Handout 1 – Principles of Effective Assessment

Assessment is an ongoing process that helps the worker and the client to plan the best way to:

- Meet the person’s immediate needs
- Assist them to enhance their life and develop in directions that will fulfil their intellectual, physical emotional and social needs.

The principles of Effective Assessment include:

- The person is actively involved in the process of assessment.
- Any decisions made reflect their needs and wishes.
- Exploring the following areas:
  - Crisis needs
  - Economic needs
  - Housing needs
  - Health/medical needs
  - Living skills needs
  - Mobility needs
  - Communication needs
  - Physical support needs
  - Employment needs
  - Educational needs
  - Cultural needs
  - Social needs including sexuality and relationships
  - Emotional needs.

The key tasks in the assessment process are:

- To decide upon the best assessment tools
- To develop or modify existing assessment tools
- To work with the person to determine who will be involved in the assessment process
- To determine which policy and procedures will impact upon the assessment
- To decide how the staff will work with the person
- To gather information about the person, their situation and their resources available to meet current and future needs.

An effective assessment should support the development of an individual plan. This plan identifies needs, goals and the strategies to meet needs and achieve goals. It is this document that provides the guidelines to workers who are interacting and providing a service to the person. It also provides a means of accountability for the worker and clearly defines responsibilities for actions. It also identifies time frames for actions to occur.