



Roadmap to the Future

Intellectual Disability Behaviour Support Program

Never Stand Still

Arts & Social Sciences



January 2017

Foreword

I am pleased to introduce you to the Intellectual Disability Behaviour Support (IDBS) Program and its Roadmap to the Future – a journey committed to improving and transforming the lives of people with cognitive disability.

I strongly believe that embracing diversity in all its forms is fundamental to a strong and just society. To make real progress we need to find new ways of doing things – ways that involve, support, and inspire people in shaping their future.

This important program has been made possible by the generous support of the NSW Government who provided the core funding to establish the Chair IDBS in 2014. Since then the inaugural Chair, Associate Professor Leanne Dowse and her committed team of scholars have designed and commenced an innovative program of applied research, teaching, and engagement, focussed on building capacity to meet the challenge of complex support needs.

At UNSW we are dedicated to generating ideas and practical applications that make social change possible. We take pride in delivering significant and sustainable improvements for our partners and our communities.

This Roadmap sets out an ambitious and innovative plan to improve the way we understand and meet the needs of some of the most vulnerable in our community. It has the potential to improve and transform lives. I commend it to you.



David Gonski AC

Chancellor, UNSW Australia

The President and Vice Chancellor of UNSW, Professor Ian Jacobs, initiated the 2025 Strategy in 2015 to take the university to a new position as a locally and globally engaged research intensive university ‘making a difference to people’s lives’. A pillar of the Strategy is progressing equity, diversity and inclusion. This, together with the depth of participatory research and scholarship by disability scholars at UNSW, makes it the natural home for the work of the IDBS program and its applied research and teaching. This document provides a roadmap for ongoing collaborative and inclusive research and program development building society’s capacity to support people with cognitive disability to flourish and live fulfilling lives.

It is an honour to Chair the dedicated IDBS Steering Committee and to support the IDBS team to fulfil the vision this Roadmap lays out.



Professor Eileen Baldry

Professor of Criminology and Academic Chair,
UNSW Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Board

➤ Message from the Chair

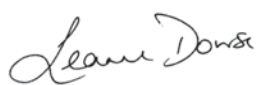
The Intellectual Disability Behaviour Support (IDBS) Program was established in 2014 to build the capacity of those living and working with cognitive disability. Our work is focussed on providing meaningful and sustainable improvements to practice and policy for those with cognitive disability and complex support needs, their families, and supporters.

Our team includes academic and professional staff with direct expertise in disability studies, inclusive research, delivery of disability services, social policy, knowledge translation, program evaluation, complex communication needs, learning, and teaching. We work collaboratively to engage all our stakeholders – including people with cognitive disability – in our programs of research, education, advice, and engagement streams.

The Program is located within the School of Social Sciences and is an integral part of the University of New South Wales' (UNSW) wider commitment to addressing the challenge of disability. We belong to a thriving multidisciplinary community of scholars uniquely positioned to deliver real social benefits.

My appointment as the first Chair IDBS – funded by the NSW Government – has enabled us to establish the IDBS Program and undertake critical foundational projects. Over our first two years of operation this core funding has also enabled us to successfully compete for additional grants and join larger multidisciplinary research projects.

We have demonstrated the need for our important cross cutting work. We know more now about what needs to be done. I am pleased to now present this Roadmap to our Future and set out the priorities we seek to address.



Associate Professor Leanne Dowse
Chair IDBS

“Throughout this document we use the term ‘cognitive disability’ to include many labels – including intellectual disability, borderline intellectual disability, acquired brain injury, and autism.”

➤ Our purpose

Our purpose is to **build the capacity** of society to support, include, and improve the lives of people with cognitive disability and complex support needs, their families, and supporters. We do this by working collaboratively and inclusively to generate knowledge, stimulate informed debate, and improve policy and practice.

➤ Our vision

We aspire to lead interdisciplinary scholarship and debate on cognitive disability and complex support needs in order to **improve and transform lives**. Our strong partnership with individuals, providers, and policy makers enables us to apply our knowledge and directly participate in the process of realising just outcomes for those living with disability.

Our commitment to this vision is further strengthened by UNSW's aspiration 'to be Australia's global university, improving and transforming lives through excellence in research, outstanding education, and a commitment to advancing a just society'.

"At the core of our organisation is a determination to deliver excellence built on an ethos of: academic freedom, facilitating open debate and the pursuit of ideas; creativity, being innovative and open to new ideas; and equality of opportunity for all regardless of background."

*Professor Ian Jacobs, President and Vice-Chancellor, UNSW Australia
UNSW 2025 Strategy*

Our values

We share the overarching commitment of UNSW to place people at the centre of everything we do, respecting diversity, and providing opportunities to learn, research, and express views in a collaborative and respectful environment. This means that we actively seek out opportunities to include people with cognitive disability and complex support needs, their families, and supporters in all aspects of our work.

Along with this overarching commitment to inclusion, our work, decisions and relationships are characterised by these core values:

Excellence

Our work is academically rigorous. We strive for quality, innovation, initiative, and creativity.

Respect

We respect diversity and difference. We place the person with disability at the centre of all we do.

Partnership

We seek opportunities to partner with all stakeholders – including those with disability – in every aspect of our work.

Justice

We are committed to achieving just outcomes for people with a disability, their families, and supporters.

Integrity

We subject our work and decisions to rigorous review and the highest ethical and professional standards. We accurately represent the views and opinions of those with cognitive disability and complex support needs.

Accountability

We engage openly, fairly, and transparently with all our stakeholders to accurately understand and respond to their needs.

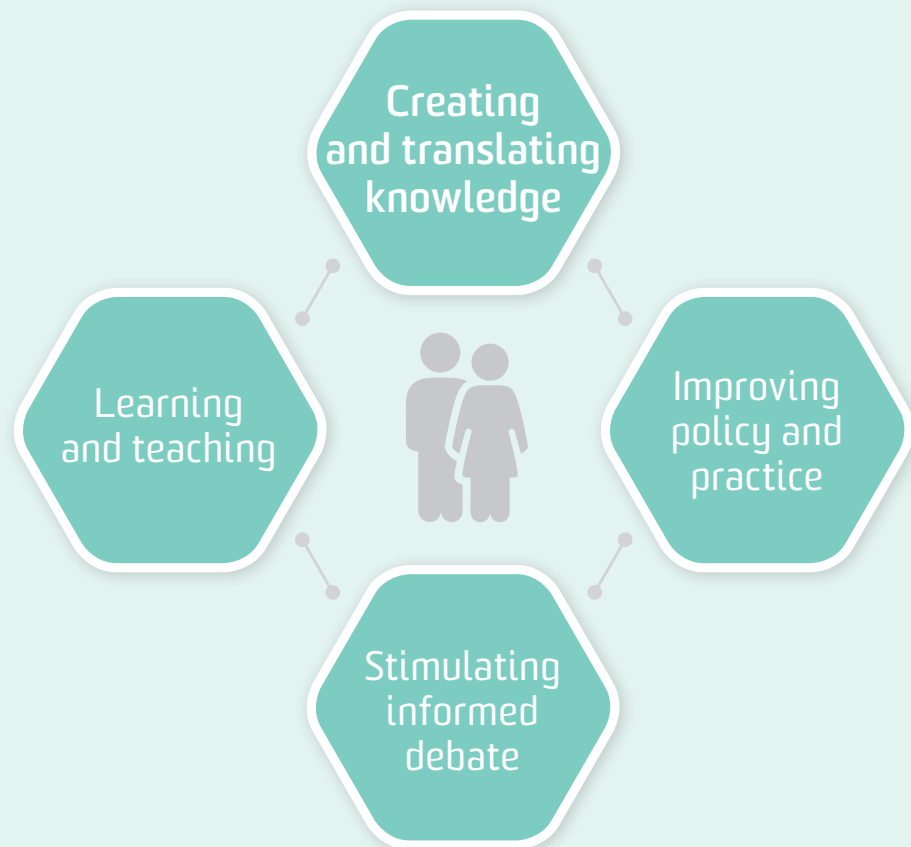
“The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which Australia has signed and ratified, promotes, protects and ensures the ‘full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and promotes respect for their inherent dignity.’”

Article 1, United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

➤ Our integrated approach

To realise sustainable improvements for people with cognitive disability, capacity must be strengthened at local, community, and system levels. Our program of work is designed to stimulate fundamental and systemic development informed by rigorous academic scholarship.

Our integrated program encompasses **knowledge creation and translation**, **learning and teaching**, **improving policy and practice**, and **stimulating informed debate**. Our collaborative and inclusive approach ensures that people with disability, their families, and supporters remain at the core of all we do.

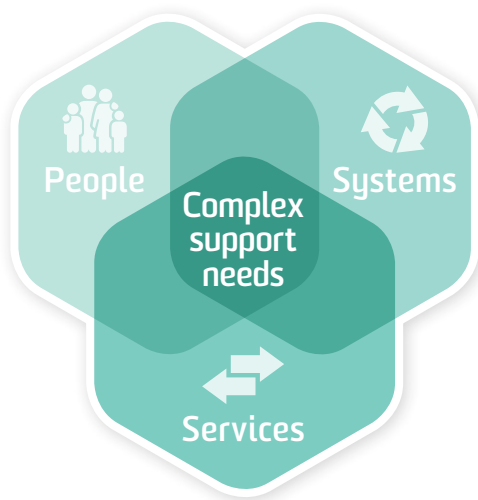


“UNSW is home to a multi-disciplinary community of over 100 scholars committed to working with people with disability to explore new ways to benefit from their increasing participation and contribution in the community.”

Disability@UNSW Survey 2015

➤ Our challenge

We take an ecological approach that accounts for an individual's characteristics, circumstances, and experiences as well as the full context of their social support systems at every stage of life. Our focus is on improving and transforming the lives of the most vulnerable; the people with needs that current systems fail to meet.



“Complex support needs emerge across the ‘fault lines’ between our services and systems. Real support has to match real need”

Gordon Duff

National Disability Services

People with cognitive disability are a large and diverse group. Almost three in every 100 people have a cognitive impairment. These people have a wide variety of capabilities, attitudes, and life experiences. Their disability may or may not be diagnosed or given a label. Often they will experience cognitive disability together with other physical, psychosocial or sensory impairments. Their disability will impact the lives of their families and supporters in profound and life changing ways.

It is widely recognised that people with cognitive disability are frequently socially disconnected and experience poor access to social support, education, employment, housing, health care, and justice. People with cognitive disability are disproportionately represented in our prisons, are more likely to experience violence and abuse, and to be subjected to physical or chemical restraint and intrusive medical interventions. Those who are parents are at higher risk of having their children removed. Some are exposed to high risks of homelessness and have harmful levels of substance use. These experiences are intensified for Indigenous people with cognitive impairment and those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. These difficult life experiences interact with cognitive disability to produce complex support needs.

Due to the nature of cognitive disability, needs for support are not easy to communicate or recognise. People with cognitive disability and complex support needs can be the most challenging to support. Individuals may have deep needs in a few areas as well as broader needs across many areas. Current systems struggle to cope with the challenge of complex needs – and particularly with needs that evolve in different ways across a lifetime. People with complex support needs are particularly vulnerable to marginalisation and disadvantage. ‘Complexity’ of need is a product of individual life situations together with the failure of support structures. Where needs in multiple domains remain unmet, intense social disadvantage and exclusion can be the result.

Our supporters

The core funding for the Chair IDBS reinforces our independence as advocates for sustainable social change.

The NSW Department of Family and Community Services, Ageing Disability and Home Care generously provided the core funding to establish the Chair IDBS. This funding – which provides us with \$500,000 annually for four years – has enabled us to appoint the Chair and other key staff, create foundational materials, engage with practitioners and commence primary research. To sustain our program into the future it will be necessary to secure further core funding.

Support for our applied research increasingly comes from competitive grants and commissioned projects. Our research is widely recognised for its intellectual excellence as well as its practical impact. As our program becomes more established we expect the proportion of our income from competitive grants and commissioned projects to grow.

UNSW provides us with a range of in-kind support including facilities, administrative and financial services.



This funding provides the essential income to enable foundational research, development of teaching programs, and engagement with policy makers, providers and people with cognitive disabilities, their families and supporters. The Chair is currently funded by the NSW Government.



This funding provides the resources for specific targeted research. We continue to be successful in winning highly competitive Australian Research Council and National Health and Medical Research Council grants.



We undertake a range of specific commissioned projects and consultancy services for a range of clients including state and federal government agencies and non-government entities including peak bodies and service providers.

Source of current funds June 2016

➤ The road so far

Since our commencement in 2014, IDBS has delivered research, teaching, and social engagement aimed at building capacity to better understand, and respond to, the support needs of those with cognitive disability. Our efforts have been directed to three main areas: **living**, **working**, and **responding**.

Living

This stream of work is directed towards enhancing the understanding of disability as a lived experience for **people** with a cognitive disability, their families, and supporters. This work is informed by our original research and directed by our knowledge translation strategy.

We connect with students globally through our innovative online and open access learning and teaching activities.

Thinking through and working with Disability: People, Policy and Practice

» Tertiary course on disability available to all UNSW undergraduates

Massive Open Online Courses Disability and a Good Life

» 5,000 students
» Global reach

Resource Kits

» Complex support needs planning and implementation
» Evidence based practice advice for case managers and service co-ordinators

Project RE-PIN

» Evaluating drug and alcohol rehabilitation for people with cognitive impairment

Working

We provide evidence based resources and guidance for professional practitioners working with those with complex support needs. We use findings from our person-centred exploration of complex support needs and **service** systems to improve behaviour support, decision-making, service planning, and implementation of safe and sustainable supports.

This work stream applies research to build the capacity needed for the more intensive, co-ordinated, and longer term support required to meet complex needs.

Responding

Our third stream of work is focused on the **systems** of response to cognitive disability and complex support needs. We aim to understand and communicate the experience of those with cognitive disability as they interact with systems of social care, justice, health, education, and housing. Our research has opened up the space for scholars and practitioners to understand more fully what is required for meaningful inclusion for people with complex support needs.

Since 2014 we have undertaken a series of original research projects on the impact of social systems on people with cognitive disability across the life course.



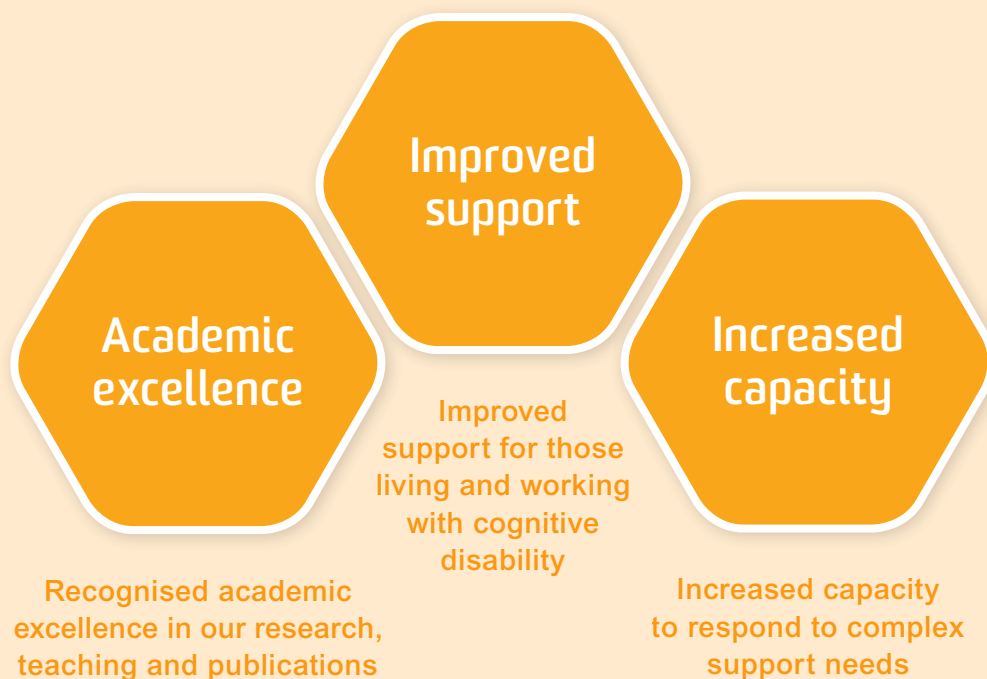
The demand for our work means that we are consulted by practitioners and policy makers to help with evidence based improvements to services and systems. We work with many advisory councils and reference groups on matters of central concern to those with cognitive disability and complex support needs, their families, and supporters including behaviour support, transition to new service models, supported decision-making, violence and abuse, access to justice, and implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

"I encourage everyone to think about how they can act inclusively so people with disability have the opportunity to live life their way."

*NSW Minister for Disability Services, John Ajaka
International Day of People with Disability, 2015*

> The road ahead

The IDBS program aims to deliver outcomes in three strategic areas:



Each area represents a major outcome of our integrated program of work and is integral to achieving our vision of leadership in transforming the lives of people with complex support needs, their families, and supporters. To be included in our work program, projects must demonstrate clear links to one or more of these outcomes.

The framework for linking these outcome areas with our integrated research, teaching and engagement program is presented in the following Strategic Map.

In this early phase of our development, **our overall objective is to deepen our understanding of complex support needs and increase our engagement with decision and policy makers.**

We will continue to build on our existing research program to improve our understanding of the impacts of core systems of social support on those living with and alongside cognitive disability. We will use this work to extend our engagement through our research, teaching, and advocacy.

➤ Our specific priorities for 2017–2021

📍 Specific priority 1

Build shared understanding of complex support needs for people with cognitive disability.

Objectives

- 1.1 Conduct research into complex support needs for people with cognitive disability.
- 1.2 Improve understanding of cognitive disability and complex support needs in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities.
- 1.3 Create and translate knowledge of theoretical, conceptual and analytical approaches to complexity and complex support needs.
- 1.4 Widely disseminate information about cognitive disability and complex support needs using a range of knowledge translation strategies.
- 1.5 Develop education and training programs and resources that promote understandings of complex support needs for people with cognitive disability, across tertiary, vocational, professional and community sectors.
- 1.6 Improve the focus on policy and practice for people with cognitive disability and complex support needs.
- 1.7 Stimulate informed debate on life course, diversity and ecological models of disability.
- 1.8 Participate in advisory panels across a range of system and human service agencies to promote shared understanding of complex support needs and drive change.

Specific priority 2

Ensure people with cognitive disability and complex support needs, their families and supporters are engaged in and inform all aspects of the IDBS Program.

Objectives

- 2.1 Develop best practice models of care to include people with cognitive disability and complex support needs, their families and supporters, in all decisions about their lives.
- 2.2 Build the capacity of people with cognitive disability and complex support needs, their families and supporters to engage in inclusive research.
- 2.3 Influence governments for the inclusion of people with cognitive disability and complex support needs, their families and supporters.
- 2.4 Engage with the UNSW Inclusive Research Network to ensure that IDBS' work related to complex support needs is informed and led by the experiences and priorities of people with cognitive disability, their family members and supporters.
- 2.5 Raise awareness of the barriers to inclusion faced by people with cognitive disability and complex support needs, their families and supporters.
- 2.6 Raise awareness and influence professional practice using the improved evidence-base from our research activity.

Specific priority 3

Improve understanding and delivery of effective and sustainable support for people with cognitive disability and complex support needs, their families and supporters.

Objectives

- 3.1 Document the experiences of people with cognitive disability and complex support needs.
- 3.2 Document the experiences of families of people with cognitive disability and complex support needs.
- 3.3 Document the experiences of professionals who provide support to people with cognitive disability and complex support needs.
- 3.4 Use documented experiences to contribute to evidence-based supports for practice, education and training.
- 3.5 Create opportunities for strategic partnership and research with multi-system service providers.
- 3.6 Utilise evidence and culturally informed practice to engage with people with cognitive disability and complex support needs to gain a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the impacts of systems and supports on their lives.

Specific priority 4

Promote integrated systemic responses to cognitive disability and complex support needs.

Objectives

- 4.1 Extend our research into systems of governance, including the National Disability Insurance Scheme and its interface with mainstream social care and other systems, to provide information and evidence to establish effective and sustainable responses to complex support needs.
- 4.2 Develop policy and legislative advice and recommendations.
- 4.3 Advocate for the integration of lived experience into the development and improvement of systems of support through involvement in advisory groups and committees.
- 4.4 Influence implementation of relevant policies and frameworks.

Specific priority 5

Expand the body of knowledge of cognitive disability and complex support needs.

Objectives

- 5.1 Create authoritative, high quality and accessible education and training programs and resources to improve knowledge about cognitive disability and complex support needs.
- 5.2 Explore the potential for international partnership under the UNSW PLoS Alliance.
- 5.3 Lead scholarship globally in cognitive disability and complex support needs.
- 5.4 Publish in high impact national and international journals.
- 5.5 Present on IDBS work at national and international conferences and develop networks with those in the global research community engaged in similar work.
- 5.6 Foster collaboration between researchers nationally and internationally.

➤ Our influence

In achieving our **vision, mission and values**, by 2021 we will have cemented our profile locally and internationally as a leading source of expert conceptual and practical advice on the inclusion of people with cognitive disability and complex support needs to inform and influence change in **policy and professional practice**.

This will be done through leading scholarship globally in cognitive disability and complex support needs; establishing international partnerships through the Plus Alliance; publishing in high impact journals; disseminating knowledge through international conferences, media appearances and community engagement activities; and using our position in various advisory roles to inform and influence the thinking and actions of key decision makers.

➤ Our expected outcomes

Living

By 2021 we will have built a significant evidence base to better understand, and respond to the diverse support needs of those with cognitive disability and complex support needs and tested a range of innovative models for support through collaboration and strategic partnerships.


By 2021 we will have:

-  Built a range of strategic **partnerships with multi-system service providers** and developed effective and sustainable systems of support that are tested within a rigorous research framework, including innovative accommodation support models.
-  Developed an **understanding** of the range of **specific contexts** that are relevant to people from diverse cultural backgrounds with cognitive disability and complex support needs such as behaviour support, models of accommodation support, prevention of violence and abuse, alcohol and other drug use, addressing risks for criminal justice involvement and issues for those with complex communication needs, their families and supporters.
-  Developed and disseminated **best practice** models for including people with cognitive disability and complex support needs, their families and supporters, in all decisions about their lives.
-  Raised **awareness** of the barriers to inclusion faced by people with cognitive disability and complex support needs, their families and supporters.

Working

By 2021 we will have developed best-practice approaches, training and education programs and be contributing to the sustainability of a workforce of practitioners, specially trained to support people with cognitive disability who have complex support needs and their families and supporters.

By 2021 we will have:

-  Developed evidence-based **practice** approaches for the more **intensive, coordinated and longer-term support** across the lifecourse and taking into account the diversity of people with cognitive disability and complex support needs, built within a framework of integrated practice and cross-sector collaboration.
 -  Documented the range of **practitioners** needed and the training, attributes, skills and qualities they require to **effectively support** people with cognitive disability and complex support needs and their families.
 -  Developed a range of **education and training programs** across tertiary, vocational, professional and community sectors addressing professional development, training and workforce issues.
 -  Developed and disseminated **analytical and assessment tools** required for effective case management and to facilitate communication between networks, services and systems.
-

Responding

By 2021 we will provide an evidence-based over-arching policy framework that can deliver on all of a person's support needs, providing clear recommendations to inform government policy, locally and internationally.

By 2021 we will have:

-  Determined a national model of **support coordination** which responds to the diversity of people with cognitive disability and complex support needs that rests on a strong evidence base for costs and cost benefit.
-  **Recommendations for funding models**, including integration with the NDIS.
-  Documented issues of accountability, quality and safeguarding, **recommending governance structures and practices** that ensure people with cognitive disability and complex support needs get the outcomes they need and want.
-  **Policy recommendations** that are grounded in a human rights framework that translates to tangible models of service and support in practice.

Our strategic map

UNSW VISION

UNSW aspires to be Australia's global university, improving and transforming lives through excellence in research, outstanding education and a commitment to advancing a just society.

IDBS VISION

IMPROVED LIVES
for people with cognitive disability

UNSW STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2025

Global impact

Social engagement

Academic excellence

STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

Academic excellence

Increased capacity

Improved support

Evidence for improved system wide responses

Partnership with multi-system service providers

PRIORITIES FOR 2017 – 2021

Expert support for inclusion

Engage with global practice

Conceptual and analytical tools

WORK STREAMS

Living

Responding

Working

INTEGRATED APPROACH

Creating and translating knowledge

Learning and teaching

Stimulating informed debate

Improving policy and practice

OUR PURPOSE

BUILDING CAPACITY

Our leadership and governance

Leadership

Associate Professor Leanne Dowse was appointed the inaugural Chair of the IDBS Program in May 2014, as part of the NSW Government's commitment to improving services for people with cognitive disability. The Chair's role is to expand the body of knowledge and increase capacity to support people with cognitive disability with complex support needs.

Leanne is well known as a scholar, practitioner, supporter, and ally in the area of cognitive disability and complex support needs. As well as teaching social policy, social research methods, disability studies, human behaviour, and criminology, Leanne continues to lead major research projects and is chief investigator on many Australian Research Council, NHMRC, and Federal and NSW government funded grants.

Steering Committee

Our Steering Committee is chaired by UNSW's Professor Eileen Baldry, an esteemed researcher internationally recognised for her prolific research on the criminal justice system and mental health and cognitive disability. Members of the Committee are drawn from across the disability sector and provide guidance and insight into our strategic choices and plans.

The current members of our Steering Committee are:

Professor Eileen Baldry (Chair)	School of Social Sciences, UNSW
Associate Professor Leanne Dowse	School of Social Sciences, UNSW
Meredith Coote	NSW Department of Family and Community Services
John Della Bosca	Every Australian Counts
Gordon Duff	National Disability Services
Damian Griffis	First People's Disability Network Australia
Angela Koelink	NSW Department of Family & Community Services
Nicholas O'Neil	Law School, UNSW
Therese Sands	People with Disability Australia
Jim Simpson	NSW Council for Intellectual Disability
Phillip Snoyman	NSW Department of Justice
Professor Julian Trollor	School of Psychiatry, UNSW

Research independence and confidentiality

IDBS undertakes independent research for public dissemination. While we actively seek to engage stakeholders in contributing to our general work agenda – including research, teaching, advice, and engagement – our priorities are determined by our Chair, in consultation with funders and the Steering Committee.

Our research activities are subject to review by the various UNSW Research Ethics committees. Where we have access to confidential and sensitive information, we work with our research partners to ensure concerns about disclosure and privacy are respected. All our publications are subject to peer review.

Implementation and reporting

The IDBS Program is located in the School of Social Sciences within the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at UNSW. We are accountable to the School for the quality of our research and teaching, and actively participate in this vibrant community of scholars. The School provides facilities, and administrative and professional support, for our staff and students.

The Chair, IDBS oversees the development and implementation of program activities. Regular progress reports are provided to funders and the School of Social Sciences. An annual report of our activities is made available on our website. In addition to our internal program and grant management processes, we are subject to regular internal and external audits co-ordinated through the School and UNSW.

Disability@UNSW

The Chair, IDBS is co-convenor of *Disability@UNSW* – a collaboration of over 100 academics and Higher Degree Research (HDR) students from faculties across UNSW whose work involves enhancing the lives of people with disability through applied research, teaching, and engagement with policy and practice. *Disability@UNSW* aims to consolidate these efforts via regular networking forums, development of disability-inclusive research and teaching practices, and assistance in developing knowledge translation plans.

Glossary

Behaviour support

Behaviour support includes appropriate ways to assist a person to communicate, make choices, and otherwise participate in the community. Behaviour support is used to address the severity of challenging behaviours in order to increase a person's quality of life. Challenging behaviour includes actions of such an intensity, frequency or duration that they threaten the quality of life and/or physical safety of the person or others, and is likely to lead to restrictive, aversive or exclusionary practices.

Cognitive disability

The term cognitive disability encompasses a variety of diagnostic labels including intellectual disability, borderline intellectual disability, acquired brain injury, and autism. Generally, having a cognitive disability means that a person will have difficulty with things such as self-management, decision-making, and communication.

Complex communication needs

Communication involves the exchange of information and meanings between two or more people. People with complex communication needs may have communication problems associated with a wide range of physical, sensory, cognitive, and environmental causes which restrict or limit the person's ability to participate independently in society.

Complex support needs

Complex support needs are the interplay of cognitive, developmental, psychosocial, physical impairment and/or health conditions combined with adverse environmental factors, for example, behavioural risks, substance misuse, criminal justice contact, insecure housing, cultural or intergenerational disadvantage or a history of violence, trauma, and abuse. Typically, complex support needs have both breadth and depth in the sense that they span multiple domains and/or involve high levels of need in one or more areas.

Inclusion

Inclusion is about making sure everybody has the same opportunities to participate in every aspect of life to the best of their abilities and desires. Inclusion involves more than simply encouraging people; it requires making sure that adequate policies and practices are in effect in a community or organisation.

Inclusive research

Inclusive research relates to the active participation of people with disability, their families, and supporters throughout the research process. Inclusive research aims for researchers and people with disability to collaborate in setting a research agenda, conducting research tasks, and jointly disseminating research outcomes to further the interests of people with disability.

Intellectual disability

Intellectual disability is a condition involving impairment of general mental abilities that is first apparent during the developmental period (usually before the age of 18), and impacts significantly on the person's adaptive functioning. Diagnosis is usually based on standardised assessment of deficits in adaptive functioning, intellectual abilities or both. The severity of intellectual disability can usually be described as mild, moderate, severe or profound.

Knowledge translation

Knowledge Translation is the exchange, synthesis, and ethically-sound application of knowledge – within a complex system of interactions among researchers and users – to accelerate the capture of the benefits of research for all.

Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs)

A Massive Open Online Course is free, and aimed at unlimited participation and open access via the internet.

Mental health conditions

Mental health conditions are clinically diagnosed conditions that include significant disturbance of mood or thought, and which can affect behaviour and cause distress for the person or those around them. Mental health conditions may impact the person's cognitive, emotional, and social abilities.

National Disability Insurance Scheme

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is an Australian-wide insurance-based scheme established on 1 July 2013 to provide individualised support to people a permanent and significant disability. The NDIS supports people with intellectual, physical, sensory and psychosocial disabilities.

Psychosocial disability

Psychosocial disability describes the disability experienced by some people living with a mental health condition. This can include reduced physical, social, and emotional wellbeing.

Supported decision-making

Supported decision-making upholds the equal rights of people with disability to make decisions about issues affecting their lives. Some people with disability will need support to make, communicate and participate in these decisions. In providing support for decision-making, the will, preferences and rights of the person with disability must direct the decisions made, and legal frameworks must safeguard the person against abuse and undue influence in the decision-making process.

Contact details

For more information on the IDBS Program visit:
www.arts.unsw.edu.au/idbs

For further information contact:

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