

Northern Territory Government and Non-Government Community Services Sector

Statement of Principles

The Northern Territory Government and the Non-Government (NGO) Community Services Sector will work together according to these principles in order to provide quality and culturally appropriate services for Territorians.

1. **Achieving the best outcomes** – the overriding goal of government policies and programs, and the prime objective of those organisations that implement them, is to ensure that service delivery maximises public value and improves the quality of life of, and empowers the people and the communities who use them.
2. **Partnership** – a culture of partnership is expected, between and within, the NT Government and the NGO Sector. The collaborative relationships should be founded on appreciation of the constraints under which all organisations operate and include the following values:
 - Mutual respect and reciprocated trust
 - Authentic consultation and genuine collaboration
 - Recognition of a common purpose
3. **Accountability** – public accountability should focus on outcome performance rather than simply complying with process, with an emphasis on the effective use of funding to achieve agreed outcomes and on measuring the longer-term social impact of programs and services. Where possible, the burden of reporting should be minimised and streamlined.
4. **Provider diversity** – the diversity of community service organisations is recognised as a strength with the range of providers delivering a greater choice of programs either individually or in partnership to respond to the needs of the community in different ways.
5. **Program and service design** – policy, program development and service delivery should work progressively towards the following:
 - A holistic approach – the elements of multiple disadvantage are complex and so the support services provided should be ‘joined-up’ and ‘wrapped-around’ the individual or family in need.
 - Program flexibility – services should be evidence-based, culturally appropriate and responsive to the distinctive needs of the individual, community group or region and tailored to the particular circumstances. Where evidence is unavailable, services should be based on a risk assessment business case that allows and encourages innovation.
 - Citizen responsibility – individuals, families and communities who require support should be encouraged and empowered to take greater control and responsibility of the services they require to live a full and independent life.
 - Primary prevention and early intervention – the immediate need for expenditure on tertiary services must be acknowledged, however, there should be also be a focus on investment in primary prevention and early intervention.
 - Shared governance and service design – all providers of publicly-funded services (whether public service agencies, not-for-profit organisations, social enterprises or private businesses) should be regarded as ‘co-producers’ of government services, jointly contributing to service design and sharing responsibility for program delivery.
 - Long-term outcomes – services should focus on the long-term benefits for the individual, community group or region.