



2. POLICY ON INDEPENDENCE AND INFORMED CHOICE

Wagtail Therapy
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Policy Statement

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the clients of Wagtail Therapy can participate as fully as possible in decision-making relating to the services that they need, want and receive in accordance with:

- The NDIS Code of Conduct
- UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- NDIS Practice Standards
- NDIS Act 2013

Scope

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

Procedure

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

- 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) Each person's right to dignity of risk is supported by providing them with the resources required to make informed choices about the benefits and risks of the options under consideration. Access to supports will not be withdrawn or denied solely on the basis of a dignity of risk choice that has been made by the participant.
- 6) Jointly review the clients individual service plan regularly and ensure any changes are agreed with the client.
- 7) Seek the formal authorisation of the client, family or advocates by having them countersign the agreed individual service plan
- 8) 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.
- 9) Encourage and support clients to develop their capacity and confidence to make decisions that affect their lives.
- 10) Ensure each participant has sufficient time to consider and review their options and seek advice if required. This is encouraged at any stage of support provision including assessment, planning, provision, review and exit.
- 11) Encourage and support client's autonomy including their right to intimacy and sexual expression.
- 12) 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. A current list of Advocates can be found on the NDIS Commission Website (www.ndiscommission.gov.au/participants/disability-advocacy) which takes clients through to an advocacy directory <https://askizzy.org.au/disability-advocacy-finder>
- 13) Ensure clients, their families and/or advocates are included in the selection process of new staff



who provide services to them, wherever possible to the level they desire.

- 14) Involve clients, families and advocates in the organisation's strategic planning activities.
- 15) Involve clients, families and advocates in the development of the organisation's service policies and procedures.
- 16) Ensure all staff are given adequate training with regard to organisational policy and how to fulfil these objectives effectively in practice.
- 17) Continue to explore new and innovative individual service delivery options within the constraints of available resources.
- 18) Support participants to transition to other providers if they choose to by:
 - a. Collaborate with the participant to plan the transition.
 - b. Help the participant to minimize risks associated with the transition

Responsibilities

Wagtail Therapy is committed to ensuring that all clients 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 Independence and Informed Choice is supported by:

- The Policy on Independence and Informed Choice 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 therapy plan has been developed for all clients and a copy has been provided to the member, family members and advocates, where the client chooses to have one completed.
- 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 Wagtail Therapy strategic planning activities.

Review

This Policy will be reviewed on an annual basis. However, if at any time where change is identified as being needed through legislative changes or service requirements, the Policy will be amended accordingly. This Policy will still remain in force after its review period if not reviewed, or until changed or withdrawn.