

Access to Care – Advocacy Policy and procedure

1 Statement of Purpose

The following policy and procedures have been developed and will be implemented to meet the requirements of:

- National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013
- National Disability Insurance Scheme (Code of Conduct) Rules 2018
- National Disability Insurance Scheme (Provider Registration and Practice Standards) Rules 2018
- National Disability Insurance Scheme (Incident Management and Reportable Incidents) Rules 2018
- National Disability Insurance Scheme (Complaints Management and Resolution) Rules 2018
- National Disability Insurance Scheme (Practice Standards-Worker Screening) Rules 2018
- National Disability Insurance Scheme (Procedural Fairness) Guidelines 2018
- National Disability Insurance Scheme (Quality Indicators) Guidelines 2018
- The National Disability Insurance Scheme Terms of Business;
- Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992;
- The NSW Anti-Discrimination Act 1977;
- Other legislative or related provisions e.g. NSW Privacy Act 1998.

In particular, the policy seeks to meet the following requirements:

- Each participant is encouraged and supported to contribute to social and civic life in their communities in the way they choose.
- Each participant is actively encouraged and supported to participate in their community in ways that are important to them.
- Access to Care with the consent of the participant with a disability, work with a participant's family, carer, significant other or advocate to promote their connection, inclusion and participation in the manner they choose.
- Access to Care develops connections with the community (including CALD communities and groups) to promote opportunities for active and meaningful participation.

2 Advocacy Policy

Access to Care recognises the right of each participant to participate in the planning and the provision of services and supports received from the organisation. This includes supporting the participant to access an advocate to assist and support the participant in decision-making processes, inclusive of individual plans and service development. The organisation recognises and respects the role of people who act as advocates, including the participant's family, guardians and friends when they take on that role.

Access to Care aims to empower all participants and stakeholders to freely express their views concerning the organisation. The organisation aims to support participants to develop their self-advocacy skills and/or to support participants to use advocates (including advocates from CALD backgrounds for participants from CALD backgrounds) to assist them to achieve greater independence both at the organisation and in the broader community.

Access to Care should gather information from the participant, their family and significant people or service providers about the cultural and linguistic background of the participant on an ongoing basis. This information should be reflected in the planning and provision of the services and support for the participant.



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Each participant will be explained Disability Advocacy Factsheet, will be provided a list of independent disability advocates using disability advocacy finder (<https://disabilityadvocacyfinder.dss.gov.au/disability/ndap/>)and support to access them.

3 Advocacy Objectives

Advocacy is the process of taking action to:

- prevent abuse, discrimination or negligent treatment of people with disability;
- promote and enhance the rights of people with disability;
- encourage people with disability to make informed choices;
- assist people with disability to participate equitably in community life;
- increase the knowledge and understanding of people with disability, their families, carers and people in the community about the rights of people with disability;
- improve communication between people with disability and other members of the community.

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4 Advocacy Procedures

- 4.1 On entry to Access to Care each participant and his or her representative as appropriate (e.g. family, friend, guardian, or advocate) has ready access to all policies and procedures of the organisation.
- 4.2 If Access to Care management and staff have concerns that individual participants do not have personal networks to advocate on their behalf and who are unable to self-advocate, the organisation is committed to actively assisting participants to access an independent advocate on their behalf, including bilingual advocates.
- 4.3 Participants will be encouraged to seek out or use external advocates or decision making skills development programs (e.g. self-advocacy programs) as required.
- 4.4 Access to Care staff will support each participant to make decisions and choices and as necessary, to draw on external agencies or individuals to facilitate information exchange and effective communication (e.g. interpreters etc.) with each participant.
- 4.5 Access to Care will assist to link each participant, their family members and significant other persons in their lives, with external agencies (e.g. interpreter services, culturally appropriate/responsive information, advocacy and support groups) as required, to facilitate effective information exchange and communication.
- 4.6 The participant has a right at any time to make their own decision on whether or not they need an advocate and that decision is no business of the organisation, except where the participant wants the organisation to help them find an advocate.
- 4.7 Each participant, and his or her representative as appropriate, will be provided with the opportunity to be fully and actively involved in all decision making processes concerning the planning, development, delivery, evaluation and monitoring of the organisation.
- 4.8 Access to Care respects the participant's right to change their advocate at any time.
- 4.9 Individual advocate contact details are to be kept in participant files and regularly updated.
- 4.10 The right to raise service issues or complain about how the service is provided extends to 'interested parties' such as the person's family, friends, advocate and guardian, and to other members of the community who can demonstrate a genuine interest in the life and circumstances of the participant.

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