

# ACCESS AND EQUITY

## STANDARD 1. ACQS



### 1. Purpose

Northside is committed to providing equitable access to all programs conducted by Northside irrespective of gender, marital status, religious or cultural beliefs, political affiliation, particular disability or health condition, ethnic background, age, gender identity sexual preference, or inability to pay.

This policy is to provide clear guidance for the application of Access and Equity throughout Northside Community Service.

### 2. Scope

This policy relates to all programs, service and activities undertaken by Community Service staff. This policy applies to all persons employed (paid and unpaid) within Northside's Community Service Division. This policy applies to Northside management, Executive and Board as defined in the Approved Provider of Age Care Accreditation.

### 3. Policy

It is a policy of Northside Community Service Inc. that staff will adhere to the principles of access and equity and that all Northside areas have appropriate procedures.

**Equal Access:** No consumers are excluded from access to Northside on the grounds of their gender, marital status, religious or cultural beliefs, political affiliation, particular disability or health condition, ethnic background, age, gender identity sexual preference, inability to pay or circumstances of their carer.

**Prioritization of Special Need:** All other things being equal, priority access to services is given to people with special needs, whose safety and wellbeing are at immediate risk and/or who are in circumstances which require immediate response to mitigate further deterioration of circumstances related to their safety or wellbeing.

The Northside Board of Directors accepts that the Organisation cannot always provide all services required by all the clients. In these cases every attempt will be made to connect the individual with a suitable service which can meet the requested service needs.

### 4. Procedure

N/A

### 5. Definitions

**Approved Provider:** A person who holds a provider approval under the Aged Care Provider Approval and (if relevant National Mental Health Standards). Key Personnel linked to Approved Provider Accreditation include the Board of Directors, CEO, All Executive positions, Senior Management and management positions directly related to the provision of age care and in the case of the Mental Health Standards, mental health.

**Northside:** Northside Community Service, including all Services operated by both Community Services and Children's Services.

<b>Document Type:</b> Policy	<b>Doc Ref No.:</b> COMS- POL-002	<b>Distribution:</b>
<b>Version No.:</b> V1	<b>Due for Review:</b> 12/2019	<b>ALL STAFF</b>

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**Client** – individual engaged in or accessing Northside’s community service programs.

**Northside staff** - paid and unpaid employees delivering services, programs and activities

**Access** -the ability to be able to approach Northside to enquire about available services.

**Creed** - system of religious belief.

**Equity** - being fair and impartial.

**Sexuality** - Sexual identity, sexual feelings and sexual behaviour.

**Gender Identity** – an individual’s personal sense of their own gender. Gender identity can correlate with assigned sex at birth, or can differ from it

### 6. Responsibilities – Key roles & responsibilities

**Approved Provider Key Personnel** ensure regular monitoring and review of systems and processes through internal auditing and regular reporting.

**Management** ensures processes and practices are in accord with consumer dignity and choice and provide the resources to support staff and consumers including staff development and supervision

**Staff** follow policies and procedures, participate in development opportunities, treat consumers with dignity and respect at all times, work to maintain an environment that is culturally safe, support consumers to make informed choices about their care and ensure the privacy and confidentiality of consumers

**Consumers and/or their representatives** make their choices known to staff and let us know when they feel they have not been treated with dignity and respect or have not been supported or permitted to express their choices about their care and services.

### 7. Related Standards, Legislation and Documents.

#### Standards

Age Care Quality Standards	Standard 1 – Dignity and Choice
National Practice Standards for Mental Health	Standard 1 – Rights Responsibility, Safety and Privacy. Standard 3 - Meeting Diverse Needs

#### Legislation

- Aged Care Act 1997 (Cth), Schedule 1 User Rights Principles 2014.
- Charter of Rights and Responsibilities
- Residential Care Aged Care Act 1997 (Cth), Schedule 2 User Rights Principles 2014.
- Charter of Rights and Responsibilities – Home Care Aged Care Act 1997 (Cth), Schedule 3
- User Rights Principles 2014.
- Charter of Rights and Responsibilities – Short-term restorative Care Aged Care Act 1997 (section 11.3)
- Meaning of people with special needs Australian Privacy Principles 2013

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- Disability Discrimination Act (Commonwealth) 1992

### Documents

- Clients with Diverse Backgrounds Policy
- Informed Consent Policy
- Supported Decision Making Policy
- Client Feedback Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Access and Equity Policy
- Continuous Improvement Plan

### 8. Document Control & Version History

Document Reference number:	COMS- POL-002
Version Number:	V2
Written by: Name & position	Kate Cvetanovski, Executive Director Community Services
Document Status:	Final
Document approved by:	Bruce Papps, CEO
Approval Date:	10/12/2018
Effective Date:	18/12/2018
Review Date:	This will be no later than 12 months from Release Date. A register is maintained to ensure currency
Corporate/Community Services or Children's Services:	Community Service

### Version History

<i>Version No. V1</i>	<i>Date of effect</i>	<i>Brief Summary of Change</i>
	18/12/2018	.

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