



DOWN SOUTH THERAPY

Making Choices and Decisions Policy

Version 1.0
3 April 2017



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Making Choices and Decisions Policy

1.1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the clients of Down South Therapy (DST) can participate as fully as possible in decision-making relating to the services that they need, want and receive.

This policy relates to all of Down South Therapy activities and applies to all employees, contractors, students, advocates, directors and others who may act on behalf of Down South Therapy.

1.2. Application of Policy

Down South Therapy is committed to ensuring that all members of the organisation retain maximum control over their own lives by having primary involvement in, and influence over, decisions that affect them.

Facilitation of this commitment in relation to Making Choices and Decisions is supported by:

- The Policy on Making Choices and Decisions is made available to members, families, staff and contractors.
- Staff have been provided with training in person centred practices and are familiar with the concepts that support individual decision making and choice.
- Members and their families/carers (when appropriate) have been involved from the outset in designing the individual service plan.
- The organisation's services have been structured in a way as to permit maximum flexibility and responsiveness to individual preferences and choices.
- A written, current individual service plan has been developed for all members in accordance with the Policy on Individual Needs and a copy has been provided to the member, family members and advocates.
- Written individual services plans have been countersigned by the member, family members and/or advocates.
- Individual services plans have been jointly reviewed at least annually or more frequently if requested by the member, family members or advocates.
- Members, families or advocates have participated in Down South Therapy strategic planning activities.

1.3. Procedure

The following procedures are to be implemented to enable Down South Therapy to meet its policy objective of ensuring that clients have primary involvement in, and influence over, decisions that affect them.

Down South Therapy will:

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- 1) Structure and develop its services to be flexible and responsive to the individual needs and preferences of current and future clients.
- 2) Ensure that clients are informed of the range of services available and consult with them in the development of individualised services that meet their unique circumstances.
- 3) Involve the client, their family and/or advocates in the development of an individual service plans and provide them with the necessary information, time and resources to make informed decisions about the outcomes the organisation will work on in partnership with the client and their family, friends and community.
- 4) Ensure that services offered will provide as wide a choice as possible so as to enhance life experiences, with the organisation taking reasonable care to avoid foreseeable risks without unduly limiting the rights of each member to take responsibility for their own decisions.
- 5) Jointly review the clients individual service plan regularly and ensure any changes are agreed with the client.
- 6) Seek the formal authorisation of the client, family or advocates by having them countersign the agreed individual service plan
- 7) Continue to respect, promote and support clients being self-determining wherever possible, by informing clients of their rights and responsibilities, and providing access to information that will facilitate effective decision making and choice by individuals.
- 8) Encourage and support clients to develop self-worth and confidence to make decisions that affect their lives.
- 9) Respect that clients have the right to choose an advocate to participate in appropriate decision making at all service levels. Those not able to make informed choices will receive advocacy as required.
- 10) Ensure clients, their families and/or advocates are included in the selection process of new Staff who provide services to them, where ever possible to the level they desire.
 - a) Involve clients, families and advocates in the organisation's strategic planning activities.
 - b) Involve clients, families and advocates in the development of the organisation's service policies and procedures.
- 11) Ensure all staff are given adequate training with regard to organisational policy and how to fulfil these objectives effectively in practice.
- 12) Continue to explore new and innovative individual service delivery options within the constraints of available resources.

