



## **Accessible Services Policy**

### **1. Policy Connections**

National Standards for Disability Services Standard 5 Service Access. Disability Services Act 1986 (Commonwealth), Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Commonwealth), and Guardianship and Administration Act 1990 (Commonwealth).

### **2. Policy Statement**

Access to Directions services is clear, transparent and non-discriminatory, so that all people are treated equitably and fairly.

### **3. Principles of Equitable Access to Services**

- Information about Directions' services will be easy to read, widely available and adaptable to individual needs;
- Services are provided in a flexible and responsive way to meet each person's individual needs and goals;
- When deciding on eligibility for access to our services, Directions will adopt, apply and promote non-discriminatory rules in respect of age, gender, race, culture, religion or disability, consistent with the contractual obligations and purpose of our association;
- Directions will work with other organisations and community supports to share information in order to build a strong referral network, keeping the needs of people with a disability at the centre;
- Directions regularly seeks feedback from people who use our services to help improve service access for others through an annual survey;
- All Directions workers are responsible for maintaining these equitable access standards.

### **4. Physical and Cultural Accessibility**

Directions is committed to ensuring that all service locations are fully accessible to all persons. Accessibility means more than being able to get in the building. Directions acknowledges that many of the people that we support are from linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds and that our services need to be provided in a culturally responsive and equitable way.

Directions facilitates physical and cultural accessibility in the following ways:

- All our entrances, hallways, washrooms and meeting rooms allow access for wheelchairs and for people using mobility aids;
- Meeting rooms at Directions have easy access chairs;
- Interpreters (language and sign) are available for people who may require them;

- The use of augmentative and alternative communication methods are used to supplement or replace speech or writing for those with impairments in the production or comprehension of spoken or written language including large print, tactile communication, easy English, accessible multimedia and accessible information and communications technology;
- Directions workers undertake cultural sensitivity training to increase the capacity of our service to all the people that we support;
- All individuals and families are encouraged to complete a survey on an annual basis, detailing how satisfied they are with the service provided to them and provide suggestions for improvements. Where literacy is an issue, people are supported to complete this survey verbally.

## **5. Information Strategies**

We promote our association by producing information in a range of formats. We distribute and present this information widely in ways and places that will reach those most in need of our service.

Information about Directions services for the people that we support and the general public is available in simple English without jargon, and can be provided in audio format upon request.

Information strategies we use to promote our service include:

- Holding regular community engagement events to provide information about how to access our services;
- Regularly updating the website to give information on how to access services, and to provide details of upcoming Directions community events;
- Large, visible signage on our building;
- All Directions workers wearing name badges or carrying identification cards as appropriate;
- Distributing Directions brochures to all major organisations that Directions have affiliations with in order to facilitate access to our service;
- Encouraging workers to network and engage in community events to facilitate opportunities to access our services.

## **6. Service Access Criteria**

Directions provides supports and services to people who have a disability which:

- Is intellectual, physical, neurological, or sensory impairment, or a combination of such impairments;
- Is permanent or likely to be permanent;
- Results in a significantly reduced capacity in one or more activities of daily living such as communication, mobility, decision making personal care, decision making or social skills;
- Incurs eligibility for an individualised funding package, or receipt of funding through the National Disability Insurance Scheme, unless services can be privately funded.

## **7. Fees**

People who receive DSC funding are subject to the following:

- Until 2016 fees have been charged to cover transport costs as part of the agreed funding process with the DSC;
- New funding rates from 2016 include some transport and all new DSC-funded plans for people that we support negate the necessity for fees up to 30km per support.

People who are not able to access DSC funding, or who wish to travel over 30km per support, are subject to the following:

- Directions may provide support and/or travel charge by the hour/km for the service;
- Rates for services/kms will be based on the DSC funding model.

## 8. Exiting Services

Directions promotes the health, wellbeing, safety and security of all people receiving services and acknowledges that sometimes the best outcome for someone that we support is to exit Directions services. Directions acknowledges that each individual has the right to refuse a service or to leave Directions at any time they choose without giving a reason.

An individual may choose to leave Directions under the following circumstances:

- They relocate to an area outside Directions' area of service delivery;
- The support schedule and service is no longer able to meet the person's needs or assist in achieving chosen goals;
- They decide to move to another service provider;
- There are no available resources, or funding;

In some exceptional cases, Directions may not be able to continue to provide services. Directions may consider negotiating the cessation of services under the following circumstances:

- The person supported is unwilling to meet the reasonable conditions required in their support plan and thus affecting the safe delivery of a service and the health and safety of the workers;
- Changes in the health, abilities or behaviour of the person that we support result in the support they require exceeding the skills and expertise that Directions can deliver;
- There has been no contact between the person supported and Directions for a period of 3 months;
- The person supported or a member of their family engages in behaviour which is unacceptable to Directions such as violence, abuse, aggression, theft or property damage.

When someone wishes to exit the service, or Directions is no longer able to provide the services required, Directions will:

- Be fair and transparent;
- Follow due process and uphold the rights of individuals;
- Protect the safety and integrity of workers, the people that we support, and their families;
- Provide all relevant referrals;
- Assist in transitioning to new organisation(s);
- Provide information on to re-enter Directions services in the future;
- Seek feedback to help inform and improve service exit for others.

<b>Accessible Services Policy Endorsement</b>			
<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Ratified</b>	<b>Next Review</b>
2 yearly	Board	April 2018	April 2020