

# LDC QUARTERLY

a complimentary newsletter distributed electronically to individuals & organisations on the LDC email list

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## This Issue

1. Implementation of the Revised Quality Framework for Disability Services – Standards and Outcomes Measurement Unit, Quality & Sector Development Unit, Disability Services Branch
2. What is reflective practice?

The first quarter of 2006 indicates that it is going to be a busy year for LDC. We are presently working on a number of projects for:

- ▶▶▶ Department of Human Services
- ▶▶▶ Mornington Peninsula Shire
- ▶▶▶ VITS Language Link
- ▶▶▶ Ethnic Communities Council Victoria
- ▶▶▶ Greater Dandenong Community Health

In this edition, an overview is provided of our work on the implementation of the revised quality framework for disability services. Also included in this edition is a brief discussion about reflective practice, which we have used in our work and as an approach in project methodologies.

Implementation of the Revised Quality Framework for Disability Services – Standards and Outcomes Measurement Unit, Quality & Sector Development Branch, Disability Services Division

LDC in partnership with the Community Services & Health Industry Training Board (CS&HITB) is developing tools, resources and training to support DHS regional and

funded disability support providers to implement the revised Quality Framework for Disability Services.

This project will be completed by May 2007 and includes:

- ▶▶▶ Development of outcomes measurement tools and resources to support personal outcomes measurement and monitoring.
- ▶▶▶ Conducting a pilot of the revised Victorian Standards for Disability Services and quality management tools and resources across one metropolitan and one rural DHS region.
- ▶▶▶ Participating in an evaluation of the pilot and the effectiveness of the quality management tools and resources.
- ▶▶▶ Undertaking a training needs analysis.
- ▶▶▶ Developing a competency based education and training package.

This project includes a series of consultations and activities and it will involve:

- ▶▶▶ People with a disability and their personal networks
- ▶▶▶ Managers, senior staff, quality representatives and direct support staff from DHS Regional and funded disability support providers
- ▶▶▶ DHS Disability Services Divisional Program and Regional Disability Managers

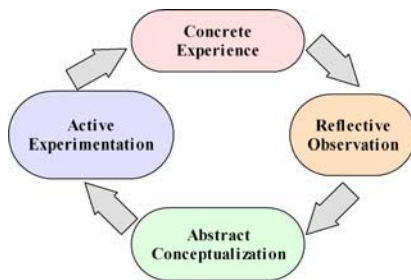
- ▶▶▶ Regional disability program staff, including Client Services, Accommodation services and Partnerships and Service Planning Teams
- ▶▶▶ Peak disability organisations
- ▶▶▶ Advocacy organisations
- ▶▶▶ Self advocacy group

A series of multimedia newscasts will be developed during the project that will provide information about the project.

## What is Reflective Practice?

Almost everyone who has learned to play a musical instrument or how to play a sport will have come into contact with the adage "practice makes perfect". Many a wise teacher has revised that adage, preferring the equally well known "perfect practice makes perfect". The revised adage highlights some generally held truths about the nature of learning, the most important being that mere repetition of a task does not in itself guarantee the gradual transformation (or improvement) of the result. Transformation requires a level of critical engagement with feedback: it is learning from ones experiences.

Such a transformational process is eloquently described by Kolb as the experiential learning cycle (1984):



This flow chart suggests that a person inquiring into their experiences in this way follows four stages in a cyclical fashion: concrete experience is followed by personal reflection, a stage which may lead to an individual placing their experience within a broader framework of ideas (abstract conceptualisation) and making modifications on the basis of this reflection in the form of active experimentation. If the cycle were to repeat exactly, no transformation would have taken place. Every time a person, or group of persons, completes a cycle they should find themselves with a slightly different perspective on their concrete experiences.

Reflective practice is ultimately based upon a form of inquiry. We

ask questions of our experiences in the hope that the answers will help form new understandings of future experiences. Joy Amulya, of the Centre for Reflective Community Practice, suggests that the most powerful tools we have for examining our experiences are *stories* and *dialogue* (undated discussion paper):

“By examining the way we have constructed a narrative account about a significant event, it suddenly becomes more possible to observe the meaning we have taken from that experience and to excavate the underlying qualities that made it significant.”

Examples of practical ways to incorporate reflective practice may include the use of:

- ▶▶▶ Journal Writing
- ▶▶▶ Internet Blogging
- ▶▶▶ Drama/Role Play
- ▶▶▶ Mind Mapping
- ▶▶▶ Storytelling in groups
- ▶▶▶ Peer observation

Reflective practice has as its main aim the improvement of practice. This is where it differs from mere thoughtful action; I can act thoughtfully and to the best of my

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ability, but without acting with reflection I will not necessarily make a systematic change to the practices themselves.

Perhaps a new revision of the adage should be "Reflective practice makes perfect"?

References:

(2005) *The Experiential Learning Cycle*. Retrieved 20/3/2006, from <http://www.learningandteaching.info/learning/experience.htm#kurtlewin>

Amulya, Joy *What is Reflective Practice?* Massachusetts Institute of Technology, undated.

KOLB D.A. *Experiential Learning: experience as the source of learning and development* New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1984

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