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APPROVED BY: Committee of Management

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Service Delivery Policy

1.0 Introduction:

The *Disability Services Act (1993)* identifies that each person has the right to receive services which respect and promote their legal and human rights and which place them at the centre of decision making on all aspects of the way they live their life.

The disability services sector in NSW and across Australia has established a consistent approach to quality assurance to ensure that service providers deliver supports and services to a standard of quality that meets the expectations of participants, their families/carers and the community.

Using the NSW Disability Service Standards (DSS) to measure the continued performance and quality of services at ConnectAbility Australia (ConnectAbility) is fundamental to a person centred service system that enables its participants, their families/carers to exercise choice and flexibility in accessing their supports and services.

2.0 Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to outline how participants will be provided services from ConnectAbility and the key processes and policies that link to this delivery of the service consistent with the six NSW Disability Service Standards. For ConnectAbility Australia to deliver high-quality services and supports to our participants, their families and carers, we must be attentive to their needs and strengths, their limitations and to the needs of their families and their communities.

Our service delivery policy provides a framework and describes how we take an organised and responsive approach to our core business — the way we consult with participants to obtain access to services, understand their needs and goals, assist participants and their families to plan and schedule required supports and services, undertake activities, cooperate with other providers and agencies, provide feedback and review participant progress against their person centred pathways.

Having clear, written procedures for the delivery of services against the Disability Service Standards provides clarity to participants and their families and carers about what they can expect from us within our resource constraints. Being focused on responsiveness to their needs and strengths at all stages of the delivery of a service helps us to assist each person to work towards effective and achievable service delivery.

3.0 Definitions:

- **Confidential:** to keep your information private and safe

- **Decision making:** to have a say about the things that are important to you
- **Dignity:** treat a person with respect
- **Dispute:** you do not agree with something a person says or does.
- **Independent:** to do something by yourself.
- **Integration:** to bring all people together
- **Participation:** to join in with other people, or to join in community events
- **Privacy:** to have time and space by yourself.
- **Service provider:** a business that does work to help people with a disability.
- **Valued status:** you know what you do and what you think is important. The community also knows that you are important.

4.0 Scope:

This policy applies to all stakeholders of the organisation including: participants, families, staff, carers, contractors, other service providers and members of the community.

5.0 Policy Statement

ConnectAbility Australia aims to provide participants and their key stakeholders quality supports and services in line with the NSW Disability Service Standards. ConnectAbility recognises it's participants at the centre of decision making processes, service delivery and offers maximum choice and control in all interactions in relation to service delivery.

It is committed to delivering services and activities that respond to the needs and strengths of those people who use our service, their families, carers and their communities.

The objectives for ConnectAbility Australia in its delivery of supports and services is to adhere to the following practice requirements:

- each participant of ConnectAbility is aware of their rights;
- facilitate the planning and provision of services, supports and other initiatives for participants, their families and carers;
- promote and protect the rights of ConnectAbility participants
- support the provision of high-quality personalised and person centred services;
- be accountable to participants accessing supports and services provided by ConnectAbility Australia;
- ensure the efficient and effective use of participants individualised funding and support packages in the day to day provision of person centred supports and services .

We want those who use our service to be confident that their needs and issues have been understood, that there is a clear plan for the services they will receive from us, and that there is assistance available to build relationships with other agencies as appropriate.

6.0 Principles:

This Policy outlines two sets of principles that, wherever possible, should be given effect to in the delivery of supports and services. These principles relate to both the participants, their families/carers and ConnectAbility Australia.

The principles relating to participants are:

1. People with a disability have the same rights and responsibilities as other members of the community and should be empowered to exercise those rights and responsibilities.
2. People with a disability have the same rights as other members of the community to:
 - respect for their human worth and dignity as individuals
 - live free from abuse, neglect or exploitation
 - realise their individual capacity for physical, social, emotional and intellectual development
 - exercise control over their own lives
 - participate actively in the decisions that affect their lives and have information and be supported, where necessary, to enable this to occur
 - access information and communicate in a manner appropriate to their communication and cultural needs
 - services that support their quality of life.
3. ConnectAbility adopts the principles of the New South Wales Carers Charter and actively seeks to recognise the contribution carers make, provides support to them and the people they care for.

6.0 What are the Disability Service Standards

The standards reflect contemporary practices that place people with disability at the centre of decision making and choice about their supports and services. The standards will guide ConnectAbility Australia to implement a person centred service system, and ensure that person centred approaches are embedded in its practice requirements and procedures. They now form the basis of ConnectAbility Australia's quality reform requirements under its current funding agreement with the Department of Ageing Disability and Home Care (ADHC).

The NSW Standards have been streamlined from ten to six in line with the revised National Standards. These streamlined standards are:

1. Rights
2. Participation and inclusion
3. Individual outcomes
4. Feedback and complaints
5. Service access
6. Service management.

6.1 Standard One: Rights

Each person receives a service that promotes and respects their legal and human rights and enables them to exercise choice like everyone else in the community.

What does this standard mean for participants?

- Each person is aware of their rights and can expect to have them respected;
- ConnectAbility will uphold and promote the legal and human rights of each person;
- ConnectAbility will actively promote the rights of people to the wider community;

6.2 Standard Two: Participation and Inclusion

Each person is encouraged and supported to contribute to social and civic life in their communities in the way they choose.

What does this standard mean for participants?

- Each person is actively encouraged and supported to participate in their community;
- ConnectAbility Australia will strive to develop connections with the community and other organisations to promote opportunities for active and meaningful participation.

6.3 Standard Three: Individual Outcomes

Each person is supported to exercise choice and control over the design and delivery of their supports and services.

What does this mean for participants?

- ConnectAbility maximises person centred decision making and places each person at the centre of their supports;
- ConnectAbility undertakes person centred approaches to planning to enable each person to achieve their individual outcomes;
- ConnectAbility encourages participants to utilise person centred tools and resources to develop support pathways to achieve their goals, dreams and aspirations.

6.4 Standard 4: Feedback and Complaints

When a person wants to make a complaint, the service provider will make sure the person's views are respected, that they are informed as the complaint is dealt with, and have the opportunity to be involved in the resolution process

What does this mean for participants?

- Each person is treated fairly by ConnectAbility when making a complaint;
- Each person and their family/carer is provided with information and support on how to make a complaint;
- ConnectAbility has developed appropriate policies and procedures to investigate, manage and review complaints;
- ConnectAbility provides referrals and information to external bodies for complaint management as requested or required;
- ConnectAbility will ensure your complaints are managed in a timely manner.

6.5 Standard 5: Service Access

Each person is assisted to access the supports and services they need to live the life they choose.

What does this mean for participants?

1. ConnectAbility makes information available about its services;
2. ConnectAbility have clearly defined processes to access services;
3. ConnectAbility works with other service providers and the community to increase each person's support options.

6.6 Standard Six: Service Management

Service providers are well managed and have strong and effective governance to deliver positive outcomes for the people they support

What does this mean for participants?

1. Each person receives quality services which are effectively and efficiently governed;
2. Each person receives quality services that are well managed and delivered by skilled staff with the right values, attitudes, goals and experience

7.0 Consultation

This is a new policy introduced to increase flexibility and innovation in supports and services for ConnectAbility Australia participants, their families and carers.

As a response to changes to the disability sector ConnectAbility Australia has been proactive in its consultation mechanisms to develop and implement an effective Service Standards Policy Framework. Consultation has occurred with a number of peak bodies in the disability sector, namely National Disability Services New South Wales (NDS NSW), Ageing Disability and Home Care (ADHC), and National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA). The National Standards Framework and NSW Standards in Action documents have been researched to determine alignment of this policy and framework.

It also draws on the direct experiential knowledge of staff, and research and consultation within the organisation, including participant's families and carers of ConnectAbility Australia.

8.0 Quality assurance mechanisms

Supports provided by ConnectAbility Australia must be underpinned by a quality framework that ensures consistency and a high level of quality care and support for participants, their families and carers. ConnectAbility Australia acknowledges that it will be required to undertake third party verification of their performance against the NSW Disability Service Standards (NSW DSS), prior to June 30, 2015.

ConnectAbility Australia's adopted Standards Policy framework must be informed by human rights principles, refer to nationally consistent standards, clear accreditation mechanisms, sound compliance and monitoring systems, and information readily available to participants, families and carers to inform them of minimum quality expectations.

9.0 Communication

This policy will be:

- communicated to the key internal and external stakeholders of ConnectAbility;
- communicated to ConnectAbility Australia staff through professional development opportunities;
- accessible through ConnectAbility Australia's internal intranet and website.

10.0 Training

ConnectAbility Australia Senior Management will identify staff responsible to implement the policy and /or who will be affected by the policy, and provide information and training as necessary to enable staff to comply with all areas described within this policy.

11.0 Related Policies:

- Code of Ethics and Practice
- Individualised Funding Policy
- Rights Policy
- Participation and Inclusion
- Individual Outcomes
- Complaints Management
- Service Access
- Service Management
- Service Risk Management Policy
- Privacy, Dignity and Confidentiality
- Discrimination and Harassment
- Equal Employment Opportunity

12.0 Related Legislation and Obligations:

- Disability Services Act 1993
- Disability Service Standards
- NSW Carers (Recognition) Act 2010
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Anti-Discrimination Act 2004
- Community Services Act 1993
- Fair Work Act 2009
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011
- Workplace Injury Management and Workers Compensation Act 1998

13.0 Evaluation and review

This policy will be regularly reviewed as contextual drivers within the disability services sector continue to evolve. The move to a nationally recognised Standards Framework is a priority of the National Disability Agreement (NDA). The continued implementation of Stronger Together 2 and introduction of the National Disability Insurance Scheme will provide evidence as to the planning and future direction for ConnectAbility Australia. This policy is not intended to be a static document and ConnectAbility Australia will make a commitment to its ongoing development.

Version	Date	Author	Reason	Sections
1 (draft 2)	October 2013	Scott Harvey	New policy	All
(draft 1)	August 2012	Karen Stace	Due for review	All