

DD Council 5-Year Plan TA Brief

Public Input for CRA



Public Input

Engaging with and gathering information from people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families is part of the comprehensive review and analysis task.

Roles

The role of Council staff is to develop and plan ways to collect information from people with ID/DD, their families, and others in the state or territory.

The role of Council members is to be actively involved in sharing information about public input and listening to people during public input opportunities. Council members can also share relevant reports and other needs assessment data from other agencies with Council staff.

What you need to produce and by when:

Develop a summary of the information gathered from people with ID/DD, their families, and others. Consider organizing the information with the major portrait of the state categories in Part B of the CRA so information gathered from the public can be easily added for analysis.

Gather this information **before** you start the CRA, Part C Section.

DD Councils have reported using a variety of strategies to collect information. Below are some examples:

Partner with other organizations to plan and hold listening sessions or focus groups with their planned events.

Gather information from people with ID/DD and their families from culturally diverse groups and communities.

Share surveys or links to online surveys through other disability conferences, events, or annual meetings.

Identify self-advocacy and family support organizations and ask to meet with them to get input.

Hold public forums before, after, or during regularly scheduled DD Council meetings.

Rotate DD Council meetings to different areas of the state or territory and plan time to receive public input.

Partner with the DD Network partners and host public input sessions.

Council member strategies:

Explore Council member affiliation(s) with other organizations and ask the DD Council member(s) to share surveys and information gathering activities with them.

Ask Council members to partner with staff to conduct conversations with people with ID/DD and families in their area of the state or territory.

Ask State/Territory agency representatives to provide copies of current needs assessment results, annual reports, and other relevant data.

Methods

Access: Provide multiple ways for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families to give their information.

Consider a full range of technology methods (low to high) to ensure participation from people with and without access to the internet or web-based platforms.

Support low or non-readers and visual learners, consider an audio version of a survey with icons and images for responses.

Partner with statewide or local self-advocacy groups and Council members with ID/DD so they can review and provide feedback and ensure the materials are written clearly.

Cultural Considerations: Consider translation and interpretation needs and make sure information is written clearly and to the point.

Reminder: Not all people who use English as a second language are literate in their native language. Ensure people from all communities have more than a written option to provide input.

Consider using a cultural broker, or partner with culturally diverse community leaders and grantees involved in your targeted disparity work to gather information from culturally diverse groups.

Partner with culturally diverse people and community-based groups so they can review and provide feedback on the materials.

“Hard” copy, mail-in surveys, and direct distribution and collection of surveys

Consider accessing distribution lists from:

- Self-advocacy organizations
- Family advocacy organizations
- Developmental disability provider organizations
- Advocacy organizations and coalitions
- Grant projects
- Independent Living organizations
- State agencies.

Include the name and contact information for someone on Council staff who can support and assist if accommodation requests are needed.

Online surveys

Use 508 compliant standards to ensure accessibility.

If using an outside service for online surveys (e.g., Qualtrics, Survey Monkey, etc.) check to see if the service meets accessibility requirements.

Share survey links or QR codes widely, distribute through multiple channels and distribution lists (see ideas above).

If you convert an online survey to a Word document using cut and paste, double check for accessibility.

Make sure you are not collecting personally identifying information such as name and address. You can collect other demographic information without identifying the person individually.

Web-based conversations and information gathering.

Determine how many people you can accommodate in a web-based meeting. Make sure you have considered accessibility, staff capacity, timing, and pricing. Examples of web-based platforms include Zoom, GoTo Meeting, Microsoft Teams, and Web Ex.

Provide training and support so that people can participate fully. Provide information for meeting facilitators, self-advocate leaders, direct support professionals, caregivers, and others who are supporting people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Use polling or survey features within the platforms to capture information from participants.

Consider recording the meeting for note-taking purposes. Tell participants the recording will remain private and not be available to anyone other than Council staff taking notes and tell them when the recording will be destroyed.

RELEVANT RESOURCES

[Section 508](#) – training to create accessible documents.

[Microsoft Word Accessibility](#) – best practices.

[Microsoft Readability Levels](#) - how to check for reading levels.

[Community Toolbox](#) – information about conducting Interviews, Surveys, Focus Groups.

[A Guide to Assessing Needs](#) – a Better Evaluation resource.

For more information

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