



## **Early Intervention – Evidence Informed Practice Policy**

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**1.1. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that each child receives evidence-informed supports from providers with quality standards and validated practice.

**1.2. Scope**

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

*This Policy reflects requirements in:*

- NDIS Practice Standards and Quality Indicators 2021
- NDIS Act 2013
- ECIA National Guidelines – Best Practice in Early Childhood Intervention 2016
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1990
- UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities 2006

*Related Policies:*

- 6.16 Training and Development Policy
- 6.17 Staff Supervision and Appraisal

**1.1. Evidence Informed Practice – Outcomes and Quality Indicators**

Outcome

Each participant receives evidence-informed supports from providers with quality standards and validated practice.

Quality Indicators

- Intervention strategies are based on explicit principles, validated practices, best available research and relevant laws and regulations.
- Appropriate information, knowledge, skills and expertise are in place to deliver quality supports to families.
- Knowledge and skills are maintained through continuing relevant professional development, ongoing self-reflection, self-assessment and monitoring of practices.

**1.2. Definitions**

Evidence Base, Standards, Accountability and Practice

As defined in the ECIA National Guidelines – Best Practice in Early Childhood Intervention 2016, evidence base, standards, accountability and practices are best when *“ECI services comprise practitioners with appropriate expertise and qualifications who use intervention strategies that are grounded in research and sound clinical reasoning. Standards based on these ECI key best practices will ensure ECI practitioners and services are accountable to continuous improvement and high-quality services”*.

Evidence Based Practice

As defined in the ECIA National Guidelines – Best Practice in Early Childhood Intervention 2016, *“evidence-based practice is a decision-making process that integrates the best available research evidence with family and professional wisdom. It involves a balance of empirically supported interventions, clinical expertise or practice wisdom, and client or family values, preferences and circumstances”*.

### **1.3. Providing Evidence Informed Services**

The following procedures are implemented to ensure that Down South Therapy meets its policy objective of ensuring that each child receives evidence-informed supports from providers with quality standards and validated practice.

DST Procedures:

- Therapists deliver intervention strategies based on explicit principles, validated practices, and best available research.
- Therapists attend both internal and external professional development opportunities to enable the delivery of quality, evidence-based supports.
- Therapists attend weekly/fortnightly case share groups that involve discussing current research and evidence for their clients.
- Therapists are required to meet their governing registration bodies (Allied Health Practitioner Regulation Agency or Speech Pathology Australia) professional development criteria for registration as well as their codes of conduct and best practice.
- All therapists attend weekly/fortnightly supervision with a Senior Therapist to ensure they have the appropriate skills, knowledge, and expertise to deliver quality supports with their clients.
- Therapist are appraised on their performance annually which involves a process of achieving performance indicators, a self-reflection workbook, supervisor assessed client sessions and direct client feedback.
- Therapist interests, skills and knowledge are taken into consideration when matching therapists to client needs and are reviewed periodically through supervision and the maintenance of the Talent in The Team documents.
- Where targeted or specific intervention is required, supports are provided through the context of family centred principles, inclusive of coaching and are incorporated into everyday routines and settings.

### **1.4. Review of the Policy**

This policy will be reviewed on a two-yearly basis. However, if at any time the legislative, policy or funding environment is so altered that the policy is no longer appropriate in its current form, the policy will be reviewed immediately and amended accordingly