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25 Clyde Road, Dublin 4. Tel: 01 608 0400 Fax: 01 660 9935
Email: nda@nda.ie

www.nda.ie

Strategic Plan 2004 > 2006

National Disability Authority

Strategic Plan 2004 > 2006

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introduction

This is the second Strategic Plan of the National Disability Authority, following the establishment of the Authority in June 2000.

The Plan has been submitted to, and approved by, the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform, as is required under the National Disability Authority Act, 1999.

The three years since the establishment of the Authority have seen a number of significant successes and challenges whilst implementing the NDA's ambitious first Strategic Plan 2001 – 2003 "A Matter of Rights."

the role of the nda

The National Disability Authority is an independent, statutory body focused on disability and thus has a unique role in progressing the disability agenda in Ireland. As a key advisory body to the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform, the NDA is well situated to work with Government, the public, and other stakeholders, to ensure there is ongoing, tangible improvement in everyday life for people with disabilities.

The legislation specifies the functions of the Authority. These are:

- > To advise the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform and keep him/her informed of developments in relation to disability
- > To assist in the co-ordination and development of policy
- > To undertake, commission or collaborate in research related to disability
- > To seek information on any matters concerning the provision of programmes or services for people with disabilities, from public bodies and from other bodies providing services that are funded in whole or in part from the Exchequer



Georgia Bradley, age 7 Brandon Bradley, age 12 School children
" We want the NDA to make sure we can get
the help we need to learn and do well"

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- > To prepare, consult with, and submit to the Minister draft codes of practice for the purpose of achieving good standards and quality in the provision of services for people with disabilities. The Minister may legislate a resulting code of practice as an approved code of practice
- > To monitor the implementation of standards and codes of practice in programmes and services provided to persons with disabilities and to report to the Minister
- > To recognise achievement of good standards and quality, including through the provision of an awards system
- > To recommend the review, reduction or withdrawal of funding from any programme or service in accordance with its monitoring role
- > To make reports to the Minister with respect to any of its functions, as it sees fit.

[See Appendix 1 for Functions specified under Section 8 of the National Disability Authority Act, 1999]

delivering on the remit

In its first three years the Authority faced the challenge of establishing a dynamic organisation whilst delivering on its statutory remit and its first Strategic Plan.

Through an evidence-based approach located in the social model of disability the Authority advises in relation to public policy and service provision and seeks to affect public attitudes towards people with disabilities. In carrying out its role to assist in the co-ordination and development of policy relating to disability the Authority has thus far focussed on areas related to Education, Health, Employment and Training, Transport and Income Adequacy.

The Authority recognises the importance of genuine involvement by people with disabilities in the design and delivery of services. Following the work of the Commission on the Status of People with Disabilities the NDA has continued the important process of consultation with people with disabilities and their advocates,

ensuring their involvement on an ongoing basis whilst discharging its mandate. People with disabilities and their advocates, families and carers participate in the development and delivery of the work of the NDA, through membership of the governing Authority and Advisory Committees, undertaking and participating in research, and involvement in consultation and influencing policy. Noted successes have been the development of comprehensive consultation processes, and publication of Accessibility, Consultation and Research guidelines.

The establishment of Advisory Committees, with broad representation, on Research, Standards and Mental Health, and the consolidation of partnerships with statutory and voluntary agencies and service providers have significantly progressed the work of the Authority.

The research work commenced with a Review of Disability Related Research in Ireland 1996 – 2001 and a review of the disability dimension of administrative databases across the public sector. These identified research gaps, and along with a major survey into public attitudes to disability in Ireland, provide information and baseline data from which to inform planning and the development of further research, policy and practices. The creation of a Chair of Disability Studies, based at University College Dublin, along with NDA funded post-graduate research scholars are creating new knowledge through disability-specific research. The Research Advisory Committee supports the work of the Authority's research team.

In working towards the development of standards in services it became evident that, in many areas, geographical and otherwise, services are patchy or do not currently exist. Coupled with administrative inconsistencies and financial constraints there is some way to go before consistent, high quality services are provided across Ireland.

The Standards Advisory Committee set, as a key priority, the development of national standards for those disability services which are funded by the Department of Health and Children, and continues to support the work of the standards team in the Authority.

The introduction of the Mental Health Advisory Committee brought together key stakeholders, including service users and service providers, to focus on mental health policy and advise the Authority on the development of mental health services in Ireland. This unique initiative ensures that the concerns and needs of people with

mental health disabilities are central to the NDA's work, alongside those of people with physical, sensory and intellectual disabilities. Priority work will concentrate on attitudes, advocacy and contributing to the monitoring and review of the Mental Health Act (2001).

developing this plan

In developing this plan, the Authority publicly invited submissions from interested organisations and individuals. Advertisements were placed in the national press, posted on the NDA website, and invitations to participate sent to organisations identified as significant stakeholders. The consultation particularly welcomed comments on:

- > The achievements of the first three years of the Authority's work
- > Areas for improvements by the Authority
- > Exploration of priorities to focus on for the next three years

Submissions were received from a range of stakeholders, including people with disabilities, family members and carers, and public and voluntary organisations. The largest number of responses was from Disability Service Providers, while family members and carers of people with a disability made up 23% of responses.

The NDA's Advisory Committees submitted their views for consideration in developing this Strategic Plan. A number of strategic planning workshops were held with staff of the NDA and the Authority.

Through the consultative process significant achievements in the life of the NDA's first three years were identified as:

- > Raising awareness of issues affecting people with disabilities
- > Challenging public attitudes
- > Consultation with people with disabilities and stakeholders
- > Undertaking and supporting disability-related research

- > Advising in relation to policy
- > Developing national standards for disability services
- > Publication of guidelines in areas of accessibility, consultation and research

The following were identified as areas to focus on:

- > Increasing the profile of the NDA and its work
- > Ensuring continued, meaningful consultation with people with disabilities
- > Further raising public awareness about disability
- > Developing an evidence-based approach to policy and standards setting
- > Influencing the development of appropriate, accessible, quality services

The consultation has been important in establishing the priorities for the work of the NDA, in order to focus resources over the next three years, whilst acknowledging the context in which the Authority operates.

This Plan draws on the foundation work of the first three years of the Authority. It retains focus on a vision of an inclusive Ireland. It emphasises continuity with earlier work, and sets out a route to progress key priority areas, through advising the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform, influencing policy, conducting research, developing partnerships, improving access to public services, and setting and monitoring standards.

developments in the external environment

Significant developments have taken place, within Ireland and internationally, over the Authority's first three years.

domestic developments

Government initiatives to enhance its commitment to a more equal society include the implementation of the National Children's Strategy, the work of the Equality Authority, the establishment of the Human Rights Commission and the equality commitments in the City and County Development Boards Strategy Plans under the Local Government Act (2000). The Authority, in accordance with its statutory functions, will continue to engage with these and other bodies involved in the provision of services to people with disabilities.

Political commitment to equality is further evident in the Employment Equality Act (1998) and Equal Status Act (2000) that contain enforceable rights to non-discrimination for people with disabilities. The Programme for Prosperity and Fairness (PPF) introduced initiatives, reaffirmed in Sustaining Progress, around improving access to public services, and equality proofing. The NDA and the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform will monitor, guide and audit progress towards the achievement of the commitment to make public services accessible (PPF, Framework 111 Section 3.12.19). Supported by the Strategic Management Initiative, and reflected in disability legislation, there is a growing emphasis on accessibility and provision of quality services. The changing legislative and regulatory frameworks, particularly in transport and telecommunications, provide challenges for the sectors involved, ensuring commitments in disability legislation are adhered to along with increasing opportunities for progressing mainstreaming. The emergence of new organisations with which the NDA shares common areas of concern, such as the Taxi Regulator, and the National Special Education Council, will create opportunities for further collaboration in developing draft codes of practice and standards, in order to progress the quality of services and quality of life for people with disabilities.



Maureen Breslin, age 60 Campaigner

" I want the NDA to issue guidelines and standards to ensure quality in services for people with disabilities"

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The Authority has been active in promoting the equal status of people with disabilities. Positive developments are evident at a national level within the health service. Following extensive consultation the NDA made a submission on the Mental Health Act (2001). The Authority welcomes the establishment of the Mental Health Commission that offers opportunities for the NDA to work in partnership to influence the development of quality services for people with mental health disabilities. Additionally, the Authority participated in the consultative forum and working group on, and made a comprehensive submission to, the development of the National Health Strategy, Quality and Fairness, A Health System for You (2001). These developments indicate that the needs and concerns of people with disabilities will be comprehensively addressed throughout the health services and the NDA will take an active role in monitoring the implementation of standards and codes of practice in programmes and services provided to persons with disabilities.

The recent economic downturn and resulting budgetary constraints is not only putting significant pressure on services for people with disabilities but also on individuals with disabilities and their families.

The NDA has a key role to play through the ongoing review of the National Anti Poverty Strategy, and NAP/incl in supporting the Government's commitment to building a "fair and inclusive society and to ensure that people have the resources and opportunities to live life with dignity and have access to the quality public services that underpin life chances and experience" (Sustaining Progress 2003 – 2005).

disability legislation in ireland

During the period of the first strategic plan the Authority made a significant submission in relation to the development of domestic disability legislation. Following the publication of the Disability Bill, 2001, the NDA was invited to facilitate a consultative forum of the disability sector, to report into the Government's Expert Consultation Team. The Authority prioritised the facilitation and support of the work of the Disability Legislative Consultation Group. This resulted in the publication and submission of Equal Citizens: Proposals for Core Elements of Disability Legislation to the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform, recommending that positive rights to services, needs assessment and advocacy be enforceable by individuals and duties and requirements be placed on bodies providing public services to remove access barriers.

The most important initiative for people with disabilities over the period of this Strategic Plan is the introduction of disability legislation. Along with Education legislation it sets a new agenda and provides new opportunities and challenges in the delivery of health, education, advocacy and other services to people with disabilities. The legislation enables the NDA to build on the achievements of its first years and will provide an impetus for future developments.

international developments

Developments within Ireland are reaffirmed at European and United Nations levels. The EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, and the Barcelona and Madrid Declarations promote equality. Towards a Barrier-Free Europe emphasises more rigorous mainstreaming and access, while a new action programme on disability will be prepared for 2004 – 2007.

In order to promote and protect the rights and dignity of people with disabilities the NDA has and will continue to support the proposed United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities.

The NDA will continue to support the mainstreaming equality agenda as detailed in the revised equality legislation following the transposition of the European Framework Directive for equal treatment in employment for people with disabilities in Ireland.

looking to the future

The NDA was established during a period of economic growth. The impact of the changing economic situation has yet to become fully apparent. The Authority will be observant of any effects on areas of key importance to the lives of people with disabilities.

This Strategic Plan sets out how further progress can be achieved, within this environment. While the NDA seeks to maintain its ability to be flexible and responsive the delivery of the work is dependent upon continued provision of adequate resources.

vision

The NDA is committed to the creation of an inclusive Irish society. The creation of a society in which people with disabilities have equal rights and opportunities to participate in the economic, social and cultural life of the nation.

The National Disability Authority dedicates itself to strive for the creation of a society in which people with disabilities have the right and opportunities to:

- > Influence and shape public policy at all levels
- > Develop and fully use their abilities, talents and skills
- > Live, learn and work in environments appropriate to their needs
- > Live as independently as possible
in the least restrictive environment
through the use of personal assistance, and other community supports, where necessary
making full use of technology and other supports
- > Enjoy equality and full participation
- > Make informed choices on issues
- > Participate in, and receive support from, national and international organisations which effectively represent their interests
- > Have systems of support sufficient to ensure a reasonable standard of living in the community of their choice.

The NDA, through developing its work across its priority areas, and working with other stakeholders, can make a contribution to progressing this vision.

mission

The National Disability Authority will, on behalf of the State, promote and work to secure the rights of people with disabilities. The Authority, as an authoritative and independent voice will achieve this:

- > By advising the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform
- > By influencing public policy and legislation
- > By working to ensure that services to people with disabilities are of the highest standards and quality.

Specifically the National Disability Authority will:

- > Collect and disseminate information
- > Undertake and commission research
- > Develop, co-ordinate and advise on policy
- > Prepare draft codes of practice for submission to the Minister for approval
- > Advise on, support the development of, and monitor the implementation of standards for programmes and services
- > Provide an awards system for recognition of quality in services
- > Promote equality, participation and inclusion

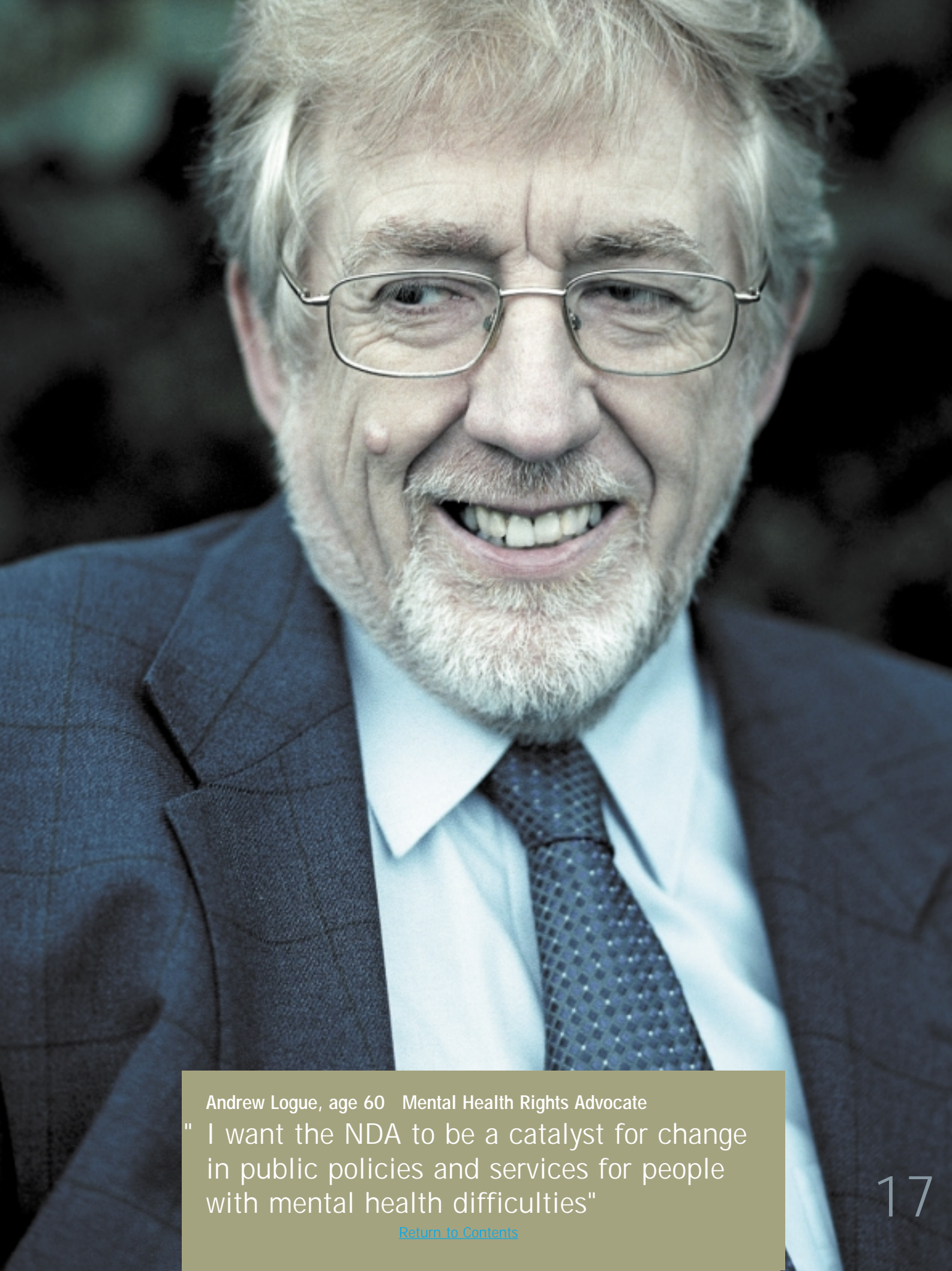
core values

The Authority reaffirms its core values, to be reflected in the work delivered over the period of this Strategic Plan. These values remain central to the way in which the Authority exercises its functions. They continue to guide the way in which the Authority will achieve its mission:

a rights-based approach

The National Disability Authority will continue to proactively adopt a civil and human rights perspective in the development of policy and practice for people with disabilities. Grounded in the social model of disability and the principles of equality, participation and choice put forward by the Commission on the Status of People with Disabilities, this approach will seek to:

- > Highlight the needs, promote the rights of, and empower people with disabilities to secure full and equal participation in all aspects of Irish life
- > Support access by people with disabilities to appropriate economic and social supports to enable them to exercise their rights
- > Underpin the promotion of an inclusive vision among all constituencies in Irish society
- > Build on rights-based policy positions established in the NDA's first three years.



Andrew Logue, age 60 Mental Health Rights Advocate

" I want the NDA to be a catalyst for change in public policies and services for people with mental health difficulties"

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working in partnership

The National Disability Authority recognises the importance of partnership working in order to make progress towards an inclusive Ireland. Identifying strategic partners provides a wider framework for progressing the primary function of the NDA to advise the Minister. The NDA will undertake to work strategically with government departments and other statutory bodies, people with disabilities and their advocates and families and other key stakeholders, including service providers, and industry specific bodies in order to be an authoritative voice and a catalyst for action.

In particular the Authority will:

- > Consult with key stakeholders in identifying emerging needs and priorities for people with disabilities
- > Seek to recognise where the remits of organisations provide opportunities for collaboration and influencing mainstream approaches
- > Maintain and strengthen existing partnerships, and initiate and contribute to the development of strong partnerships and constructive working relationships, where necessary, as a basis for effecting change
- > Continue to work with expert advisory bodies and strategic working groups on key policy issues with significant representation from people with disabilities/advocates
- > Provide opportunities for key decision and policy makers to actively listen to people with disabilities, their advocates and their representative organisations
- > Encourage collaborative partnerships with people with disabilities, their advocates and potential advocates and community development/capacity building approaches and networking
- > Continue to develop positive relationships and ongoing co-operation with government departments, other statutory and non- governmental bodies
- > Strive to add value to the good work already being undertaken by other bodies.

quality services

The National Disability Authority is committed to the sustained development and continuous improvement of high quality, person-centred services for people with disabilities in Ireland.

This quality focus will require the Authority, in consultation with key stakeholders, to continue to:

- > Promote service user-focussed and service user-led service planning and services
- > Develop the evidence-base
- > Identify and ensure standards of good practice in design, delivery and monitoring of services
- > Acknowledge value for money in service provision
- > Make recommendations for appropriate action where services are inadequate
- > Incorporate quality of life impact indicators and the right to exercise choice
- > Pursue maximum appropriate inclusion in mainstream services
- > Adopt quality principles and practices in relation to how it delivers on its mission and objectives.

strategic priorities

2004 – 2006

The National Disability Authority has focused on five strategic priorities through which it will deliver its mission over the next three years. These priorities are:

developing policies and practices that promote the equal status of people with disabilities

maximising accessibility in Public Services

informing and challenging attitudes in Irish society

developing quality in services for people with disabilities

developing organisational capacity



Selina Bonnie MA, age 32 Academic and activist

" I want the NDA to promote evidence based research and data gathering that promotes the dignity and independence of disabled people and which will be used to plan services that more appropriately meet the needs of all disabled people"

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one

developing policies and practices that promote the equal status of people with disabilities

The Authority will continue to provide a central, national focus to the development of forward-looking strategies to promote the equal status of people with disabilities. The need to continue mainstreaming disability issues and to respond to the emerging legislative agenda will be key considerations.

The development of such strategies will include policy proposals for Government and other stakeholders; and practices such as equality / disability proofing tools to ensure inclusive policies and programmes, ongoing research and statistics for more effective planning and delivery of services.

This strategic priority will be achieved through the following objectives:

Objective 1: To advise and inform the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform of developments in relation to any disability of persons, which concern issues of policy and practices

Objective 2: To promote equal rights and opportunities for people with disabilities in the legislative arena by:

- Reviewing relevant legislation
- Monitoring the impact of relevant legislation
- Influencing the drafting of legislation
- Reviewing and monitoring Ireland's compliance with relevant international human and civil rights instruments

Objective 3: To ensure equality measures for people with disabilities and to underpin the potential for positive action in all key areas of economic, cultural and social life by:

- Engaging with public and other bodies
- Developing and supporting mainstream initiatives
- Promoting the use of equality / disability proofing guidelines

Objective 4: To effect change in the key policy areas of health, education, transport, poverty and employment / training by:

- Gathering essential information
- Developing and informing policy positions
- Identifying areas for draft codes of practice
- Developing standards and promoting their implementation
- Monitoring compliance
- Reviewing and reporting on progress to the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform

Objective 5: To develop baseline quantitative and qualitative data to inform and underpin the planning and development of policy, practices and services for people with disabilities by:

- Undertaking a national disability study
- Promoting standardised data gathering
- Collaborating in research projects relating to disability

Linkages: This work will involve linkages, as appropriate, with people with disabilities and their advocates, families and carers, the Departments of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, Education and Science, Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Transport, Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Social and Family Affairs, Equality Authority, Combat Poverty Agency, Comhairle, FÁS, Human Rights Commission, Equality Commission Northern Ireland, Mental Health Commission, National Council of Ageing and Older People, National Special Education Council, National Office for Social Inclusion, Local Authorities, City and County Development Boards, Health Boards, Disability service providers, Disability representative groups, ICTU, IBEC, all-level education providers, Centre for Disability Studies UCD, Children's Research Centre TCD, Policy Institute TCD, Health Research Board, ESRI, Central Statistics Office, Disability Law and Policy Research Centre, NUI Galway, and other relevant agencies as identified.

Strategic Priority

two

maximising accessibility in public services

Government Departments and Agencies are required to take reasonable steps to make their services accessible to people with disabilities. In accordance with this commitment, contained within the Programme for Prosperity and Fairness, Sustaining Progress and subsequent agreements, the Authority will work, in partnership with Government Departments and agencies, to facilitate effective action and the development of acceptable standards.

This work includes working with other bodies, the issuing of guidelines in accordance with international norms, and audit tools, the monitoring of the implementation of these guidelines and, finally, awarding the accessibility symbol to compliant Public Services.

Three key areas will continue to be addressed:

1. Built Environment 2. Customer Service 3. Information Communication Technology

The NDA will agree an overall strategy with the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform and agree individual guidelines with it and other relevant Government Departments.

This strategic priority will be achieved through the following objectives:

Objective 1: To develop and issue guidelines and audit tools to assist Government Departments and their agencies

Objective 2: To work in partnership with the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform to monitor, guide and audit progress

Objective 3: To award an accessibility symbol to compliant public services

Linkages: This work will involve linkages, as appropriate, with the Departments of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, Transport, the Taoiseach, Social Community & Family Affairs, Finance (CMOD), Office of Public Works, National Standards Authority of Ireland, Comhairle, Equality Authority, Information Society Commission, Irish Internet Association, REACH, OASIS, EDeAN, and other relevant agencies as identified.

Strategic Priority

three

informing and challenging attitudes in Irish society

The Authority will develop public awareness of disability issues and support within Irish society for inclusive policies and practices.

The Authority will undertake to promote the inclusion of people with disabilities in society by working with partner organisations to contribute to the education of people in Ireland around disability issues. The Authority will raise the public's awareness of the functions of the NDA and opportunities for contributing to framing the agenda.

This strategic priority will be achieved through the following objectives:

Objective 1: To develop a communications strategy for public education and awareness regarding:

- The role and activities of the NDA
- Issues affecting people with disabilities and their needs and rights

Objective 2: To promote effective inclusion of people with disabilities in all aspects of public life, including mainstream employment, through:

- Strategic partnerships with other bodies
- Continuing education and training of professions
- Guidelines for the meaningful involvement of people with disabilities
- Disability awareness programmes

Linkages: This work will involve linkages, as appropriate, with a range of Government Departments and agencies, professional bodies, media, people with disabilities and their advocates, families and carers, disability representative groups, community and voluntary groups, and other relevant agencies as identified.

Strategic Priority

four

developing quality in services for people with disabilities

The NDA has an important role in ensuring that services for people with disabilities develop to the highest quality and in contributing to a measurable improvement in the quality of life of people receiving those services.

The Authority will help to achieve this by carrying out its statutory remit regarding the development and monitoring of standards and draft codes of practice in programmes and services, and through reporting to the Minister with recommendations for the review, reduction or withdrawal of funding from programmes and services, if appropriate.

The Authority will liaise with other bodies to facilitate and support the development of appropriate standards. Services are increasingly being delivered through person-centred plans, where individual's specific needs are met through a targeted package of services. A key feature in the design and delivery of a monitoring system is the experience of the individual service user as the central measure of quality. The achievement of quality will be recognised and promoted through the provision of awards schemes.

This strategic priority will be achieved through the following objectives:

Objective 1: To develop standards, in partnership with Government Departments and their agencies in:

- Health funded services
- Transport services

Objective 2: To prepare and issue statutory draft codes of practice, in the following areas:

- Education
- Transport
- Person-centred planning

Objective 3: To monitor and evaluate the implementation of standards and draft codes of practice, in particular the monitoring of the National Standards for Disability Services as developed in partnership with the Department of Health and Children

Objective 4: To recognise the achievement of quality in services through the provision of awards, in particular to award services that comply with the National Standards for Disability Services

Linkages: This work will involve linkages, as appropriate, with people with disabilities and their advocates, families and carers, service providers, all Government Departments and in particular the Departments of Education and Science, Health and Children, Transport and its agencies, Equality Authority, National Council for Ageing and Older People, Mental Health Commission, FAS, Social Services Inspectorate, National Standards Authority of Ireland, Comhairle, Disability representative groups, and other relevant agencies as identified.

Strategic Priority five

developing organisational capacity

The NDA has prioritised key areas of activity for the next three years, where the Authority estimates it can deliver within agreed resources, and with the support of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform. Organisational capacity needs to be built in order to ensure continual responsiveness and effectiveness. As a learning organisation entering into the period of its second Strategic Plan work is required to develop this capacity.

This strategic priority will be achieved through the following objectives:

Objective 1: To develop equality-based human resources systems by:

- Implementing and reviewing the Performance Management and Development System for staff
- Ensuring appropriate training for all staff
- Maintaining and developing the work environment
- Developing and ensuring a work environment which models good practice in accessibility
- Implementing employment equality policies
- Developing and regularly reviewing internal communication systems

Objective 2: To enhance the development of existing NDA information systems, including the library and web site, by:

- Disseminating NDA generated information on research, standards, policy and public affairs
- Disseminating information available through the NDA library related to disability issues
- Creating inward flow of information to inform the NDA in relation to its key activities

Objective 3: To increase efficiency and value for money in NDA operations by:

- Developing and implementing an internal quality system
- Regularly reviewing and upgrading the information communications technology infrastructure
- Ensuring financial systems meet the rigorous standards required for government agencies
- Identifying gaps and developing procedural systems
- Implementing evaluation of NDA activity as set out in this Strategic Plan

Linkages: This work will involve linkages, as appropriate, with professional bodies, community and voluntary groups, libraries, information providers and other relevant agencies as identified.



Lianne Quigley, age 21 University Student

" I want the NDA to profile the importance of access so that people with disabilities can participate as equals in Irish society"

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Joe Bollard, age 68 Musician and Journalist

" I want the NDA to create awareness among the general public of the abilities and needs of people with disabilities"

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Appendix 1: National Disability Authority Act, 1999

Section 8 (1)

The principle function of the Authority shall be to advise the Minister and keep him or her informed of developments in relation to any disability of persons which concern issues of policy and practice and in particular, developments which relate to the functions specified in subsection (2).

Section 8 (2)

The following shall be functions of the Authority:

- (a) To act as a central, national body which will assist the Minister in the co-ordination and development of policy relating to persons with disabilities;
- (b) To undertake, commission or collaborate in research projects and activities on issues relating to disability and to assist in the development of statistical information appropriate for the planning, delivery and monitoring of programmes and services for persons with disabilities;
- (c) To advise the Minister on appropriate standards for programmes and services provided or to be provided to persons with disabilities and to act as an advisory body with regard to the development of general and specific standards in relation to such programmes and services;
- (d) To monitor the implementation of standards and codes of practice in programmes and services provided to persons with disabilities and to report to the Minister thereon;
- (e) To liaise with other bodies, both corporate and unincorporated, involved in the provision of services to persons with disabilities and to facilitate and support the development and implementation of appropriate standards for programmes and services for persons with disabilities;
- (f) To prepare codes of practice;
- (g) To recognise the achievement of good standards and quality in the provision of programmes and services for persons with disabilities including through the provision of a disability equality awards system;
- (h) To prepare Strategic Plans

Section 8 (3)

The Authority may, subject to the other provisions of the Act, do anything which it considers necessary or expedient for enabling it to perform its functions.

