



DOWN SOUTH THERAPY

Reference Group Charter and Code of Conduct

Version 1.0
3 April 2017



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Reference Group Charter and Code of Conduct

1.1. Purpose

Down South Therapy (DST) believes it is essential that it engages with the families and communities in which it operates so that its operations, strategic planning, and direction are responsive to the needs of clients.

The purpose of the Reference Group is to work in an advisory capacity providing Down South Therapy with opinions and advice on issues that arise from time to time relating to Down South Therapy and the community in which it operates.

1.2. Scope

This Charter and Code of Conduct sets out the principles for the operation and administration of the Reference Group

1.3. Structure of the Reference Group

Composition of the Reference Group

The Reference Group will be comprised of:

- a) Client Members
- b) Down South Therapy Director
- c) Business Professional

Appointment of Client Members

Down South Therapy may, from time to time, call for expressions of interest (EOI) for the appointment of one or more Client Members. The EOI may specify criteria (including particular knowledge or skill sets required) for the selection of those Client Members. Current Down South Therapy employees and contractors are not entitled to hold a position as a Client Member.

To be appointed as a Client Member, a person must:

- a) Be or have been a client, family member or carer of a client of Down South Therapy;
- b) Hold the requisite qualifications or experience (if any) set out in the EOI; and
- c) Respond to the EOI with all information requested and within the timeframe required, under the EOI.

Client Members are appointed on a voluntary basis and will be required to meet and abide by all Down South Therapy policies and procedures (including those relating to the Down South Therapy workforce).

Unless otherwise provided for under the terms of this Charter, each Client Member will be appointed (or re-appointed) for a term of two years.





Removal or suspension of a Client Member

If a Client Member does not carry out their duties as a Client Member; refuses or neglects to comply with this Charter or with the Policies; engages in conduct inappropriate of a Reference Group Member; or engages in conduct which is damaging to the interests of the Reference Group or Down South Therapy, the Director may, in its discretion, at any time either suspend the Client Member for a specified period, or terminate their appointment.

Director Representative Member

At least one Down South Therapy Director will be members of the Client Reference Group at all times.

The Down South Therapy Director Representative Member/s are responsible for:

- a) Accepting the views of the Reference Group (including any resolution of the Reference Group made in accordance with section 1.4 of this Charter);
- b) Notifying the Reference Group of matters for review.

The Down South Therapy Directors may alternate this position.

Business Professional Member

Down South Therapy may, from time to time, personally invite a Business Professional to be a member of the Reference Group. The Business Professional should have;

- a) Experience with Disability Service Organisations,
- b) An understanding of Down South Therapy operations; or
- c) A unique qualification or set of skills.

1.4. Proceedings of the Reference Group

Decision making

Any decision of the Reference Group is to be made by simple majority vote of the members present.

Each Member is entitled to one vote.

On an equality of votes, no Member will have an additional or casting vote.

Recommendations and advice

The Reference Group will provide opinion, advice and recommendations to Down South Therapy as required.

When making recommendations the Reference Group may consider the following points:

- Is the decision or conduct lawful?
- Is the decision or conduct consistent with Down South Therapy policies, Mission, Vision, Values and the Code of conduct?

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- Do these outcomes raise a conflict of interest or lead to private gain or loss at public expense?
- Can the decision or conduct be justified in terms of the public interest and would it withstand public scrutiny?

Twice yearly meetings

The Reference Group must meet at least twice a year.

The Down South Therapy Director will call each meeting by giving at least 6 weeks written notice to the Reference Group.

The Down South Therapy Director will circulate an agenda and any supporting documentation at least 2 weeks prior to the meeting, and will chair the meeting.

1.5. Remuneration and expenses

Client Members are not entitled to remuneration for services in their capacity as members of the Reference Group.

Subject to any restrictions or limits determined by Down South Therapy, Members may be reimbursed for reasonable out of pocket expenses incurred in the performance of any duty as a member of the Client Reference Group (provided that any such expenses are approved in writing by the Director prior to being incurred).

