



DOWN SOUTH THERAPY

**Community Participation and
Inclusion Policy**

Version 1.0
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Community Participation and Inclusion Policy

1.1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the organisation's services are designed and delivered in ways that offer opportunities for physical and social integration in the general community.

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 Principals

Down South Therapy acknowledges that all individuals, regardless of their support needs, gender, race, ethnicity, religion or nationality are central to the planning of supports to be provided. Down South Therapy acknowledges the role of significant others/carers and families in this process and is committed to providing quality supports that are tailored to meet individual needs that are flexible and responsive to changing circumstances.

Down South Therapy is committed to ensuring that, wherever practicable, all members regardless of their support needs, gender, race, ethnicity, religion or nationality:

- 1) Have access to the same places as the rest of the community.
- 2) Receive their services in community settings alongside other members of the community.
- 3) Have the opportunity to socialise and build relationships with members of the wider community.
- 4) Receive support respecting individual cultural and community connections.

1.4. Performance Standards

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

- The Policy on Participation and Integration is available to clients, families, staff and contractors.
- Staff are provided with training in person centred practices and are familiar with the concepts of community inclusion.
- Clients and their families/carers (when appropriate) have been involved from the outset in designing the individual service plan and have been provided with information about the opportunities for inclusion in their local community.
- Clients and families have had a primary decision making role about how agreed services are delivered and attention is given to involving people in regular community activities at times

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that coincide with other members of the wider community.

- Down South Therapy staff and contractors are well connected to their communities and have been matched with clients based upon shared interests along with other attributes.
- Down South Therapy collaborates closely with the broader community and promotes opportunities for members to become involved in a wide range of community activities.
- Down South Therapy has arranged its services in a manner that minimises the possibility of exclusion of its members.
- Down South Therapy works proactively with community based groups and services to improve the access of their programs and activities.

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 around Clients enjoying maximum participation and integration of their choice, in and with the community.

Down South Therapy will;

- 1) Design and deliver its services in a way that facilitates the integration and participation of members with other members of the community.
- 2) Wherever possible make the greatest possible use of community facilities and services that are available generically.
- 3) Use community facilities and services in a manner and at times that coincide with those of the wider community.
- 4) Select staff and contractors on the basis of their own involvement and connection with the wider community, amongst other attributes.
- 5) Involve and mentor community members in the integration of the organisation's members in participative community activities.
- 6) Collaborate with other community groups, and their members, to facilitate the inclusion of individual members in their chosen activities.
- 7) Avoid large group activities for clients that are likely to have the unwanted effect of stigmatising or excluding them from community contact, acceptance or involvement.

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