

Continuity of supports

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Introduction

This policy sets guidelines on providing supports and services where there are staff shortages.

We will have arrangements in place to minimise the risk of cancellation, no show or late change to a scheduled support. Service agreements between participants will include details of our cancellation arrangements (including rescheduling the support) and advice periods for cancellations and changes to agreed appointments.

Applicability

When
<ul style="list-style-type: none">applies to supports and services provided to all participants.
Who
<ul style="list-style-type: none">applies to all employees including key management personnel, full time workers, part time workers, casual workers, contractors and volunteers.

Governing regulations for this policy

 NDIS (Quality Indicators) Guidelines 2018 (Cth)

Commitment to uninterrupted supports

As part of our commitment to uninterrupted supports:

- we are committed to ensuring day-to-day operations are managed in an efficient and effective way to avoid disruption and ensure continuity of supports
- our supports are planned with each participant to meet their specific needs and preferences
- the participant's needs and preferences are documented and provided to workers prior to commencing work with each participant to ensure the participant's experience is consistent with their expressed preferences
- we have arrangements in place to ensure support is provided to the participant without interruption throughout the period of their service agreement
- in the event of worker absence or vacancy, a suitably qualified and/or experienced person will perform the role
- where changes or interruptions are unavoidable, we will make alternative arrangements which we will explain to the participant and seek their approval
- where applicable, we have disaster planning measures in place to enable continuation of critical supports before, during and after a disaster.

Avoiding service interruptions

As much as possible, we seek to avoid service interruptions to participants due to worker absences.

We will ensure each participant is provided with appropriate supports at the appropriate time.

We will record and manage the risks related to delegating authority to a different support worker in the risks register. If the usual delegated person is unable to attend or fulfil their duties, we will delegate responsibility to another worker suitably informed and qualified.

We aim to avoid service interruptions to participants by:

- where practicable, having suitable replacement staff members that can undertake supports when needed
- ensuring that the replacement staff member has all required knowledge to properly support the participant
- informing the participant (by phone or in person) if the usual support worker is unable to provide services or attend an appointment
- obtaining the consent of participants, and/or other relevant parties, before proceeding with services
- adhering to this policy.

Rescheduling services

When rescheduling services, we will:

- only be reschedule if we can be reasonably sure that:
 - we do not have the service capacity to delegate support duties to a suitable person, and
 - the rescheduling will not negatively impact the participant's safety, health and/or well-being
- not reschedule a service if it has a risk of impacting a participant's safety, health and/or well-being
- record and manage risks associated with rescheduling services
- manage service rescheduling by:
 - contacting the participant by phone or in person as soon as we know a service reschedule is required
 - finding a replacement time that is suitable for the participant
 - managing any associated administrative considerations (e.g. room availability) in a timely manner.

Delegation of authority

To manage delegation of authority, we will:

- if applicable, have a recorded system of delegation which details the people/position holders that will step into a role if the usual position holder is absent
- ensure that the next person in line of delegation has suitable knowledge, qualifications and experience to undertake the relevant duties
- avoid interruptions to key management activities by:
 - rescheduling any non-essential meetings and other management activities
 - planning essential management activities in advance
 - informing workers about our delegation of authority arrangements
 - informing returning management personnel about the work that has been done during their absence.

Alternative arrangements

All alternative arrangements we put into place to ensure continuity of supports will be planned and recorded. Where changes or interruptions are unavoidable we will:

- explain the situation to the participant and outline the alternative arrangements

- seek the participant's consent before putting the alternative arrangements into place
- deliver the alternative arrangements in a way that is appropriate to the participant's needs, preferences and goals.