

CORPORATE POLICIES

CP14 STANDARD 3(NSW/Cwlth): DECISION MAKING AND CHOICE

1.0 POLICY STATEMENT

Disability Services Australia (DSA) recognises that all people with a disability have the opportunity to participate as fully as possible in decision making processes impacting on the services they receive.

2.0 PURPOSE

To provide a framework for the purposeful involvement of service users in making decisions in relation to the services they receive.

At a minimum such involvement will aim to:

- Promote, encourage and support independence of thought by facilitating access to and comprehension of information (as needed and appropriate to each person's ability).
- Enhance services and quality of life for people supported through consultation and direct involvement in such decision making.
- Meet the Disability Services Standards and comply with all relevant legislation.

3.0 SCOPE

This policy relates to all levels of management and staff of Disability Services Australia. Each relevant area of DSA is required to consider and address compliance against these Standards within divisional procedures, work instructions and forms.

The Commonwealth and State Disability Services Acts and Standards relate to the provision of disability services for people with a disability.

For adults with a disability supported by DSA, the participation/involvement of family/significant others/advocates/guardians in decision making on key service delivery processes (e.g. individual goal planning) is dependent on:

- The relevant decision making rights for family/significant others/advocates/guardians, as determined by their legal status in relation to the person receiving support;
- The expressed wishes of the person receiving support; and
- The assessed need for such advocacy.

4.0 POLICY DETAILS

DSA is committed to providing quality services that enhance opportunities for positive life outcomes, by empowering every person supported to be the primary decision maker in relation to the services they receive (to the extent of their ability) in a manner that is the least restrictive of their rights and opportunities.

Facilitation of this commitment in relation to Decision Making and Choice is supported by:

- Ensuring all levels of management and staff understand, comply with and apply the intent of this policy.
- Placing the individual's right to self-determination (within funded program constraints and the stated or funded purpose of the service they receive) at the centre of all decision making processes, and ensuring such processes include informing each person of choices, and any limitations and barriers where they exist.
- Having written policies and procedures on the planned approach(s) to supporting person-centred decision making and making these available in appropriate formats to those who use the service.
- Providing the opportunity and support to participate in decisions which affect the lives of every person receiving support through their consultation/involvement in the planning,

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provision/ management and evaluation of the service the receive (to the extent of their ability, availability and interest).

- Ensuring that any issues raised and suggestions made are seriously considered and appropriate action taken when necessary within available funding and resources.
- Ensuring the decision making process about the service the individual is to receive and service delivery procedures support their right to involve family/ significant others/ advocates (unless requested otherwise by the person receiving support).
- Considering the cultural/ language needs (including signing) of each person and their family/significant others/advocates (where they are involved) and in particular, respecting the social structure of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) Community.
- Facilitating access to advocacy services as requested or where necessary/ appropriate to ensure each person's right to self-determination is protected.
- Proactively seeking to balance DSA's duty of care to ensure the safety of people supported, DSA staff and the general public (consistent with the stated or funded purpose of the service) with the right of each person to self determine and take responsibility for their decisions/ choices/ actions by facilitating informed decision making processes (wherever possible), including but not limited to:
 - Encouraging and facilitating access to and understanding of information as needed and appropriate to their ability and cultural background.
 - Highlighting the likely consequences and/or foreseeable risks without limiting the right of each person to self determine.
- Where relevant, those who use the service are informed of other services that might meet their needs. This includes but is not limited to, information about and/or referral to alternative service options where DSA is unable to provide a service.
- The review of processes and systems as part of scheduled and as needed policy and procedure reviews, including where possible input from those who use the service.
- Ensuring adherence to policies and procedures in place through the quality assurance audit process to maximise the design, delivery and implementation of a quality service.

5.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

Refer to the Quality Policy Manual Section 5.0 Management Responsibility.
[Quality Policy Manual](#)

6.0 REFERENCES

Legislative context

Disability Discrimination Act (Cwlth) 1992
Disability Services Act (Cwlth) 1986 and Commonwealth Disability Services Standards
Disability Services Act (NSW) 1993 and NSW Disability Services Standards
Occupational Health and Safety Act (NSW) 2000
Occupational Health and Safety Regulations (NSW) 2001

Policy Context

[Quality Policy Manual](#)
[CP01 Management Review](#)
[CP02 Consultation with Stakeholders](#)

Relevant State (NSW), Commonwealth and DSA policies are listed in [The DSA Document Matrix](#).