# Workforce Capability Framework Provider Session

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Thank you very much for joining me today.

My name is Samantha Jenkinson.

I'm the Director of Workforce Quality with the NDIS Commission.

You can send general questions about the NDIS Commission to the Contact Centre at contactcentre@ndiscommission.gov.au.

This session will be recorded and made available online at a later date by the Workforce Capability Framework website.

So, I’d just like to start by acknowledging the country that I'm on today and that those who are joining me on might be on the wide range of countries across Australia.

So I'm actually coming from the land of the Whadjuk Noongar people in WA and I'd like to acknowledge their strength and resilience and capacity on this land which they have inhabited for at least 45,000 years and pay my respects to their elders past and present, and extend my respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that might be present on the call today.

As you can see in the slide on the screen, there's a beautiful piece of artwork that was developed during NAIDOC week in 2022 with our Queensland office by Natalie Mudford, who's a proud Wallaboloola and Pajong woman from Ngunnawal and Wiradjuri country.

I'd also like to acknowledge all people with lived experience of disability and the experience of the people who are supporting with disabilities, who I know many of you are here today as providers in the NDIS space.

So today's session I'm looking at the Workforce Management and Planning Tool of the Workforce Capability Framework.

However, before I go into that, I'd like to provide a brief overview of the Workforce Capability Framework and the supporting tools and resources that we've developed to help providers and participants or workers put the Framework into practice.

If you have had a look at the Framework, we'll try and make this fairly quick.

If you haven't, we'd encourage you to have a look, but also, if you've had a brief look and thought “Oh not really sure what that's about”, I'd really strongly recommend have a look again from the perspective of what is it that my workforce needs, what is it that the workforce that I'm supporting need and are they actually able to do the things that are listed in this Framework?

The Framework itself was developed in 2021 and it was created to support the improvement of services and quality supports in the NDIS.

When it was released, it was released as an interactive website Framework and over the last couple of years we've developed a number of tools to then support the Framework.

Because the Framework itself is written from the perspective of the NDIS participant and really goes through and shows the capabilities that all workers funded under the NDIS should be demonstrating and by capabilities we mean those observable behaviours and the skills and attitudes as well as the knowledge that a worker should have.

The Framework's been developed as one of the developmental domains under the NDIS Quality and Safeguarding Framework, and what that means is it's a tool to help build the capacity of providers, workers, and participants in the NDIS to help get that shared knowledge of what good looks like and to contribute to that continuous improvement and building a quality workforce within the NDIS.

And now that the development of the Framework and tools is complete, we really have a range of resources that can support providers and workers and participants from workforce planning as you can see in that diagram on the side there, all the way through to career planning as well.

I’d just like to share with you an animation video that we've now got available on our website and this little animation takes us through the provider journey.

So please let me know if there's any issues with the sound here as we play this.

So what I've popped up onto the slide now is to show you what the interactive Framework looks like and so that you can see how this works in practice.

So as you can see, the capabilities that are on the interactive Framework are set out with the range of different types of work across the top of the page, which is just above where you can see on the screen here.

And that goes from general support work all the way through to senior management and leadership roles.

Then underneath we have the objectives and for each objective there is then capabilities underneath.

So here we've chosen general support work.

We have the objective ‘be present’, be present and provide the support I need and under this objective are the core capabilities which include the core capability of ‘managed health and safety’, and then you can see under ‘managed health and safety’, the expectations of a frontline worker managing health and safety from the perspective of the person with the disability are: ‘check in with me to understand any intermittent conditions I may have on what I need you to do if they occur’.

Another example there ‘be alert and take action if you notice that I'm uncomfortable, distressed, apathetic, or in poor health’. So as you can see, the way the capabilities are framed are from the participant perspective, but it's also giving really clear guidance around some of those questions that are that providers might have when it comes to things like, what's that balance between dignity of risk and duty of care, for example, are underneath that, there's also the knowledge that a worker should have.

So, for example, basic understanding of behavioural, physical and emotional indicators of poor physical or mental health is what would be in the knowledge under this area.

And when you look at the Framework, there are also additional capabilities for supporting identity and also additional capabilities for supporting specialist areas like coordinating support, meal time management, psychosocial disability and more.

So the Framework is there for providers and for workers and participants, and it can support with hiring worker development, supervision, participant feedback and I will talk a bit about those and it can also help workers to explore career options.

We've also recently developed a participant page which will be up on Monday and we think that the Framework is a really great resource for participants as well to, so to get that shared language and ideas between providers and participants and workers of what is good quality support.

What does that look like in practice and with those participant resources. We have a number of Easy Read resources available, fact sheets, and a range of videos and animations similar to the one we just shown you which go through different scenarios and how to use the different tools.

As you can see, we've got a range of resources and tools that have been developed and I'm just going to very, very briefly run through these main tools.

But today the focus is the Workforce Management and Planning Tool.

So the Position Description Tool is one of our key tools that's an interactive version that you can fill in online that comes up with the position description that pulls automatically from the Workforce Capability Framework into the position description.

So it's really clear with workers and participants what the capabilities are that a worker should be demonstrating as part of their job role.

And we have two versions: one tailored for participants who might be self-managing or who might be engaging their own workers in some way and one for providers as well.

We also have our Recruitment and Selection Resources again for both providers and participants again, who might be self-managing, but we do encourage providers to involve participants in the recruitment of workers.

We know that when participants are engaged and involved in that recruitment process that often there's a better relationship between the worker and participants as well.

There's lots of practical tips, downloadable resources and templates, including interview templates, and we will be doing another workshop session that focuses more on these tools as well.

One of our new assets of resources is also our Supervision Resources and these are really encouraging good conversations and it's not about, you know, supervision being a two hour once every fortnight type thing, but rather that supervision is about regular connection and feedback between a worker, a participant, managers, supervisors. That it's actually three-way conversations that need to happen for when there's good active supervision in place.

And again, we have a number of tools and templates that connect back to how you use the capabilities in the Framework to support that good supervision and our training and development resource is there.

I will just say this is not a training guide or a training tool specifically, it's about supporting providers to know how to find the right training options and with some tools and templates that can support a provider in doing that, that's going to meet any gaps in the capabilities of the workers that you have.

We also have a couple of tools that support recruitment and support workers, so there's a Self-Assessment Tool for Potential Workers that you could use in the recruitment processes.

And we also have a Career Options Guide for workers who want to stay in the sector but maybe want to try something different.

But today, we're going to focus on the Workforce Management and Planning Tool.

But I might just pause there briefly so that we can check if there's any questions just on the Framework generally before I go into the detail.

Hi Sam.

Yes, there's a couple of questions about behaviour support.

So is there a section around behaviour support practitioners and are there position descriptions for behavioural support?

Thanks very much Mel.

So the Capability Framework for behaviour support practitioners is a separate Framework that's on the NDIS Commission website, so behaviour support practitioners need to meet the capabilities in that Framework to be a registered behaviour support practitioner.

However, the Workforce Capability Framework does have the additional capability of ‘support me to implement my behaviour support plan’, so it's there as capabilities that are for workers who would be helping to implement a behaviour support plan.

And so those capabilities, those additional capabilities, if when you're filling in the position description tool, you click on that additional capability that will automatically then move into that position description.

So the position descriptions are tailored to the particular capabilities and the additional or specialised capabilities that that particular participant might want or that provider might be developing a role for.

I can see as well that someone asked how often will there be changes to the Framework.

The actual Framework itself hasn't changed since it came up in 2021.

What we've done is added additional tools and resources, so I will just flag that the Framework, the Workforce Capability Framework, is a guidance document.

So it's the Code of Conduct and the Practice Standards for registered providers, which are what the provider must adhere to.

That's what's in the legislation and that's what auditors check against, what the Workforce Capability Framework does is tries to provide a more detailed description about the capabilities of workers at different levels to support providers to be able to meet those obligations.

So the Framework itself will only be reviewed about every three to four years, so any changes that might, I don't believe there has been any changes to what's in the Capability Framework apart from the additional tools and resources which have been developed, unless there's a different Framework that, that David, you might be referring to, but you can send us an email for further questions if you like on that one.

I might move on to our main game today, which is the Workforce Management and Planning Tool.

So today we're focused on the Workforce Management and Planning Tool and this is one of the tools that's been developed primarily designed to support and guide small and medium size providers who might have limited specialist human resources support.

But it can also provide value to large organisations.

So if you're new to workforce planning, you can use the tool to guide you on what data you might want to collect and how you can use it to inform your decisions about the workforce you need now and in the future.

If you're more experienced or already have an established workforce planning process, then you can use the tool to prompt you to explore aspects of workforce planning that you might not have looked at in detail before and use it to find out how to use the Workforce Capability Framework to strengthen any current planning processes that you might have.

And while the tool has been designed to respond to the specific needs of the disability sector, it can equally be used and is relevant to organisations in the wider care and support sector.

So I will just note that we have recently reviewed and updated this particular tool.

So if you have previously downloaded the tool or used the tool, we recommend that you could re-download the updated version when you next go through your planning processes.

So the tool is really there, as I said, for small-to-medium size providers, it's a tool to support providers, to plan and manage their workforce and it really supports a strategic design focus, it supports an evidence based focuses well in the collection of data, and it can be a bit of a checklist.

You don't have to necessarily fill it in to use it, but you can use it as a guide.

So I'll just talk a little bit about the way the tool is structured. So it is an Excel spreadsheet which you download from the Framework website.

The tool itself is then available for you to be used in whichever way you want.

It's not something which the Commission holds.

It's not something which the NDIS Commission will expect from you at all. It's there as something to help support you to do that workforce planning.

When you have a look at the tool and open it up, it's split into five main sections and will guide you.

Each section guides you through a particular process, so there's reviewing your business goals, which is the very first part of the tool, and that's where you can identify what your organisation's business goals are in service delivery, in your workplace culture and in your workforce capability, which is also related to the quality indicator.

The Part A, the Workforce Management Assessment, is there to support you to review your workforce characteristics.

That goes into what your characteristics are, what the culture is and the capabilities that you currently have, and it asks questions that get you to consider how well those things are supporting achieving your business goals.

So when you fill in Part A, there's lots of detailed questions there that ask you what you're doing to support those things to be able to happen and what your workforce characteristics and culture and capabilities currently are.

It also gets you to look at the data that you have so that you can plan for the size and type of workforce that you're going to need to achieve your business goals.

So that's in Part B on workforce metrics, and there's also some suggestions of where and how you might find the data that you need for your workforce, and that data can be things like your incident reporting, the data about your participants that you're supporting, so data on what participant needs are, data on what qualifications you're workers might have, data on how workers are, how satisfied they are with the work they're doing and the training they get, how satisfied participants might be, for example.

But it's also like by doing that Part B and those workforce metrics, you're able to have a look at where there might be gaps in your workforce or gaps in your data as well.

And then Part C provides a number of questions to help you review your priorities and develop some strategies to address them.

And then as you're filling those things in, the tool uses that information that you enter to develop a workforce plan that summarises your workforce priorities and the strategies that you've highlighted that you will use to address them.

So you don't need to complete all the sections, you may only want to complete Part A and then go straight to Part C to develop strategies.

Or you might not complete any sections straight away, but use the questions in the sections as a catalyst to get managers and leaders together for a planning day, for example.

Or you might do Part A, then do a bit of a planning day before doing Part B or vice versa.

So it's very much there to use how you want, but then that last section is where, depending on what you've put in, it will automatically fill in that Workforce Plan that you can then use.

So a little bit about how you can navigate through the tool.

As you can see, there's expandable interactive menus.

So when you open the Excel spreadsheet across the top of the page, you can see these colour coded expandable sections that are at the top of each page of the tool.

So when you click on a menu button, it allows you to easily move through each section and step of the tool.

So you can see here, for example, we have that if you've clicked on home and then if you click on Part B, it expands out what the steps are in Part B.

So all the different parts of the sections you need to fill out.

So the workforce, you have the workforce, you need the gap analysis, et cetera.

And then as you enter information into those different parts, this is an example of how that populates your priorities and goes through.

So as you can see here, it's just stepping through what that navigation and function looks like.

I can go through that again, just so that you can see what that looks like there.

So each part is expandable.

Then you can enter the information under each part related to those questions and then that populates your priorities and the rationale in Part C, and then combines with the strategies to populate the workforce plan at the end, which is then a printable part that you can use.

So as you work through Parts A and B, the responses you enter are used to populate Part C and so then when you get to that, it's very easy to identify and focus on those priorities and strategies that you want to address.

So here's just a little bit of an example of how the tool could be used.

So this is with a small organisation and this is a fictional organisation: a small disability service provider that might be located in regional NSW, and they offer case coordination one-to-one high intensity disability support services.

They have about 40 workers.

They don't have any formal workforce planning practices in place and tend to be a bit reactive.

So they they look at the Planning Tool and go through a bit of a comprehensive review.

Reflecting on what their business goals are, looking at the data that they have about their workforce characteristics, their culture, the quality and that helps them to identify where they have some gaps.

The idea is that the tool then helps to understand their workforce, to understand how they might need to review what their employee value proposition is, why is it that their employees stay, what can they do better to support that retention of the workforce.

And in this scenario someone might then present that to their management team for uptake.

For a larger organisation, a medium sized organisation.

In this example, we have a medium-sized service provider that's more in both a metropolitan and regional area, and in this case we have someone who's using the tool to identify and analyse data on the capability of the workforce.

So they're looking at where maybe some participants aren't achieving their plan goals related to the way that their workers are behaving or the capabilities that the workers have.

So being able to identify where those gaps are in a workforce capability can then help to have those discussions about where there might be a need to focus in on supporting training for workers, the type of training that you might need as well, or where there might be a need for closer supervision, or being able to provide more feedback to workers in different areas.

And then our last example here is where a large organisation ‘Brighter Days’ is using the tool in a way to support strategic planning that they already do. So they're really looking at separating the tool out, distributing it to different business areas to complete, and going into quite a bit of detail about the data sources that they have and maybe highlighting where there might be data sources that they should be collecting that they haven't been.

So the tool might help this provider particularly to have a deeper review of its workplace culture and to have a bit more of a detailed look at the data that they're looking for, and currently collecting as well, and whether they need to collect some different data to actually support their Workforce planning.

When you use the tool and you're going through it, there are sections of the tool which detail things like the types of data that you might want to collect it as a separate tab.

Some suggestions of the ways you might collect data to help fill in the tool, and there's also a Strategy Guide, and what we've done is we've actually separated the Strategy Guide out and made it into a separate document on the website so that people can use that document as a handy quick reference for finding relevant strategies that you can build into your workforce plan or as a bit of a checklist to see if you've actually thought about all the potential strategies that you could use when you're developing your Workforce Plan and supporting your workforce to improve and build its quality as well.

So that's now a separate downloadable document that's available on the website.

I do have the ‘Find Out More page’ there, but I'll just stop sharing the screen so that we can open questions and very happy to move back to particular slides if anybody needs to have a bit more of a detailed look at anything.

So I'll open up for any questions there.

So I think someone’s commented that less than 100 employees is quite large.

What we want is for people to be able to use the tool in whatever way suits them best.

So if you're a really small provider of 20 or less, you might still find that there are useful questions that are asked in the tool that are relevant to you.

So there might be questions just simply about how you're looking at the data that you're collecting.

There might be some questions that are about how you support your workforce and the culture and characteristics, which can still be useful to you.

So again, this tool is there to support providers and to be able to be used in whichever way is going to be best for what you and how you build your workforce.

So the tool is available only as an Excel download.

Someone just asked whether it was available in any other formats there, it's done in that way as well, so that once it's downloadable, it is for a provider to use as they see fit.

It's not a tool that is trying to collect data or be used by the NDIS Commission, it's there to support providers in thinking about workforce and workforce planning.

As someone asked ‘if there's metrics or measures of proficiency achieved in core capability’. The Indicator Section does go into that a bit, but also one of the other tools that we have is our Training Development resources and there are also some handy templates there about how you might work with your workforce to have them self-assessing against the capabilities in the Framework if that's as part of their position description, for example, so that you can get an idea of how people are travelling against the capabilities and that can be one of the ways, then that you might collect data to know whether your workforce is achieving in those core capabilities or might have gaps that you need to support being filled.

Just checking if there's any other questions.

The focus is providers with staff who are disability support workers.

This is a tool that's been developed by the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission to support NDIS providers.

The tool itself, it doesn't necessarily need to be about disability support workers, so if you're a provider that has a range of staff who are doing support coordination, for example, then you just need to be thinking about the questions from that perspective of who your workers are, and you'd be looking at the additional specialised capability of ‘support me to coordinate my supports’ in the Framework as your frame of reference for the capabilities that are relevant to the workforce that you have if that's the particular workforce that you have.

So yes, the tool can be used for disability support workers and are, you know, a majority of providers out there have a workforce that might be around that, but also it's there for using against the Framework capabilities, whatever they might be.

So in terms of allied health, it absolutely could also be used for clinical staff and allied health.

So the questions in the tool are not specific to a type of support work.

The questions that are there about ‘how do I support my workforce’ if that makes sense.

So the capabilities that you use for your frame of reference for your staff is really up to you and the tool is there to support the questions that you might need to ask for building the capability of your workforce, whatever your workforce is, or whoever that might be it depending on your particular business goals and the supports that you're doing.

Someone asked about what's the ultimate outcome of the Commission? What are we wanting to achieve with this?

What we want to achieve is better service levels absolutely.

But also we want to achieve supporting providers to improve the quality of the workforce and to be thinking from a continuous improvement perspective.

So one of the parts of data that the tool suggests a provider needs to support building workforce quality, for example, is feedback from participants about the workforce and about how workers are going.

So it always comes back to what that impact and outcome for the participants that you're supporting and how are we continuously improving and building the quality of the workforce?

There's a question about back office corporate staff who support businesses.

I think that you could include that in the way that you're looking at the tool there is, for example, if you're wanting to include in their trends, say around the work health and safety of your staff more broadly than that would include all staff. The tool itself doesn't specifically say the type of worker that it has to be used for, so there is leeway depending on how you want to use the tool to use it for a range of different staff within your organisation and you might find that some questions you can a tailor more to particular areas of your workforce and others might be more sought suited to other areas.

But generally the questions are about that workforce planning, whatever that workforce looks like.

So the questions about do your staff have the capabilities they need to meet the requirements of their role is just as relevant for admin staff as it as it is for a disability support staff.

So you can use it for admin staff if you want to, that's completely up to you.

Someone asked if there will be any linkage available for providers to demonstrate continuous improvement in their audits.

If you wanted to use the tool and use that as an example of how you're doing workforce planning and an example and part of your documented evidence for your audits, then that's perfectly OK.

There isn't an expectation that that's what this would be used for at all by the NDIS Commission.

It's really the Commission wanting to support providers in building their workforce.

But certainly having good evidence is always great for your audit and then obviously the other side of audit says that auditor should also be talking to your workers and participants to check if you're implementing that plan that you might have in place as well.

Now I'm just aware we're getting to the end of the time with the session.

So I'll just pop the screen back up again with the information on where to go if you're wanting to find out more.

So we do have the Workforce Capability Framework is workforcecapability@ndiscommission.gov.au and there is a new homepage which will be live from Monday and also a new participant page which will be live from Monday as well with the Framework which will help the navigation.

But this tool is available under the Tools and Resources tab and I’d encourage everybody to have a look at the website, learn more about the Framework and the other tools and resources available such as the Position Description tool, the Recruitment Guide, the Supervision Resources and we'd love to get feedback on how you're finding those tools and resources if they are useful for you.

If you do have any further questions, you can contact us at workforcecapability@ndiscommission.gov.au and we hope we'll be able to answer some of your questions, but thank you very much for joining us today and I hope you all have a look at the Framework as well as this particular tool and that it can be useful for you.

Thank you.