

Project Fact Sheet: Decision-making support for Queenslanders with impaired capacity

The Public Advocate

The role of the Public Advocate is to protect and promote the rights, autonomy and participation of Queenslanders with impaired decision-making capacity through statutory systems advocacy. The Office of the Public Advocate is committed to an evidence-based approach that explores and extends our knowledge and influence on inclusive policy, programs and practices to promote improved life opportunities and outcomes for these vulnerable Queenslanders.

The Public Advocate is firmly committed to ensuring that Australia's responsibility under the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* is upheld in Queensland. The Public Advocate therefore supports the right of people to be supported in the least restrictive way to exercise maximum autonomy in making decisions.

Purpose of this project

The Office of the Public Advocate is examining the provision of decision-making support to adults with impaired decision-making capacity who interact with the Queensland guardianship system. This initial phase of research will explore the extent to which Queensland's guardianship regime upholds the right of a person to make their own decisions.

In doing so, the research will identify the systemic enablers and barriers to protecting and supporting the right of the person to make their own decisions. It will also highlight opportunities for systemic enhancements that reflect contemporary developments in decision-making support for people with impaired capacity.

What we will do

The Office of the Public Advocate will undertake interviews, observations and surveys with the agencies involved in the Queensland guardianship system. The Public Advocate will invite submissions on this issue from stakeholders and the broader community, and convene an Advisory Group to provide expert knowledge and strategic advice. This will generate the evidence base from which the Public Advocate will report on the systemic issues and make recommendations.

The final report is expected to be available in late 2014 and will inform future discussion about how best to uphold the right of people to make their own decisions and support the Public Advocate to work collaboratively with various agencies to pursue strategies and system enhancements.

A suite of four documents form the foundation of the research: the conceptual framework, a literature review, a synopsis of the legislation underpinning Queensland's guardianship system, and a targeted overview of guardianship legislation in other Australian jurisdictions. These documents are available on the Public Advocate website.

Further information

Updates about the project will be published on the Office of the Public Advocate website at www.publicadvocate.qld.gov.au as they become available. For more information about the project, phone 07 3224 7424 or email public.advocate@justice.qld.gov.au.