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Separation of Development and Non-Development Activity Guidance Note

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1. Introduction

NSW Rural Doctors Network Ltd (RDN) delivers work focused on strengthening health systems, building workforce capability and improving access to care. This outcomes-focused work forms the core of RDN's activities, supported by a range of enabling activities such as partnership development, engagement and organisational capability building.

As part of this approach, RDN maintains clear alignment between the purpose of its activities and how they are designed, delivered and managed. This includes distinguishing between activities that directly contribute to outcomes and those that support or enable this work.

This distinction supports clarity in planning, governance and communication, ensuring that activities are understood, resourced and overseen in line with their purpose.

2. Purpose

This guidance note outlines RDN's approach to distinguishing between development and supporting activities. This guidance note does not create new policy requirements.

3. Scope

This guidance note applies to all workplace participants performing work at the direction of, or in connection with, or on behalf of RDN, including employees, contractors and partners involved in planning, delivering or managing activities.

4. Context

RDN's work is primarily focused on strengthening health systems, workforce capability and access to care. This work is delivered through activities that are designed to achieve defined outcomes, as well as through supporting activities that enable delivery, build relationships and strengthen organisational capability.

RDN distinguishes between activities that directly contribute to outcomes and those that support this work. This distinction is embedded within RDN's planning, governance and financial management processes rather than managed through a standalone classification system.

Activities are developed with a clear understanding of purpose and intended outcomes, and this understanding informs how they are designed, described and managed. As RDN expands its international engagement, maintaining clarity of purpose is increasingly important to ensure that activities remain aligned to organisational objectives and are appropriately governed.

RDN applies this approach in a way that reflects its scale, operating model and stage of development, supporting both transparency and disciplined growth.

5. Approach / How We Apply

RDN applies a practical, integrated approach to distinguishing between development and supporting activities, where classification is based on purpose and embedded within existing organisational processes.

5.1 Clear understanding of activity purpose

RDN defines the purpose of each activity during planning, identifying whether it is intended to directly contribute to health system strengthening, workforce capability or access outcomes.

Where activities are designed primarily to support delivery, such as partnership development, engagement or organisational capability building, these are recognised as supporting activities. These activities are considered an important part of achieving outcomes, while remaining distinct in purpose.

5.2 Integration with planning and decision-making

The distinction between activity types is incorporated into RDN's planning and approval processes. Activities are assessed prior to commencement, including consideration of purpose, value, risk and alignment with organisational priorities.

This ensures that activities are designed and approved with a clear understanding of their intended contribution and role within RDN's broader work.

5.3 Financial transparency and alignment

RDN's financial management processes support visibility of how activities are funded and resourced. Expenditure is aligned with the defined purpose of each activity, and reporting reflects the nature of work being delivered.

This approach ensures that resources are applied consistently with intended purpose and supports transparency in how activities are managed.

5.4 Governance and oversight

Oversight of activities sits within RDN's existing governance framework. The purpose and alignment of activities are considered as part of broader governance discussions, alongside risk and organisational impact.

Executive oversight ensures that activities remain aligned to organisational objectives and are delivered within RDN's risk appetite and operational capacity.

5.5 Communication and clarity

RDN maintains clarity in how activities are described and communicated. The purpose and intended outcomes of activities are clearly articulated in planning, reporting and external communications.

This supports consistency across how activities are understood internally and externally, and reinforces transparency in delivery.

5.6 Application to international work

As RDN expands its international engagement, this distinction supports a staged and controlled approach to activity delivery. Activities are designed with clear intent, distinguishing between those that directly contribute to outcomes and those focused on relationship building or learning.

Governance oversight ensures that international activities are aligned to organisational objectives and delivered in a disciplined and structured way.

6. Definitions

Development activity: Activities designed to contribute to sustainable improvements in health systems, workforce capability or access to care, aligned to RDN's purpose.

RDN: means NSW Rural Doctors Network Ltd and includes its enterprises.

Supporting activity: Activities that enable or support development work, such as partnership development, engagement or organisational capability building, but do not directly deliver outcomes on their own.

RDN uses these distinctions to support clarity in planning, governance and reporting.

7. Related Legislation, Policies, Procedures and Guidelines

RDN Strategic Plan

RDN Risk Appetite Statement

Financial management and reporting processes

8. Document Control

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0.1	Ally Squires-McCarthy	June 2026	Draft
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