or we can ‘listen’ by monitoring behaviour. We recognise that our clients cannot always communicate their needs and interests directly to us. We listen informally through our day to day interactions and formally through surveys and other methods.

Right Records – We recognise that recording our work provides an important way to communicate our clients’ interests and needs in the short and long term.

We use MYP as our client management software. MYP monitors a range of personal, contact, medical and goal-based information as well as collecting progress notes on house and client activity. Shift reports, client goal attainment, clinical and other risks are all instantly accessible. The system sets reminders and reviews for important client activity (like annual GP checks) and other systems record and escalate incidents. We use Microsoft Teams to ensure that all staff have immediate access to important information about what is happening in their programs.

Right Practice – We ensure that our practice is based on professional advice, evidence based research and knowledge, and respect for our clients.

We are proud of our history of developing and implementing new practices that support clients to be as independent as possible. Practice is individualised through our insistence on accurate and up to date complex care plans for each client. Our relationship with our clients and their important people is of utmost importance to us and is built on a foundation of unwavering respect for their rights. Paramount to this is respect - this includes the seemingly little things like turning up on time, knocking on the door of the SIL homes when we visit and being polite and friendly. Respect also means ensuring clients have dignity through being supported to make their own choices and experience the rewards and risks of these choices. Whilst Nexus has a role in managing environmental risks, we value the “least restrictive principle” and believe that all people with disability can live rewarding lives that maximise their opportunity for choice and control.

Right Systems – We ensure that we are guided by relevant governance systems that underpin the quality of our work.

Nexus has invested significant time in developing policies and practice procedures that form the system that guides how we work. Nexus has two important teams who provide “Senior Practice” oversight. The Quality, Compliance and Workplace team provides important safeguarding and quality reporting, monitors standards and compliance to policy, and manages our NDIS Compliance Audit. This team also supports a subcommittee of the Board called the Program Governance Subcommittee – this Committee ensures that the Board has oversight of how we deliver services. A second team, the Operations Support Unit, works directly for the Chief Operations Officer (COO) to support improvements to practice and service delivery. Nexus is accredited as a Specialist Disability Service Provider (State and NDIS) and externally audited against National standards.

Right Action – We are here to support, but not control, the choices that our clients make about their own lives.

Nexus acts to support, not control, the client’s capacity to participate meaningfully in decision making about their life. We work to create opportunities for clients to work with other health and wellbeing professionals and engage with recreation and vocational services. Most importantly, we also work with a client’s network of important people to ensure that a person’s disability does not isolate and exclude them from their community. All actions of Nexus and our staff are transparent and accountable to our clients, staff, stakeholders, funders and the community at large.

Integrating the Nexus Governance Model into the Nexus Practice Framework

The Nexus Governance Model articulates an important element of the Nexus Practice Framework. It is the underpinning methodology for achieving quality outcomes for our clients and describes the commitment we make to each client. The Nexus Governance Model provides our Board with confidence that Nexus’ services are being delivered as intended. It also provides a way of validating that interactions between Nexus staff and clients, their important people and other stakeholders is consistent and in line with our approach and values. The Nexus Governance Model appears in the practice framework as the foundational element upon which all other elements are built.

Section 2. What makes up a practice framework?

According to Tucci and Mitchell (2016), a practice framework is made up of intersecting elements. Each element is part of an integrated approach which guides the decision making of specific staff in the delivery of services to their clients. It is presented in Diagram 2 and explained in detail below.

Diagram 2. The elements of our practice framework



Our values

The value base of the practice framework draws from the Nexus values which ensures consistency between the practice framework underpinning the service, the design of the service and the organisation's vision and ethical orientation. This consistency supports the sustainability of the service and the potential of the service to achieve Nexus approved and understood outcomes for our clients.

Our knowledge base

The knowledge base of a practice framework establishes the scope of ideas which serve as the major influences on the decision making and actions of people who are applying it.

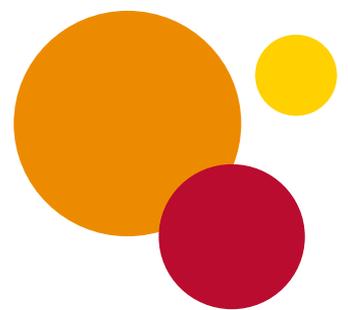
Firstly, it sets out the evidence that is used to choose the theoretical approaches and/or conceptual models which underpin how staff will undertake their role. This evidence is sourced from the literature and research undertaken to form the framework, such as consultation with staff, allied health professionals, external agencies and clients.

Secondly, the knowledge base describes the relevant concepts and understandings that are key in helping front line Support Workers know how to orient themselves in their work, know what to do, and know how to monitor if it is helpful and effective. It also helps all staff support the front line deliver their services.

Finally, where there are different and distinctive theoretical approaches being used, these need to be combined so they can be practically applied. In essence, the knowledge base of this practice framework defines the program logic behind our service models.

Our principles

The principles of this practice framework guide staff to understand the essence of the ways of working in line with the Nexus approach. Principles reflect the intent and purpose of a chosen



approach and guide the implementation of the knowledge base. The practice framework would be impossible to implement if any one of the principles was ignored.

What are our values?

Nexus has developed a clear set of values which represent the shared ethos of the organisation. These values, and the associated statements, guide all staff interactions with each other, their clients and their important people, stakeholders and the community.

Vision, mission, values

Our Vision A community where everyone experiences genuine safety, feels valued and is respected

Our Mission To uphold your rights with innovative client centred support that values your input.

Our Values

Dedication

- We earn trust and respect by being dedicated and professional
- We undertake our role responsibly by delivering services that are reliable and dependable
- We are committed to constant improvement and celebrate the achievements of our clients and colleagues

Effectiveness

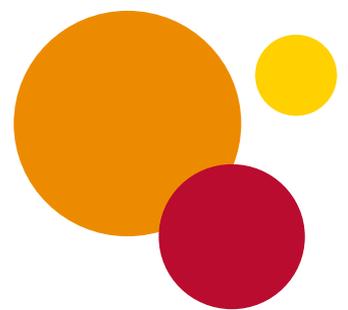
- Our focus is to make a meaningful, positive impact in the lives of our clients and their community
- Our delivery of high quality, evidence-based practice drives and guides our practice.

Solutions-focus

- We work in partnership with our clients, supporting them to achieve their goals
- We approach challenges with integrity, compassion, innovation and determination
- We remain flexible and adaptable when supporting clients

Teamwork

- We build genuine, respectful relationships with clients and the people important to them
- We work collaboratively and respectfully with our coworkers and all stakeholders
- We embrace diversity through inclusivity and recognise everyone's unique strengths
- We work to strengthen and grow the collective capabilities of our team



What is our knowledge base?

In this section, the knowledge base for the practice framework is described. Its relevance spans the broad range of services provided by Nexus.

It includes the following core knowledge areas:

- understanding person centred models of supporting clients;
- understanding the value of being attuned to the way that strong and supportive relationships form the basis of all good practice;
- understanding the importance of focusing on strengths and resources of people, families and the community;
- understanding that people with a disability aspire to live the same life as any Australian, but may face additional barriers they must navigate in making that journey. These barriers are unique to each client;
- understanding the impact of trauma on clients, families and communities;
- understanding why children are important; and,
- understanding and being responsive to risk.

Section 3. The Nexus Practice Framework

3.1 Understanding person-centred approaches to practice

Modern disability services ensure that people living with disability, their families and network of important people are at the centre of decision making about their support and how available resources are used.

Person-centred approaches ensure that the rights of people with disability are upheld. To do this, all practice must be underpinned with what the client views as important to them, and supporting them to contribute to, and be included in, society.

Person-centred approaches are “...ways of commissioning (funding), providing and organising services rooted in listening to what people want, to help them live in their communities as they choose. People are not simply placed in pre-existing services and expected to adjust, rather the service strives to adjust to the person. Person-centred approaches look to mainstream services and community resources for assistance and do not limit themselves to what is available within specialist services... (Ellis, 2012)”.

Person-centred approaches impact thinking, planning, funding and, in some cases, the client's family. This work is "...grounded in respect for the uniqueness of every person and family, and a commitment to partnering with families and communities to support children and young people with a disability to learn, grow and thrive. It puts family life – and the strengths, needs and choices of people with a disability and their families – at the centre of service planning, development, implementation and evaluation....(Valuing People, UK. 2001)".

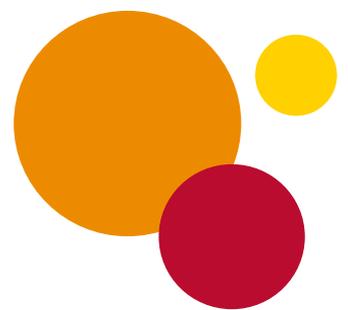
The person-centred approach supports the client's choice, control and voice to work towards independence, self-determination participation their human rights and freedoms (Jackson and Waters 2015). In a person-centred approach, practitioners away from traditional expert positions delivering a pre-determined "best" solution to a model that recognises a client's own ability to determine their own wants, needs and goals.

Person-centred approaches rely on discovering what clients want, the support they need and how they can obtain it. It puts clients at the centre of planning, actively listens to them, learns what their current and future goals are, and then supports them to achieve them. The practitioner works to support clients to resolve problems for themselves, follow their personal goals and achieve their self-identified outcomes. The key features of a person centred approach are:

- placing the client at the core of planning and decision making;
- ensuring that important people in the client's life are full partners;
- developing a plan which reflects the person's capacities, the person's current and future needs, what is important to the person and specifies the support they require to make a valued contribution to their community;
- implementing a plan that builds a shared commitment to action that uphold the person's rights and entitlements; and,
- reviewing plans through processes of continual listening, learning and action aimed at helping the person to get what they want out of life.

Nexus has adopted a person-centred approach which

- respects the whole person;
- supports a person to create their own life;
- focuses on a person's strengths and potential;
- facilitates a person's choices;
- actively shares power through respectful and balanced relationships with a person;
- advocates for fairness and social justice; and,
- fosters organisational person-centred culture and practice.



Nexus has implemented a person-centred approach to its practice called Active Support. It is a way of providing the right amount of assistance, to enable a person with disability to successfully take part in meaningful activities and social relationships. Support Workers use Active Support with everyone, regardless of their degree of intellectual or physical capability.

Support Workers who use Active Support understand that every moment has potential for a person to be engaged. They provide little amounts of assistance often - just enough to enable a person to succeed in doing all, or part of a task. They provide opportunities for people to exercise choice and control over many aspects of their lives.

Active Support is based on evidence that:

- engagement in activities and social relationships improves people's quality of life;
- personal development is only possible when people participate in activities that broaden their experiences;
- social relationships and inclusion depend on interacting with other people;
- physical health depends on lifestyle and activity; and,
- greater engagement, choice and control can lead to decreases in challenging behaviours.

Active Support is not something that workers schedule for set times, or with particular people. It is a way of working that can be applied at all times, with all people. We have built Active Support principles into the way staff teams talk about the support they provide, how case notes are recorded and how planning is undertaken.

Australian disability policy has a human rights perspective (Disability Discrimination Act, 1992). It recognises that people with intellectual disability have the right to be included in society and to a quality of life similar to other people in the community. Key principles in Australian and International Disability Policy are respect for dignity, choice and control, independence, full and effective participation and inclusion in society, respect for difference and acceptance of people with disability as part of human diversity and humanity (Every Moment Has Potential, 2015).

We believe Active Support is one way of putting these principles into meaningful practice.

3.2 Being attuned to relationships in practice

Communities are networks of relationships which carry the meanings of those who are a part of them. These relationships reflect multiple levels of experience - physiological, emotional, collective, and symbolic. In everyday interactions, relationships allow the expression of purpose, intimacy and identity. As relationships form with care and respect, they nurture and provide strength and resources. In this environment, the most vulnerable are looked after, the elderly are supported, children and young people are embraced and challenges for the community are addressed and learnt from.

Social relationships in a community connect individuals through their shared perspectives of what is valued and experienced as important. These relationships provide the guidance, courage and



belief that allows individuals to rely on each other, do things for the benefit of others, know where to seek help or offer support, and understand that everyone thrives when the community is strong.

Relationships are the vehicle through which change occurs and the heart of the community. They help establish meaning over time, across groups and generations and help make sense of the social environment. Relationships shape the wellbeing of the people in communities and are often brought together through beliefs that are given expression through ceremony, ritual and communal activity. When in harmony, these beliefs and attitudes can protect and resolve conflict and reflect the ways safety is communicated and experienced. It creates a working relationship driven by compassion and respect.

Nexus invests in helping to strengthen the social bonds that already exist in our community. We deliberately find ways to harness the strength of relationships between clients, families, other people in the community and our support staff at Nexus. We encourage inclusion of people with disability in society. We do not believe in excluding people with disability by placing them in “special” services.

Relationships resource the readiness and capacity of individuals, families and systems to assist individuals when they encounter risks or problems.

Relationship based practice focuses on the power of relationships to support individuals to live their own lives and is central to the work we undertake, and underpins the services we deliver.

By focusing on respectful relationships, staff build relationships where clients are supported to view themselves as trustworthy, curious about the world, creative and compassionate. This relationship with the worker is key in implementing change. Clients are supported to feel free from threat, both physically and psychologically, by workers who genuinely understand, accept and respond congruently when they interact with clients and families.

3.3 The importance of focusing on strengths and resources of people, families and the community

Strengths-based practice is a collaborative process between us and our clients. It allows us to work together to determine client goals based on their interests, strengths and capabilities.

Strengths-based approaches do not ignore or downplay the struggles or difficulties that clients may face, but they challenge the historical focus on perceived deficiencies within people (Saleebey, 2006). Instead of a problem-focused service delivery approach, we emphasise strength and resilience in clients and move away from problem-focused service delivery approaches.

Research by Hook and Andrews (2005) suggests that the person seeking support contributes as much to the chances of a successful outcome as either the worker or their technique.

Working in strength-based ways highlights the importance of the quality of the relationship between Nexus staff and clients, and the value clients bring to the process. Working collaboratively promotes the opportunity for clients to meaningfully participate as co-producers of their own support rather than just consumers (Morgan and Ziglio, 2007).

Strengths based models of intervention have been shown to be replicable and effective in supporting individuals experiencing disadvantage and crisis. A strengths approach offers a genuine



basis for addressing the primary mandate of community based support services – people taking control of their lives in meaningful and sustainable ways.

Strength based models aim to;

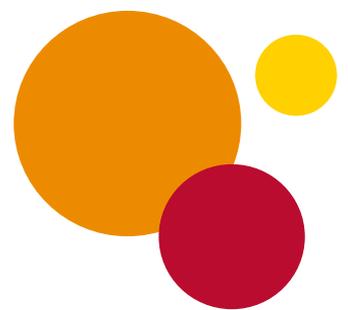
- empower people to take a lead in their own care process;
- work in collaborative ways on mutually agreed upon goals;
- draw on the personal resources of motivation and hope; and,
- create sustainable change through learning and experiential growth.

A strengths based approach is a specific method of working with and resolving areas of concern experienced by a client. It does not attempt to ignore problems and difficulties. Rather, it attempts to identify the positive resources available to the client (or what may need to be added) as the basis for addressing the challenges resulting from the problems. Specifically, a strengths based model:

- seeks to understand and support the important variables contributing to client and family/community capability;
- provides a common language that does not further disadvantage people by ascribing them as causes to the problems they experience;
- works to ensure that intervention strategies are client driven and relationship focused;
- engages distressed people with respect and understanding;
- perceives capacity building as a dynamic process that evolves over a lifetime;
- affirms the restorative and reparative potential in people; and,
- aims to enhance strengths as opposed to deficits.

Nexus believes that clients can work best in accessing the strengths in themselves and from their community when they focus on building their own life skills. Life skills are ongoing capacities that enable individuals to grow and deal effectively with everyday challenges of living. The World Health Organisation (1999) identified six key life skills that all individuals would benefit from:

- *Communication and interpersonal skills* are required in order to get on and work with other people, and particularly to transfer and receive messages either in writing or verbally.
- *Decision-making and problem-solving skills* are required to understand problems, find solutions to them, alone or with others, and then take action to address them.
- *Creative thinking and critical thinking skills* promote the ability to think in different and unusual ways about problems, and find new solutions, or generate new ideas, coupled with the ability to assess information carefully and understand its relevance.



- *Self-awareness and empathy skills* allow relationships to form and be experienced as connecting and affirming.
- *Assertiveness and self-control skills* enable the achievement of independence in the context of cooperation and relational existence.
- *Resilience and coping skills* strengthen the ability to recover from setbacks and treat them as opportunities to learn and grow.

Other life skills encourage the development of capacities to learn, negotiate, lead, organise and manage time, be employable, manage finances and resolve conflict.

Nexus has embedded life skills development as a core part of its service delivery. Using the principles of Active Support, Nexus works alongside clients providing them with the level of support that enables them to draw on their own strengths and use and broaden their life skills over time. By focusing on building capacity we work to This supports and sustains communities that are empowered to achieve their own goals and objectives and include all people in the process. This can be expressed as simply as the people living in a shared home having a voice in what they do; clients getting a job, buying a car and moving out of home or clients attending and speaking at events about their own life journey.

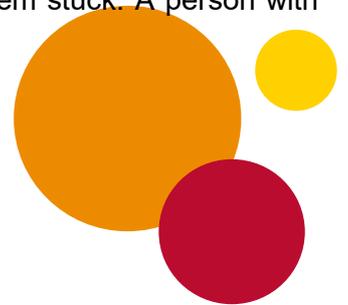
3.4 Understanding the impact of trauma

Trauma is a severe and lasting emotional response caused by a deeply upsetting or painful experience. Trauma may be a response to a single acute event; chronic, as a result of repeated, prolonged exposure to distressing experiences; complex, as a result of severe, repeated events such as childhood abuse; or intergenerational, as a result of cumulative trauma experienced by a group of people across generations. It can be a response to an actual event or the perception of a threat. It is an experience in the present that often takes the form of patterns of behaviour that aim to protect individuals from dangers that are present in real time and/or emerge from memories of their past.

Trauma shapes the belief systems of individuals affected by it. It often forces people to be overly vigilant and constantly scan their environment for any small indicator that they will be hurt again. It reinforces that risk is at every turn in life. It stops them from being able to settle and engage in safety and makes them feel that relationships are not to be trusted. They need time to make sure that feelings of unpredictability and change do not increase their sense of unease and threat.

For many who experienced trauma from childhood, it leaves behind a set of developmental needs that stay unmet and act as a theme in their lives as they grow. If they felt pain at the time of the trauma, they will need comfort, seeking it out in relationships around them. If their violation was invisible, they need validation, seeking it in all areas of their life. If they were separated from loved ones, the fear of it happening again will haunt them in ways that they often do not even understand.

Trauma affects the approaches that individuals use to adapt to their context. They are often reactive to small changes which they perceive may lead to an increase in risk of further threat, pain and fear. This makes it hard to problem solve or apply their existing strategies to new situations. Often life is governed by instinctive behavioural routines that serve to keep them stuck. A person with



trauma often follows ineffective practices of care and self-care. Often, individuals isolate themselves from others as a way of making themselves feel less frightened and more in control. Whilst this may work in the short term, in the long term it reduces the network of support that is often important to help them develop different strategies to respond the world.

For many individuals, trauma is often at the centre of feelings of shame about their own capacities and how their actions impact others. It is itself a debilitating experience. It activates states of arousal which convinces them that they are hopeless and do not belong in their community. It often makes the voices of judgement louder and more convincing than any soothing or supportive voice. It makes it harder for individuals to feel included and seek out support.

Where trauma is left unresolved, people can begin to internalise a toxic sense of responsibility for causing their own pain and, in more severe and sustained cases, whole communities can begin to think that hurt and chaos is normal.

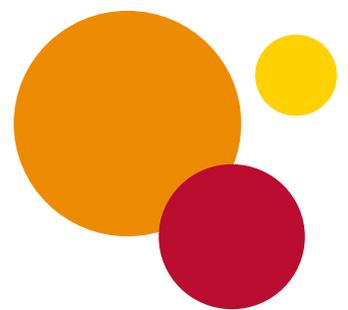
Trauma is healed through the experience of relationships which are nurturing, predictable and safe over time. Nexus has a deep appreciation for the impacts of trauma in the lives of the clients, families and communities they work with. Trauma requires a specific kind of understanding that is sensitive not only to the current needs of people, but also the needs they bring with them from their past. By understanding trauma, Nexus pays attention to the way that relationships are formed, oriented and maintained.

To be an effective and trauma informed organisation, Nexus ensures that this knowledge of trauma effects the approach and interactions of all staff – those with either direct or indirect contact with clients.

3.5 Understanding living with disability

Despite how Australians like to see themselves, our society is unequal in many ways. Nexus understands that for people living with disability there are many challenges that need to be navigated every day and funded support helps overcome only some of these. There are many other barriers that no amount of funding overcomes including physical barriers in our environment, attitudinal biases and beliefs that are held in society, and service systems that are designed by the “able” with little consideration of those who need additional support (“ableist” design).

There is no one experience of living with disability. Quality of life for Australians living with disability depends on many factors including family background, education, employability, language, their financial situation, talents, and skills. The nature of the disability a person lives with can also affect elements of their life experience and the needs of individuals may fluctuate throughout their life.



In 2014 the Australian Human Rights Commission in their publication *Face the Facts* (Australia Human Rights Commission, 'Face the Facts: Disability Rights', 2014) provided a range of insights into the impact of living with disability. These included being more likely to experience poverty, live in poor quality housing and have low levels of education. They generally had fewer opportunities to participate in their communities and were often socially isolated. Whilst governments aim to have public transport fully accessible many people with disabilities indicate difficulties in using public transport. More recently there have been many stories shared with the Royal Commission into Abuse and Neglect of People with Disability. The 12 volumes of the report informing us of the lived experience of Australians with a disability and their families is a truly sobering record of abuse and neglect of our most vulnerable neighbours.



Image from UAA: <http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/accessibility/topic/architecture.cfm>

Whatever the type or impact of a disability, everyone has the right to be an active member of the community and have a say in the decisions that affect their lives. However, the world has not been constructed with people with disabilities in mind, and as a result, the world we live in is inherently “ableist.”

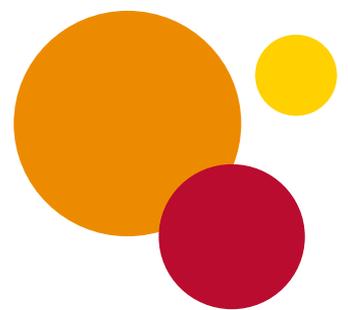
An “ableist” belief system often underlies negative attitudes, stereotypes, and stigma toward people with disabilities. “Ableism” refers to attitudes in society that devalue and limit the potential of persons with disabilities and is born from the belief that people without disability are superior to persons with disability.

Ableism includes the use of inappropriate words, discrimination in education and employment, refusal of service, omission of accessible facilities and all other situations where the needs of the person are not considered, and where people with disability are treated unequally and disrespectfully as compared to people without disability.

In addition to the general “background noise” of discrimination in broader society, people living with disability have often experienced direct and sometimes hostile interactions as well. From “playful” taunting in the school ground to direct targeting of them by people trying to take advantage, people with disability have often been victims in their own communities. There can be specific levels of trauma inherently associated with being a person with disability.

Nexus is a rights-based service provider that strengthens the life skills of clients so that they are able to choose their preferred lifestyle and increase their capacity to control the direction of those choices.

Nexus strives to be an ally of people with disabilities and ensure that service direction is not complicit with negative attitudes, stereotypes or discriminatory barriers.



3.6 Understanding why children matter

Nexus is primarily a disability service and some of our clients are children with disability. People with disability can be vulnerable and children with disability can be particularly vulnerable.

In 2012 the Australian Government announced the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and five years later it had heard from thousands of survivors of child sexual abuse which often occurred under the supervision of “trusted” adults in settings designed to protect them, as well as hearing from family members, carers, supporters and more. The Commissioners made more than 400 recommendations aimed at making institutions safer for children.

Each State responded with its own interpretation of the Commission’s findings. In 2023 the Tasmanian Parliament passed legislation to enact the Child and Youth Safe Organisations Framework. The Framework has four major parts:

- The Child and Youth Safe Standards: Ten principles that organisations must put into practice when they engage with children and young people.
- The Reportable Conduct Scheme: A compulsory scheme that requires organisations to investigate and report concerns about worker conduct related to child abuse.
- The Independent Regulator: Who oversees the Framework and ensures organisations have the support, advice, and education they need to do the right thing.
- Information sharing provisions: Rules to ensure leaders of organisations are permitted to share personal information in certain circumstances.

The 10 Standards are:

Standard 1: Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.

Standard 2: Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.

Standard 3: Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.

Standard 4: Equity is upheld, and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.

Standard 5: People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.

Standard 6: Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused.

Standard 7: Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.

Standard 8: Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.

Standard 9: Implementation of the Child and Youth Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved.

Standard 10: Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

Throughout our practice, Nexus staff must ensure the basic human right of safety to all clients – the risks to children are more complex and sadly often more covert. Nexus delivers services to particularly vulnerable people and have a professional duty of care to do this safely.

3.7 Understanding and being responsive to risk

Nexus provides support to clients from childhood through to end of life care. Nexus has a duty of care to all its clients and their network of important people to ensure that they are safe, treated with dignity and respect, and supported in line with best practice evidence and health advice to meet their immediate and long term inclusion, health, wellbeing and developmental needs.

The Nexus Board sets the “risk appetite” of the organisation. This is an important role for Boards and one where they have an obligation to provide strategic governance. This includes more than issues related to ‘hard’ topics like finance or capital investment, but more recently Boards have been reminded of their important role in setting the culture of the organisation – including how staff deal with risk and how the organisation supports them in this. The Nexus Board’s risk statement can be found on the Nexus website.

A duty of care is the legal or moral responsibility to ensure the safety and wellbeing of others, which includes taking all reasonable steps not to cause foreseeable harm to another person or their property. A breach in the duty of care means that something done or failed to be done by a support worker or Nexus as an organisation may cause them to suffer a loss which might be an injury, financial loss or exposure to some form of trauma.

The principle of duty of care is that staff have an obligation to avoid acts or the omission of an act, which could be reasonably foreseen, which can lead to injury or harm of clients and other people. This means that staff must anticipate risks for clients and take care to prevent them experiencing physical or emotional/psychological harm.

Effectively supporting people does not mean that all risks are eliminated and, in fact, environments that strive to eliminate risk often destroy other important aspects of life including rights, the experience of new things and learning from our mistakes. This is often referred to as the Dignity of Risk. All people, including those with a disability, have the right to try new things, to succeed or fail, and the role of Nexus is to help them maximise the chance of having a good outcome.

Duty of care and Dignity of Risk have historically been seen as mutually exclusive, but in fact they co-exist in every decision that a Support Worker makes. The question is ‘how can we support a person to be engaged in their life in a safe and supported way’? We all experience consequences of the decisions we make, as do our clients.

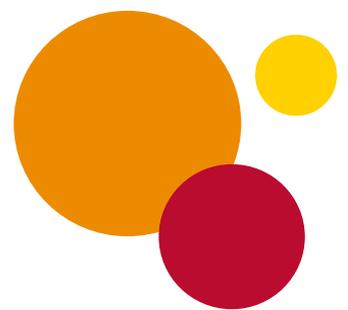
This is not always easy for Support Workers to do and while it often seems more comfortable to make decisions for a client, our role is to support clients in making their own decisions – even if

they are not always consistent with our own personal, social or ethical choices. When supporting people with complex trauma backgrounds it is also important to consider how the trauma effects the person's decision making ability.

The realistic evaluation of risk that people pose to themselves and others is critical in ensuring that they can be supported to stay safe and unharmed. The implementation and review of safety plans is a cornerstone of effective practice with vulnerable cohorts of the community.

Nexus has established policies and procedures that enable staff to understand their obligations and work within strict guidelines in relation to the standards of behaviour and practice that is expected of them. These are based on staff being able to consider the following questions in their day to day work:

Duty of Care Considerations	
Client	What does the client expect us to do? How can we work in ways that support their interests and needs?
Legal	What does the law require us to do?
Professional / Ethical	What expectations are covered in our professional codes of conduct and standards of practice?
Organisational	What does our organisation, and its funding body, say we should do?
Community	What do the parents of our clients and other community members expect us to do?
Personal	What do our own beliefs and values suggest we do?



Section 4: What are our principles?

We believe in the dignity and inherent self-worth of people.

We believe that all individuals have the right to be treated with dignity and respected for who they are. We acknowledge the inherent value and worth of individuals, their histories and their current experiences. Whilst we support people to reach their potential, we value them for who they are in the present as well as the hopes they have themselves for their own future. We believe that individuals and communities are at their most creative when they connect genuinely with their sense of purpose. We support clients to appreciate the importance of the qualities and perspectives of those they are connected to. We trust in those relationships to celebrate the significance of people's contributions to their community.

We don't give up on people.

We see people through the strengths, resources and capacity that they have, rather than their problems or challenges. We believe that our clients want us to show them the same persistence that they have to apply to meet and overcome their challenges. We understand that our clients have often experienced exclusion, dislocation and sometimes abuse and violence. We recognise the enormous effort that our clients and their families have made in attempting to live their lives according to the goals they set for themselves. We join with them to change the conditions in which they live so that the hopes they hold for themselves and their families are honoured and respected.

We build relationships that support the needs and interests of our clients.

We believe that strong, caring and respectful relationships deliver positive outcomes for everyone in the community particularly its most vulnerable. We aspire to build relationships on trust, dignity, belonging and value – these are the relationships people in the community need to thrive. Our approach to service delivery aims to strengthen the social bonds and capacity of the networks and communities we work with, making it easier for clients and families to access support when they need it the most.

We work in ways that create commitment to building strong relationships for our clients in the community.

We use a collaborative approach that reflects a respect for client's self-determination and is responsive to client and family needs and aspirations. We believe it is important to recognise that clients, families and communities, co-workers and other professionals are equal 'experts' in the process of ensuring the wellbeing of clients. We work from an understanding that developing an effective partnership takes time, trust and investment in professional and personal relationships.

We find innovative ways for relationships to support change.

We believe that we need to use the power of relationships to support clients to achieve their personal goals and work hard to overcome barriers and restrictions that get in the way. We are committed to creating new ways to meet the needs of all of the people we work with.

We use a trauma informed approach.

We strive to use a trauma informed approach in all of our interactions with people. We do not engage in discussions which explicitly or inadvertently place blame or responsibility for problems on the client or family. We look to understand the unmet needs of clients and families and try to organise support so that these needs are addressed over time. We appreciate the efforts people make to keep themselves and their families safe from harm. We use knowledge about trauma to act with genuine empathy and compassion. We believe that safety is critical to healing, empowerment and growth.

We support people to make choices about the lives they want to lead.

We believe in the right of clients to self-determination. We work with clients and their network of important people so that they actively participate in the decisions which affect their lives. We support them to achieve the goals they set for themselves which are in line with their intent and hopes they have for their own lives.

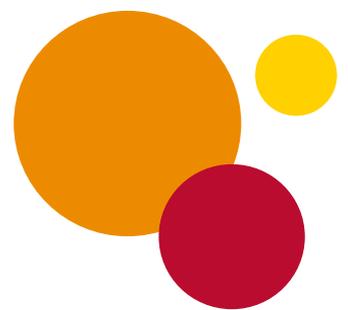
We provide enough support for our clients to live inter-dependently.

We actively support our clients to live inter-dependently within a network of relationships in their community. We recognise that no-one lives independently in any community. Everyone is in relation to others, including individuals, groups and institutions. Inter-dependence is a principle that validates how people with disabilities live interconnected lives with others. We help our clients build capacity to negotiate relationships with people and systems.

We work with clients to strengthen their life skills .

We support clients to develop and practice a range of life skills with the aim of them becoming more adaptive and resilient to challenges. We want them to build a mindset that reminds them that: they are not their mistakes, they can try again, things can get better, they are supported.

We support clients to make their own decisions wherever possible and let them learn through doing tasks for themselves.



We collaborate and work with each other and other services.

We recognise that the most effective responses occur when we take responsibility for building sustainable connections with others based on mutual respect to ensure that the needs of our clients are met consistently across the contexts in which they live, learn and play.

We are responsive to all forms of risk.

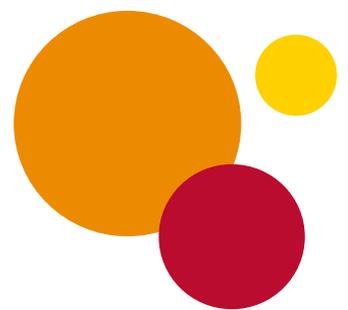
At all times, we recognise the need to be responsive to all forms of risk that may be experienced by clients in the community. We work to identify risks and put in place effective plans that keep clients, family and staff safe from physical and emotional/psychological harm.

We believe that there is no wrong door for people to access our services.

Our approach is wholistic and we offer multiple types of services and supports for people in the community. We are committed to ensuring that people who engage with Nexus will be offered the best pathway to support that meets their needs regardless of where they start.

We are brave and tackle issues that are challenging for our community.

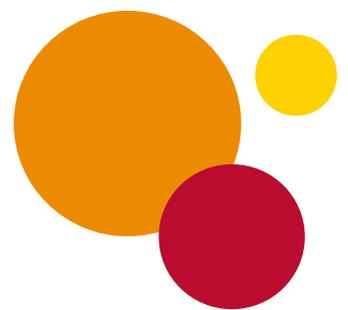
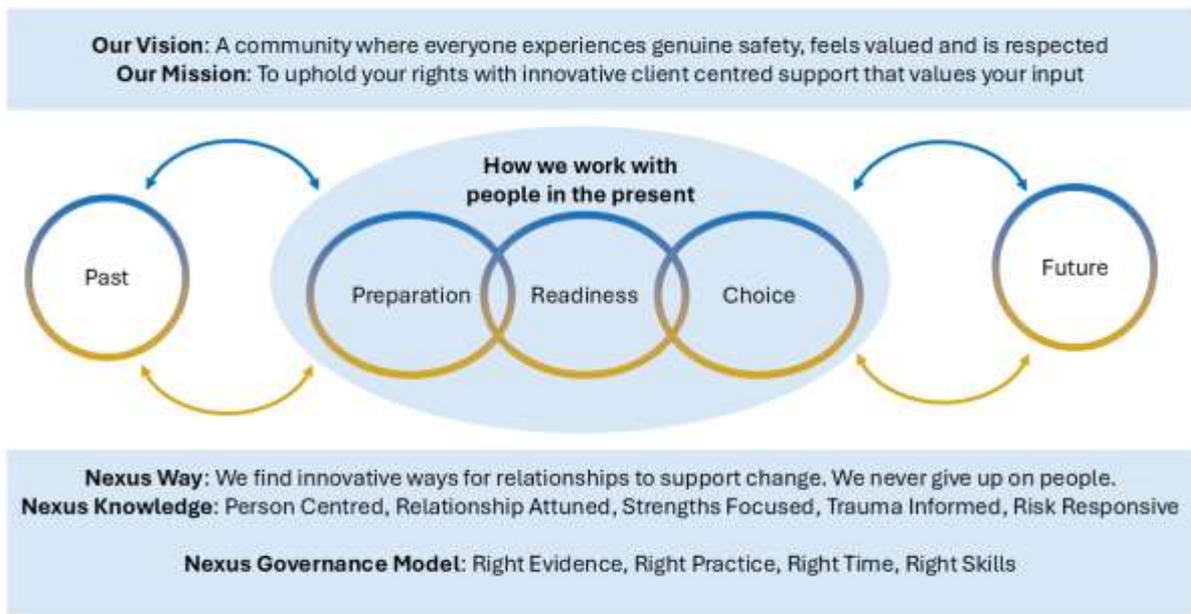
We acknowledge that concerted community action is often required to change the underlying conditions which adversely affect the lives of people. We act with the courage of our convictions to tackle issues which are challenging for our clients in their experience of their community. Where we can, we work to build alliances and collaborate with others to address structural or institutional adversity. We will take the lead if we need to show how change is possible and necessary.



SECTION 5: What is our Practice Framework?

Drawing on the key messages from the knowledge base, our values and principles, our Practice Framework is presented in Diagram 3.

Diagram 3. Practice Framework for Nexus



The Nexus Practice Framework provides a summary of how all our core elements integrate to resource and empower staff to undertake their role effectively and in accordance with the values, principles and knowledge that Nexus view as essential.

The Framework recognises that we are often on a journey with our clients – this journey might be life long, it might be to gain a skill, and it might be to simply live their life their way. All journeys and relationships pass through phases.

The central three circles describe the three core dimensions of the relationship between clients and staff in the present. This relationship provides the resources to meet the needs that come from their past – a past that may be effected by genetics, impacts on development, wins and losses, trauma and past relationships. It also provides the basis for how clients use support to help them move towards a future that is defined by their own intentions and goals.

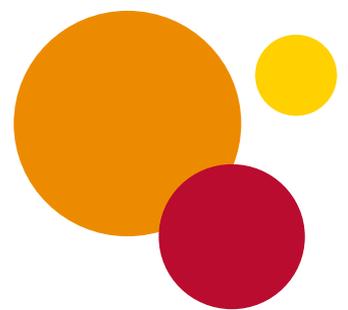
Preparation is the process through which the client-staff member relationship validates the past experiences of the client. It is the stage that acknowledges past success and failure, grief and loss, experiences of inclusion and exclusion. It recognises that past trauma may continue to affect the present for the client. It recognises that clients can draw on past success and the resilience they have built. The relationship becomes more attuned to how the client reacts and feels in different settings, in different interactions and under different conditions of stress. The relationship offers stability as well as comfort and support when needed. Preparation sets up the relationship to be in sync and responsive. It is the process through which clients become ready and open to change and growth.

Readiness is an interactive process through which clients increasingly engage with their motivations to live life, to change and to have new positive experience. Staff support clients to appreciate and access their personal strengths and connect with the resources available in their network of relationships to engage in a future based on their own goals. Clients are encouraged and supported to determine their goals and aspirations. They identify the barriers to those goals and, in partnership with staff, learn how to manage and address those barriers in effective ways. Readiness is experienced by clients as an open state that holds optimism for the future.

Choice is experienced by clients as they begin to move towards their preferred goals and self-narratives of about their own future. They are supported to participate actively and as fully as possible in decision making which affects their life. They are supported to organise their environment in ways that benefit them and engage in relationships which provide them with meaning. Clients will experience themselves as active agents in their own lives.

The **future** becomes open to exploring and planning. By having an attuned staff-client relationship in the present, the needs of the client's past help create a different future. The client's present experience becomes more important than the past. It holds a sense of opportunity for clients to continue to grow even when faced with ongoing stressors, ill-health, financial constraints and many other conditions. The future is a set of choices that is now more available to clients because of the relationships of understanding and support offered to them by Nexus.

For staff, the central three circles provide a focus for what staff do in their everyday interactions with clients.



At one level, **staff need to be prepared for their role**. They need to understand their obligations to Nexus and their clients in exercising a duty of care. They need to be prepared with the knowledge about the standards of practice that Nexus expects through the training and documentation they are offered. They need to be prepared with the insights of their previous work with clients and an understanding of how they will build on the relationship with their client into the future.

Once prepared, staff are ready to work with the client(s) they are supporting. This means having a knowledge of the client's history, their goals and their needs. It also means being aware of the support plan in place and being ready to use it to help the client meet those goals and needs.

Staff must choose to be in the right mindset to relate to the person they are supporting for their shift or day at work. This involves leaving behind any residual feelings from interactions with the client previously which may act as a barrier to effective and quality engagement in the present. It also involves viewing the relationship with the client as the primary focus of their work. The relationship considers the strengths and vulnerabilities of the client, viewing them holistically as a person with abilities, interests and personality. This encourages staff to consider the client's past experiences that they continue to carry as a way to understand how to best support them with achieving their future goals.

The five circles of the Nexus practice framework also represent the way that clients and staff work together in relationships of support towards the client's future goals. The **past circle** represents all the experiences that clients have had in their lives. Support staff, in collaboration with other specialist teams, come to learn about this history over time. It involves a gentle inquiry with clients and their network of important people to understand the experiences and supports that have featured throughout their life.

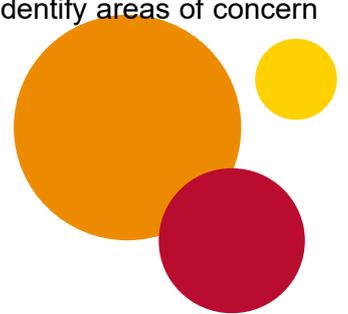
As staff provide support, they come to know and understand the dynamics that carry over from a client's past. They assess the ways in which the client's past can act to restrain or enable their positive interaction with others and their environment. Staff also understand how the recurring themes from the client's past shape their capacity to set and achieve their own goals. This knowledge is critical in informing the way staff engage and provide day to day support to clients.

The significance of the day-to-day work of Nexus staff is built on the Nexus approach, the Nexus Knowledge base and the Nexus Governance Model. The Practice Framework encourages staff to adhere to the core values and principles of the organisation. This is best understood by answering the following series of questions about how staff integrate this knowledge into their practice:

- How do we act in a person centred way;
- How do staff build strengths based relationships;
- How does staff knowledge of trauma impact their practice;
- How do staff use a strength-based approach to build strength in clients; and
- How do staff work with risk to support clients to live the way they want to live.

How are Nexus staff person centred?

Nexus staff positively engage in partnerships with clients and the important people in their lives. Staff are guided by the people they engage with and adopt a position of humility, encouraging them to take the lead about how they want to receive support in ways that feel the most effective and comfortable for them. Staff implement inclusive planning processes that identify areas of concern



for the client, understand the strengths and resources that are available to the client, and facilitates the development of support plans to address client needs in a sustainable way.

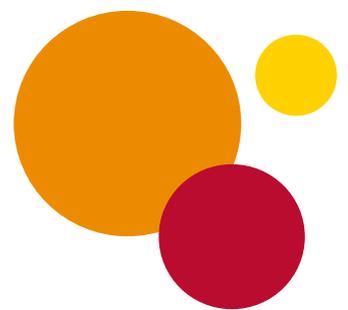
In practicing a person centred approach, Nexus staff respect client's values and put them at the core of decision making by:

- taking into account client's preferences in a way that values the relationships that are present in their lives;
- coordinating and integrating the support that is offered to them;
- working together to make sure there is good communication, information sharing and knowledge about the client and any plans that are developed with them;
- supporting the client to feel physically comfortable and safe;
- involving family and friends, where appropriate, as trusted parts of the relationship network in which people live and function;
- ensuring that there is continuity between and within services so clients experience support without adding increased stress to their life due to poor system coordination; and,
- facilitating access to support when clients need it in ways that are most effective for them.

Nexus staff bring together all the relevant people in a client's life to ensure that support plans are co-designed, delivered and reviewed. This occurs through informal and formal structures which allow for collective consideration of the needs of clients and their families. They directly involve and encourage the participation of clients, their families and other important people. Where appropriate, Nexus staff initiate and co-ordinate the decision-making processes of these teams. They facilitate discussion that considers the role of each member of the team and how they can best offer support to clients in ways that reduces shame and strengthens an ongoing commitment to relationships offering resources of support.

Nexus staff show in their practice that they understand that their involvement in the lives of clients is part of a journey that clients are taking to live their life according to their own goals and ambitions. Nexus staff support individuals to make the best decisions they can about what they want to achieve from their life, the contributions they want to make to their family and community and the meaning they draw from these experiences.

Nexus staff co-ordinate services offered to their clients. They are often in the best position to ensure that other service involvement is co-ordinated and tailored to avoid duplication and promote positive outcomes for clients and families. This co-ordination is consistent with the theory of change defined in this practice framework that acknowledges the role of the Support Worker as the instigator for addressing the complexity of problems facing clients and families in the community.



How are Nexus staff relationship attuned?

Nexus staff understand that the most valuable tool they bring to their role is themselves. They engage in relationships with clients and their families, offer supports that validate client experiences, and are sensitive to client feelings. They bring a commitment to looking for, believing in and sharing the strengths and resources that clients hold in their approach to living.

Nexus staff build relationships with clients that foster respect, openness and trust. This does not mean Nexus staff do not challenge the internal models clients hold about how to trust, how to rely on others for support, how to offer and receive support, and how to believe in themselves.

Due to exposure to past adversity, exclusion and/or trauma, many clients develop negative views of themselves, their future, others around them and the world. Staff must earn trust over time. Many clients have learned that professionals are not always a source of safety, comfort and support. Nexus staff appreciate it can take a great deal of time and patience for individuals and families to build enough trust to accept support and build relationships. Nexus staff demonstrate persistence in their efforts to form positive and supportive relationships with clients and families. In day to day interactions, staff show warmth, validation and care. Staff know that to build trust they must be predictable and consistent.

Nexus staff take a long term view of relationships, knowing that they are working at multiple levels at once. Staff support clients and families directly, practically and emotionally. They expand the skills and confidence of clients and ensure they attend to risks and respond effectively to keep people safe. At the community level, staff's respectful and kind approach helps to reinforce the important qualities of trust, belonging, dignity, value and safety.

Nexus staff pay attention to the details of their interactions and communication with clients and families and seek to use these as opportunities to promote reflection, insight and change. They focus on supporting clients to make meaning of their lived experiences and to incorporate the stories of themselves, their family and their community into a shared narrative that speaks to resilience and optimism for the future.

Nexus staff support clients to increase their flexibility and adaptability in the face of stressors that impact them and their family. We do not aim for clients to become dependent on Nexus for support when they have the capacity to build their own skills. Staff understand, support and utilise the existing supportive relationships that surround clients and strengthening the capacity of the network to provide resources at the times when they are most needed. Nexus staff foster a network of safe and supportive relationships around clients that can act protectively in the present and future.

How are Nexus staff trauma informed?

Nexus staff are sensitive to trauma when they are oriented to listen actively to the experiences of clients and families. This level of engagement comes from experience over time where staff become trusted and perceived to have a commitment to the client and their family. Active and engaged listening is also a way of collecting and considering information about:

- the ways in which the past experiences of clients continue to affect their present;

- the strengths within clients that have acted as resources to give them resilience in the past which may be helpful to their current challenges; and,
- the intentions that clients and their family and friends continue to hold about themselves.

Deep listening orients workers to understand the meaning of the problems or difficulties that the individuals and/or families are experiencing. This is the key to effective engagement.

Nexus staff are both task focused and relationally oriented in their work. They do not rush to step in to make up for what is missing from a client's capacity. Instead, they engage clients and families in thoughtful interactions to develop joint understanding of what their needs are and support them to meet those needs meaningfully and sustainably.

Nexus staff provide practical support to clients. Support plans identify the reasons why such practical support is delivered and the goals the support will realise. Practical support can include modelling routine, assisting with transport, helping with budgeting and shopping for groceries, and ensuring that clients receive medical treatment. Practical support provides temporary relief for clients, enabling them to learn, recover or re-build their sense of confidence.

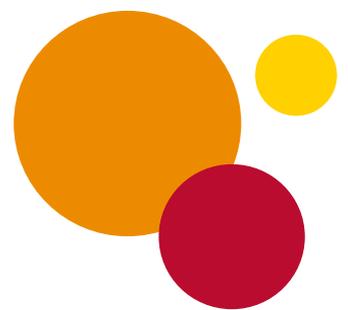
Being trauma informed represents a way to facilitate a more profound shift in the ways that clients and families come to understand how important safe relationships are in supporting their health, learning and wellbeing outcomes. These relationships can also shape the identity and capacity of clients in the future. This shift occurs through relationships between clients, their networks and their Nexus staff.

Nexus staff develop relationships of trust and care with clients. These relationships are how clients often experience comfort, predictability and compassion at times when they feel the most insecure, stressed and isolated from their network. Nexus staff are trained to understand and use key concepts from the knowledge base about trauma informed approaches to practice, such as the window of tolerance, co-regulation, and the role of attunement.

Nexus staff are also aware of the imbalance of power between service providers and clients particularly with reference to the structural and historical experiences of people with disabilities. This reflective practice supports workers to consider the contexts and processes in which people with disabilities continue to be disadvantaged. It allows workers to be attuned to the best opportunities for safety to emerge including through the choice of location and timing of each interaction, who is present and how matters are discussed.

These strategies highlight the critical role that support workers play in supporting clients to reduce their reactivity, maintaining the client's focus on the present and providing a baseline experience for clients at points in time when they are dysregulated and in need of attuned, consistent and nurturing responses.

Nexus services are consistent with the core values of trauma sensitive services developed by Professor Judy Atkinson (2013). These values are a commitment to practicing in ways that uphold the centrality of relational, cultural and physical safety for all people. These values are set out in the table below.

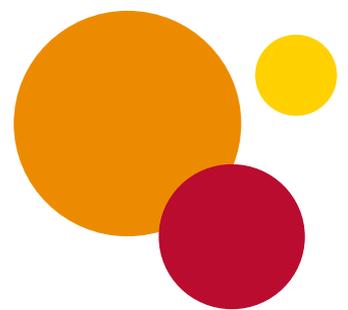


Principle	Impact on practice
Understand trauma and its impact	An understanding of trauma and its impact on individuals (such as children), families and communal groups requires trauma-informed policies and ongoing training, support and professional supervision of staff.
Promote safety	The creation of environments in which children, adults and staff feel physically and emotionally safe.
Ensure cultural competence	Ensure staff receive training and ongoing supervision to develop cultural competency, recognise their own cultural beliefs and values and adopt practices that acknowledge and demonstrate respect for specific cultural backgrounds (including the cultural elements of various disability communities).
Support client's control	Support clients regain and build a sense of control over their daily lives and actively involve them in healing journeys through effective communication about the service and its activities.
Share power and governance	Share power and governance, including involving community members in the design and evaluation of programs.
Integrate care	Integrate and coordinate care to meet children's and adult's needs holistically.
Support relationship building and enable recovery	Support safe relationship building as a means of promoting healing and recovery. Adopt strengths-based approaches that ensure and recognise the capabilities of individuals, families and communities and utilise them to address challenges.

How are Nexus staff strengths focused?

Nexus staff know they are strengths focused by ensuring that they do not over-emphasise the deficits and difficulties that clients experience in their lives, preferring to keep in view the strengths that clients hold in the face of challenges and/or stressors that affect them. Nexus staff ask the following questions of themselves to ensure that they are strengths focused:

- How has the client been adaptive to their environment previously?
- What are the qualities that the client has demonstrated in pursuing their own goals?



-
- What are the qualities that others know the client has drawn on to overcome previous challenges?
 - How has the client been able to stay hopeful?
 - What part have relationships played in keeping clients focused on their goals?
 - What does the client value the most in their relationships?
 - What does the client appreciate the most about themselves?
 - What does the staff member appreciate in the client the most as they interact with each other?
 - What part of the client's narrative does the staff member believe has supported the client to challenge the impact of adversity and other similar experiences in their past?

Nexus supports staff to reflect on these questions on a regular basis. It is a framework that holds open the possibility for change. It supports staff to be optimistic about the future for their clients.

How are Nexus staff risk responsive?

Nexus staff understand their duty of care to their clients. This means that they are monitoring the risks that clients are, or may be, exposed to in general as well as whilst receiving a service from Nexus.

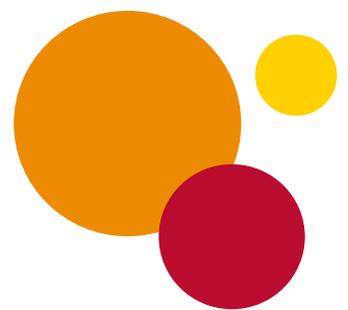
Nexus staff are supported to formalise assessments of risk in collaboration with clients, their families, other important people and specialist practitioners. These assessments consider the interplay between the client's disability and the factors in their environments and their relationships which may lead them to experience physical and/or emotional/psychological harm.

Each client receiving a service from Nexus has a Safety Plan which addresses concerns in relation to all forms of harm for how their service is delivered.

As Nexus supports a growing range of clients this harm no longer refers to just the physical risks associated with service delivery, such as poor manual handling or medication administration, but rather it now encompasses a much wider range of issues. The Disability Royal Commission also showed that organisations and staff do not always honour the rights of people they support.

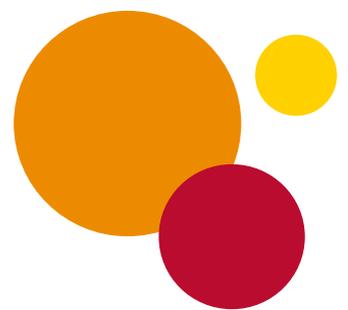
In particular our practice must now always consider the risk of harm arising from social and community factors, including:

- being physically, sexually or psychologically abused;
- being forced to live with family violence;
- being subject to exploitation;
- attempting suicide or engaging in self-harm;



-
- being left without adequate care or supervision;
 - being absent without knowledge of whereabouts;
 - engaging in sexually abusive or harmful behaviour with others;
 - accidental or intentional overdose of harmful substances; and/or,
 - the potential of accidental injury or death.

The Safety Plan identifies each area of risk, describes the risk mitigation strategy that is to be implemented and who is responsible for ensuring that relevant action is taken. The Safety Plan is reviewed regularly and/or at any time that risk levels increase. The Safety Plan for each client is an organisation wide commitment to doing all that can be done to ensure the safety and wellbeing of clients and their families.



Conclusion

It is critical to evaluate both the progress towards, and the effectiveness of, the strategies implemented to achieve change in people.

Within the context of this practice framework, it is essential to collaborate with clients, families and organisations within the community to develop agreed outcomes against which the practice framework can be measured.

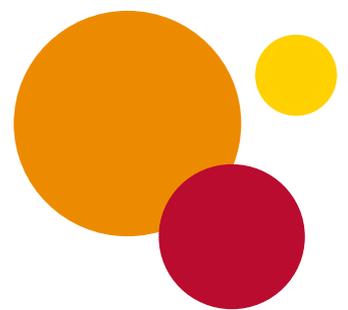
We will hold ourselves accountable to provide support in accordance with this framework. With the constant pressures of the 'day to day' it is easy to forget the mission that we are trying to achieve – to support all clients to live the life they choose. Each Nexus staff member is an enablers of this and work within this Framework to achieve these goals with our clients.

As Nexus strives to ensure this Framework operates within our organisation and also with the partners we choose to work with, we recognise that:

- change within community must be viewed in the long term and we need indicators at key points that suggest there is progress;
- change is rarely a linear process;
- efforts to change require a sustained commitment and patience from all key parties;
- efforts towards change must be set at the pace which the community is able to tolerate; and,
- there may be competing definitions as to what constitutes change or success, and these must be declared at the outset with mutually agreed indicators.

We will hold ourselves to account and support staff and clients to form effective relationships that support clients to achieve their goals and make long term societal impacts.

We want to create outcomes that can be celebrated with, and on behalf of, the community we support.



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