

Working with participant support networks

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Introduction

This policy aims to ensure each participant receives coordinated support from a collaborative team which includes the service provider, the participant, the participant’s support network and other relevant providers. A coordinated collaborative approach helps to facilitate the participant’s development and address their needs and priorities. Effective collaboration means being able to provide safe, coordinated supports and services whilst involving the participant and their support network as much as possible.

Participant support networks

A participant’s support network are the people in the participant’s life that help the participant informally to achieve their goals and aspirations. A support network can include the participant’s family, guardians, carers, friends, advocates or other members of the community. A support network includes people with important relationships, people who can help the participant learn new skills, give advice on decisions, provide opportunities to be involved in the community and develop dreams and ideas how to achieve them.

Collaborative links

We are committed to genuine collaborative relationships between support networks and other service providers where we can value each other’s knowledge of participants, communicating freely and respectfully and sharing insights and engaging shared decision-making. We encourage the participant’s support network to be as involved and provide input into support plans, spend time with the workers and contribute their skills and resources to enhance well-being, learning and development.

Communication

It’s important that all involved remain confident that their personal information is kept safe and secure and that the privacy of the participant is upheld while sharing information to deliver better services. Keep in mind the following seven golden rules for information sharing:

- information security should not be a barrier to sharing information
- record decisions and reasons for it—record what was shared, with whom and for what purpose
- be open and honest with the participant (and their family, where appropriate) at the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so
- seek advice if you are in any doubt, without disclosing the identity of the participant, where possible
- share with consent where appropriate and, where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to share confidential information—information can still be shared without consent in certain situations e.g. if the participant is at serious risk of harm
- consider safety and well-being of the participant and others who may be affected by their actions
- the information sharing should be necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure.

Applicability

When
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• applies when supporting participants.

Who

- applies to all representatives including key management personnel, directors, full time workers, part time workers, casual workers, contractors and volunteers.

Working with participant support networks

We will work with each participant and their support network to achieve the best possible outcomes for the participant. The following principles guide the services we provide. We will:

- promote open communication about major concerns, issues or opportunities to the collaborative areas
- adopt a positive outlook coupled with in a positive, proactive manner
- adhere to statutory requirements and best practice including compliance with Australian privacy law
- ensure collaborative links with participant support networks and other providers are established
- manage stakeholders effectively and support decisions collaboratively made by the support network
- act in a manner that reflects and respects the importance of the collaborative arrangement
- ensure qualified resources are available and authorised to fulfil their responsibilities
- act in good faith to support achievement of agreed objectives.