

CORPORATE POLICIES

CP20 STANDARD 9(NSW): FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

1.0 POLICY STATEMENT

Disability Services Australia (DSA) recognises the importance of preserving family relationships and informal social networks for all people with a disability. As such, DSA is committed to designing, providing, delivering and administering services that value and respect the important role of family and friends in the lives of people with a disability.

DSA is committed to creating, facilitating and enhancing opportunities for every person supported to develop, maintain and enrich their relationships with family and friends in line with the stated or funded purpose of the service they receive.

Recognition and support of these relationships includes demonstrated sensitivity to, and respect for the privacy and cultural, linguistic and religious backgrounds of those receiving support and their family and friends.

2.0 PURPOSE

To provide an overarching framework for DSA services and business activities that demonstrates in practical terms DSA's recognition of the importance of preserving family relationships and informal social networks (e.g. friends) in the lives of those DSA supports.

To acknowledge the need for, and provide individual support or referral to relevant external agencies for those receiving support; so they can develop the skills and/or advocacy support that can facilitate ongoing harmonious relationships with family members and friends.

To meet the Disability Services Standards and comply with all relevant legislation.

3.0 SCOPE

This policy is a requirement of Disability Services Australia's NSW state funded services. However each relevant area of DSA is required to consider the intent of the NSW Standards within divisional procedures, work instructions and forms.

The NSW state Disability Services Act and Standards relate to the provision of NSW state funded 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, health and nutritional 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 with a disability receiving support; and
- The assessed need for such advocacy.

4.0 POLICY DETAILS

DSA is committed to providing quality services that respect and promote the maintenance of positive and enriching relationships between people with a disability and their family and friends, in line with the stated or funded purpose of the service they receive.

Facilitation of this commitment in relation to Family Relationships is supported by:

- Ensuring all levels of management and staff understand, comply with, and apply the intent of this policy.
- Having a written policy and procedures for the services provided that have as a funded requirement an active role in:

CORPORATE POLICIES

CP20 STANDARD 9(NSW): FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

- The mechanisms which promote the maintenance of relationships between each person receiving support and their family and informal social network (e.g. friends).
- Regularly reviewing these procedures with those receiving support and making them available in appropriate format to those who use the service.
- Ensuring all procedures related to service delivery planning, facilitate and support the involvement of family/ significant others (unless requested otherwise by the person receiving support).
- Planning for and delivering support that promotes the maintenance of sustainable family relationships, recognising the unique power of these relationships to positively impact the quality of life of those supported, by virtue of their lifelong nature.
- Ensuring the services DSA develop and deliver, reflect the norms/ patterns of daily life valued by the community, specifically in relation to developing and maintaining a variety of links/connections with family and friends.
- Considering the cultural/language needs (including signing) of each person receiving support and their family/ significant others and friends (i.e. formal and informal networks) where they are involved, and in particular, respecting the social structure of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) Community.
- Planning for and delivering support which takes into consideration the impact it will have on family life and the family's relationships; and fostering service provision that considers not only the direct user but other people in their network whose lives impact on the person DSA is funded to support.
- Facilitating access to information or services (as requested or appropriate) for every person receiving support that:
 - Supports their right to self determination (i.e. make decision and choices), privacy and confidentiality in their personal affairs; and
 - Empowers them to make informed decisions about the *manner/extent/nature* and foreseeable consequence(s) of disclosing significant personal private or confidential information to family and friends including but not limited to matters relating to intimate relationships, sexuality and religious practices/choices.
In particular, where this reflects a significant difference to the known values/lifestyle choices of family and friends and is *likely to/may have* significant foreseeable consequences on maintaining harmonious relationships.
- Proactively promoting a positive image of people with a disability (i.e. recognition of their abilities, contributions and competence) in interactions with the family, friends and extended network of every person DSA supports (as well as the broader community) and fostering the rights of dignity, respect, self determination and valued status for all people with a disability.
- 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 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](#)

CORPORATE POLICIES
CP20 STANDARD 9(NSW): FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

6.0 REFERENCES

Legislative context

Disability Services Act (Cwlth) 1986 and Commonwealth Disability Services Standards
Disability Services Act (NSW) 1993 and NSW Disability Services Standards

Policy Context

[Quality Policy Manual](#)

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