



Individual Values and Beliefs Policy - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People

Version 1.2
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Individual Values and Beliefs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People Policy

1.1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the organisation's services are designed to be culturally sensitive and meet the needs of Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people with disability and their families and carers.

This policy is reflective of the following references:

- NDIS Act 2013
- NDIS Code of Conduct
- NDIS Practice Standards and Quality Indicators 2021
- UN Convention of Rights of Persons with Disability
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Equal Opportunity Act 1984
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- National Standards for Disability Services - Implementation for Aboriginal People with Disability

1.2. Scope

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

1.3. Guiding Principles

Down South Therapy acknowledges the individual needs of Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people with disabilities and their families and carers across all areas of service provision.

Down South Therapy is committed to achieving equitable outcomes as well as equal opportunities by promoting sensitivity to the specific needs of clients and by eliminating systemic racial discrimination in policies, programs and services recognising:

- 1) Rights, entitlements, opportunities and access are not necessarily distributed equally throughout society
- 2) Equal or the same application of rules to different groups can have unequal results
- 3) The need to be flexible in the way they deliver their services. On some occasions, in order to treat people equally services may need to be delivered differently.

1.4. Performance Standards

The following performance standards must be met to ensure that the procedures specified are implemented effectively:

- The Policy on Individual Values and Beliefs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is available to clients, families, staff and contractors.
- Staff are provided with training in culturally sensitive practices specific to individuals from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background to become culturally competent employees.

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- Staff are aware of the implications of the history of disempowerment for individuals from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background and supports these individuals to uphold their rights through training and advocacy.
- Staff provide services that create opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disabilities to participate in and share their culture with the organisation and wider community.
- Staff provide information to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disabilities and their families about services available in the local community allowing individuals to make informed choices and decisions about the services they access.
- Staff provide services and supports that are assessed, planned, delivered and reviewed to build on individual strengths and enable individuals to reach their goals.
- Staff provide flexible arrangements in the location and time of service provision to meet the varying needs of individuals.
- Staff actively involve family members and carers in the decision-making process for Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander People with a disability.
- Staff are provided with training in assisting Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people to provide feedback about services and the feedback provided by individuals is addressed in a culturally aware and competent manner.
- Staff are provided with training on the location rooms for service provision when in situations where services are unable to be provided at home.

1.5. Procedures

The following procedures are to be implemented to ensure that Down South Therapy meets its policy objective of designing and delivering services that are culturally sensitive and meet the needs of Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people with disability and their families and carers. Down South Therapy will:

- 1) Provide staff with information, training and awareness about human rights and the Western Australian, National and International legislation.
- 2) Identify local advocacy organisations that can assist and support Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people and assist Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people in accessing assistance through these organisations where necessary.
- 3) Ensure the views of Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people are incorporated into strategic planning and policy development processes.
- 4) Ensure staff are provided with cross cultural awareness and competency training to ensure a culturally secure service.
- 5) Engage competent interpreters so that people who do not speak English as a first language can have their views heard.
- 6) Provides Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability and their families and carers with information about general community facilities, services, events and how they can access them.
- 7) Include Aboriginal people with disability and their families and carers in all aspects of the service.
- 8) Respect that beliefs and understanding of wellbeing vary significantly between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people and will influence individual, family and community goals.
- 9) Include Aboriginal people with disability and their families and carers in the development of individual plans.
- 10) Ensure flexibility in programs and services to address the individual needs of Aboriginal people with disability.

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- 11) Support and assist Aboriginal people with disability and their families and carers to make their own decisions and choices about the services they receive.
- 12) Be aware of the different services available in the local area and inform Aboriginal people with disability and their families and carers of the choices available to them.
- 13) Maintain a culture of respect where staff understand the importance of decisions made by a person with disability and their family and carers.
- 14) Utilise a culturally appropriate mechanism to provide feedback about the services they receive.
- 15) Inform Aboriginal people with disability and their families and carers that they have the right to give feedback or make a formal complaint about the service they receive.
- 16) Utilise a clear and accessible information about making a complaint or resolving a dispute.
- 17) Advise Aboriginal people with disability and their families and carers that an advocate can represent/support them in making a complaint or resolving a dispute.
- 18) Ensure that locations of service provision in the community are located and designed to provide easy access for a person with disability when services are not able to be provided in the home environment.
- 19) Actively promote services to Aboriginal people through networking, liaising and partnering with local Aboriginal organisations.
- 20) Support families and carers to apply for services, such as assist to complete forms.
- 21) Promote and encourage Aboriginal people with disability and their families and carers and carers to participate on DST's Reference Group.
- 22) Ensure that cross cultural awareness and competency training are budgeted for and included as part of the DST's ongoing training and development program.
- 23) Make provision in budgets and funding submissions for any additional resources required for delivering services to Aboriginal people with disability.