

NDIS SUPPORT ACCESS, PLANNING & PROVISION POLICY

Purpose

MDNSW is committed to supporting participants to access programs and services in accordance with our Human Rights Policy and NDIS requirements. MDNSW supports participants to access services that are responsive to their needs and will make reasonable adjustments to suit the participant.

Scope

All participants and potential participants and their families/carers and MDNSW staff.

Policy

MDNSW is committed to maximising access to our services for people living with neuromuscular conditions and their families/carers.

MDNSW will endeavour to inform potential participants and the wider community of the services and supports MDNSW can provide under NDIS, eligibility criteria and costs.

Services will be provided in an environment that ensures people are free from discrimination, abuse, neglect and exploitation and respectful, equitable access to its services for people of different ages, abilities, social class, ethnicity, gender, LGBTQI+ and with diverse values and beliefs.

We will work closely with other community services and support organisations to maximise opportunities to provide supports for MDNSW participants.

NDIS Supports Provided & Eligibility

MDNSW provides supports under the following registration groups:

- 0104 Assist Personal Activities High
- 0106 Assist-Life Stage, Transition
- 0107 Assist-Personal Activities
- 0115 Daily Tasks/Shared Living
- 0117 Development - Life Skills
- 0125 Participation Community
- 0128 Therapeutic Supports
- 0136 Group/Centre Activities

MDNSW provides specialised supports for people with muscular dystrophy and other neuromuscular conditions. Any participant can access supports under these NDIS registration groups with an approved NDIS Plan for these supports. All supports are in line with the NDIS Price Guide and available to people 6 – 64 years.

MDNSW NDIS services include support coordination, community access, short-stay accommodation, high intensity personal supports, personal supports, skill development and group activities and will soon offer Occupational Therapy Services. It also provides information and referral, advocacy and other assistance utilising other funders.

MDNSW services are delivered over the phone, in a participant's home, at hospitals, in government or community organisations' offices and in the community.

Contact with participants is via their preferred mode of communication including providing printed information, emailing or phoning the participant.

Services and supports are delivered in line with MDNSW's Code of Conduct and the NDIS Codes of Conduct for workers and providers.

Each participant is involved in the development of their own support plan including in identifying strengths, preferences and goal setting.

Managing enquiries

MDNSW provides phone reception during business hours. Potential participants can also access information or make contact via:

- MDNSW website
- mail
- email
- Neuromuscular clinics
- Talking Point newsletter
- MDNSW Facebook page
- MDNSW brochures
- information sessions in community, or as part of a retreat activity

MDNSW also provides contact details for interpreters and TTY.

Enquiries about services will be responded to in no more than two business days.

At the initial contact, staff will establish any communication and language requirements to ensure that participants receive information suitable for them to understand their options. Also any cultural considerations required.

Privacy

Before assessing a participant for services we will explain:

- the type of information we will collect
- the reason for collecting the information
- how the information will be used

MDNSW only collects and shares information necessary to provide supports. It will only ever share or collect information for the purposes of providing supports to participants and only with their consent.

MDNSW will share with or collect information necessary to deliver supports with family members, carers, other service providers and relevant government agencies but only with the participant's consent.

Consent is obtained for MDNSW to collect, use and store participant information to plan and provide supports. Information will only be shared without consent if required by law or in an emergency.

We will provide a summary of our privacy policy to participants and our full privacy policy is also available on our website.

Service Agreements

Participants complete application forms at the intake process. MDNSW will support participants to complete these if required. The intake information forms part of the

assessment and information gathering for support planning processes. Consent is obtained to collect, use and share information.

At the initial meeting, workers will ensure that participants understand their rights, the feedback and complaints processes, privacy and information management policy and how incidents are managed.

The Service Agreement is developed in collaboration with the participant, explains the supports to be delivered.

The Service Agreement is developed based on their requirements and preferences. Workers ensure that the Service Agreement information is provided in a language or mode of communication suitable for the participant to understand the conditions of the agreement.

Costs are explained and agreed to by participants before commencement of service as outlined in the appendices of the Service Agreement.

The terms of the Service Agreement are also explained and confirmed by the participant before signing. The Service Agreement outlines the terms for cancellations, ending the service and reasons why services may be withdrawn.

Once the participant or their representative have signed the service agreement, provide them with a copy and keep copy on the participant's file. Where this is not practicable, or the participant chooses not to have an agreement, a record is made of the circumstances under which the participant did not receive a copy of their agreement. This is recorded on the participant's file on Salesforce.

Sufficient time

Participants are supported to include advocates in the decision-making process. Where a participant requires an advocate, they will be supported to access one of their choice.

Participant and their representative are given time to make decisions and consider their options.

This should occur:

- before signing our Service Agreement; and
- at any stage of the services including assessment, planning, provision of supports, review and exit from services.

Informed choice

Participants are supported to make informed choices and maximise control over the supports they receive. MDNSW supports participants by:

- explaining to each participant that they can choose any service provider
- assisting them to access service providers of their choice
- supporting participants to engage family, friends and advocates of their choosing in the decision-making process.
- Information is provided in a suitable format and language for each participant and their support network, in a timely manner.
- providing sufficient time for participants to seek advice and consider their options.
- respecting and incorporating cultural requirements and preferences in the provision of supports.
- providing suitably trained staff for the services and supports delivered.

Participants have the right to the dignity of risk in decision making. See our Duty of Care and Dignity of Risk Policy.

Responsive supports

MDNSW ensures all participants receive supports that are responsive to their needs in the language and mode of communication that best suits their needs. This may include use of interpreters and information shared in community languages.

Supports are provided that are culturally relevant based on the participants' preferences.

Participants have the right to an advocate of their choice including an external advocate, if needed. MDNSW will provide information on external advocacy services if required.

Support plans are regularly reviewed, at minimum every 12 months or amended when required to address changing needs and preferences of the participant.

Continuity of supports

Wherever possible MDNSW seeks to maintain an ongoing relationship with participants to assist in meeting their support needs.

MDNSW will ensure that services and supports are provided without interruption and are appropriate to the participant's support needs as outlined in their Service Agreement.

Casual pools of support workers and additional camp carers at camps and retreats are available for unexpected absences of staff/volunteers.

Where changes or interruptions are unavoidable, alternative arrangements will be explained and agreed to by the participant. Any potential risks will be identified and responded to accordingly.

All staff are trained sufficiently to step in if required. All staff are briefed on participants before working with them and are required to familiarise themselves with the participants plans.

MDNSW assesses risk, plans, records and manages supported transition to another provider if required. With participant consent, information will be shared with new providers to ensure a smooth transfer to new services. MDNSW has a comprehensive Transition Plan template that includes risks, communication, cultural considerations, support needs, continuity of supports, required skills and training, planned strategies and reviews.

Emergency and disaster management

MDNSW's Emergency Procedures includes severe weather events and natural disasters like bushfires, smoke, extreme heat, flooding and storm damage, plus Covid-19 outbreaks at multi-day events.

In the event of an emergency or disaster, MDNSW will enact our evacuation plans. This may require parents/guardians to assist by evacuating their participant/s from the venue.

Evacuation procedures are in place for the safe response to these events by staff so that participants and staff are protected and removed from risk as soon as possible.

Conflicts of interest

MDNSW will act in the best interests of participants, ensuring that participants are informed, empowered and able to maximise choice and control.

MDNSW and its staff must not, (by act or omission) constrain, influence or direct decision making by a person with a disability and/or their family so as to limit that person's access to information, opportunities and choice and control.

Participants have the right to freely choose service providers. Services do not need to be provided by MDNSW and staff should explain this to potential participants, particularly for Support Coordination services as MDNSW provides both support coordination and other supports.

MDNSW does not participate in sharp practices which take advantage of people, including over-servicing, high pressure sales or inducements.

Exiting MDNSW Services

Participants may need to be exited from a service for a variety of reasons, initiated by the participant or their representative or by MDNSW.

Should either participant or MDNSW wish to end their Service Agreement they must give 1 month's notice.

If the participant seriously breaches the conditions of their Service Agreement the requirement of notice will be waived, as explained in the Service Agreement terms.

Supports may be withdrawn for the following reasons:

- unlawful or inappropriate behaviour
- presents as a serious risk to other participants and staff
- changes in the person's support requirements exceeds the skills and expertise that staff can deliver
- the participant is no longer an NDIS participant

Where MDNSW elects to exit a participant from a service:

- the reason for exiting them from the service will be discussed with them
- they will be given at least 30 days' notice of the exit, unless the reason for the exit is urgent and beyond the control of MDNSW
- they will be informed of the exit in writing
- they will be informed of their right to request a review of the decision to exit and how to make such a request
- MDNSW will offer to assist the participant in finding an alternative or more appropriate service if services are still required.

Facilitated Transition from Services

MDNSW assesses risk, plans, records and manages supported transition to another provider if required.

MDNSW has a comprehensive Transition Plan template that includes risks, communication, cultural considerations, support needs, continuity of supports, required skills and training, options offered to the participant and their choices and planned strategies and reviews.

With participant consent, MDNSW will work with the new provider and share information to ensure a smooth transfer to new services.

Workers will assess risk associated with the transition and manage this throughout the process. MDNSW will regularly communicate and work with the participant and their chosen support network during the transition process, review regularly and follow up with the participant where appropriate.

Policy update

This updated and expanded policy replaces the Service Access Policy.

Changes Made	Name and Role	Date of Review	Version #	Date Approved	Next Review Date
<i>Reviewed against Practice Standards, no changes required</i>	<i>Keely Thompson – HR & Quality Coordinator</i>	<i>12.05.2022</i>	<i>V1</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>May 2024</i>
<i>Added section on Emergency & Disaster Management</i>	<i>Milvia Harder – Operations & Quality Manager</i>	<i>02/06/2022</i>	<i>V2</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>May 2024</i>