

Policy #17a	SerD - POL – Participant Rights
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Applies to: Service Delivery Programs	Version: 1
Specific responsibility: Program Managers	Last Date approved: 11/05/2021
Definitions: Refer to Schedule of Definitions <i>Privacy, confidentiality, complaint, volunteers, stakeholders</i>	Next review date: 11/05/2023

Policy Statement

Social Futures is committed to respecting and protecting the legal and human rights of all people who use our services including our diverse communities including:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities;
- LGBTIQSB communities;
- children and young people;
- culturally and linguistically diverse communities; and
- people with physical or intellectual disabilities or mental health challenges.

We will develop an organisational culture that supports our service users to exercise their rights in accordance with relevant legislation and international conventions. We will work to:

- Respect their right to access services;
- Support them in terms of advocacy;
- Support them in making informed choices.

Objectives

Service User Rights: We understand and support the principles of fairness and human rights in all aspects of service delivery and will endeavour to ensure the rights of service users to:

- independence and to determine life choices;
- dignity and security;
- be treated with care and respect;
- privacy and confidentiality within legislative limits;
- full and accurate information about the service they are receiving, within legislative limits;
- provide feedback, make a complaint and report breaches of their rights.

We document these rights and responsibilities and make them available to service users, their families and support networks in a way that is accessible and appropriate to their needs.

Advocacy: We acknowledge service users' rights to be supported by advocates and to change these at any time. Appropriate advocates may be individuals or support people for whom no

conflict of interest exists and whose primary loyalty is to the person for whom they are advocating. They may include legal advisors, independent advocates, family or friends who understand the complexities of service provision and the service user’s unique circumstances. We:

- encourage service users to select an advocate to negotiate on their behalf regarding intake, assessment, reviews, complaints, participation in meetings or groups, or any other communication with Social Futures.
- work cooperatively with nominated advocates, treat them with respect and ensure they are provided with current and timely information about service provision.
- provide service users with information and support to access an independent advocate or support person where appropriate and will endeavour to provide advocacy and support when it is requested, if possible and appropriate.

Participation and Choice: We support service users to make informed choices and respect their decisions. We will provide them with information about our services as well as other choices available to them, including other services, and encourage and support them to:

- make informed decisions on engagement / participation or non-engagement / non-participation in our services or in community activities.
- decide about services that are provided to them.
- decide with whom they are comfortable working.
- decide what information is shared.
- set goals and play an active role in decisions that affect their lives.
- participate in the community as equal and valued community members.
- build self-reliance and maintain social inclusion.
- make informed decisions that promote opportunities and self-determination.
- be involved, together with their support networks, in the planning, development, delivery and evaluation of programs and activities they participate in or that affect them.

We will develop and review our participation and service delivery processes in consultation with people who use our services and their support networks where relevant.

Policy Administration

Policy context: This policy relates to	
Standards or other external requirements	Australian Service Excellence Standards C.8.1 Family Relationships Services Standards 13 National Home Care Standards 1.8, 3.1, 3.4, 3.5 NSW Good Practice Guidelines 1.1, 1.2 National Standards for Mental Health Services 1,2,3,7
Legislation or other requirements	<i>Refer to Table 1 (Legislation)</i> Age Discrimination Act 2004 Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986

Service Delivery: Participant Rights

	Disability Discrimination Act 1992 Racial Discrimination Act 1975 Sex Discrimination Act 1984 Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2011 Children and Young Persons Care and Protection Act 1998 (NSW) Community Welfare Act 1987 Disability Services Act 1993 (NSW) Housing Act 2001 Human Rights Act 2019 (QLD)
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Reviewing and approving this policy		
Frequency	Person responsible	Approval
2 years	Chief Executive Officer	Board

Policy review and version tracking				
Review	Date Approved	Document Reviewed	Approved by	Next Review Due
	11/03/2019	Rights of Service Users	Board	Review 11/05/2023 as one merged policy – Participant Rights
	13/06/2019	Advocacy and Support	Board	
	13/06/2019	Participation and Choice	Board	
1	11/05/2021	Participant Rights	Board	11/05/2023

Documentation

Documents related to this policy	
Related policies	Compliance and Risk Management Communication, Marketing and Branding Customer and Child Safety and Duty of Care Monitoring Quality and Performance Privacy, Information and Knowledge Management Service Access, Intake, Referral, Delivery and Transition Strategic and Program Planning Values, Vision and Purpose
Related procedures	Practice Framework Refer Policy and Procedure List