



Better Together Assoc Inc

POLICY 1.0 - SERVICE ACCESS

HUMAN SERVICES QUALITY STANDARD 2: SERVICE ACCESS

The organisation makes their services available to their target group in fair, transparent and non-discriminatory ways and people seeking access to services are prioritised and responded to.



POLICY 1.0 - SERVICE ACCESS

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Related Better Together Policies and Procedures



Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to set out the circumstances and conditions under which people can be accepted for services with Better Together Assoc Inc (herein referred to as Better Together). The policy has been framed around eligibility and criteria outlined in the *Disability Services Act (2006)* and *Standard 2 of the Human Services Quality Standards*.

This policy will show how Better Together actively promotes the services on offer to our agreed target user group, to ensure that appropriate support is provided to people who need it, by identifying, minimising and wherever possible, removing barriers to access.

This policy applies to all supports provided by Better Together and extends to not only current staff, service users and the management board, but also to potential individuals who may wish to access the service.

Policy Statement: Our Commitment

The services provided by Better Together are accessible to people regardless of gender, religion or nationality who are aged between 18 to 65 years (with provisions for people turning 18 in the year commencing service), have a permanent disability and/ or significant mental health issue and live in the Caboolture or surrounding areas. It is the intention of Better Together that all people in our target user group have equal access to our services, and this organisation will, within available resources endeavour to optimise access to these services.

Preamble

The following procedures are to be implemented to enable the organisation to meet its policy objective of ensuring that, within the constraints of available funding and resources, those people with disabilities and/or significant mental health issues who most need the services provided by this organisation are accepted for services, and that services are only withdrawn:

- at the initiative of the service user;
- if the service user no longer meets the organisation's eligibility criteria;
- if the organisation's duty of care responsibilities to the service user or staff are demonstrably compromised; or in some cases where
- the service user relocates to a remote area still within the geographical service delivery boundaries but limits staff availability (each case will be assessed individually).

In order to find the most flexible and appropriate response to a support need, Better Together may, if unable to meet an individual's needs, broker another service to provide the required support.



Definition

Safety Management System is a term Better Together has adopted to envelope all service management processes which have been specifically developed to promote a safe and suitable work environment and a quality service to Better Together service users, in accordance with the *Work Health and Safety Act (2011)*. It is a working mechanism in a state of constant review.

An *advocate* is an independent individual who stands beside and for the interests of the individual with a disability and/or mental health issue. An advocate should be informed about the needs of the individual and encourage a long-term vision that strives for the inclusion of the individual with a disability in all spheres of life and society.

Advocacy is speaking out, acting, writing with minimal conflict or interest on behalf of the sincerely perceived interests of a disadvantaged person or group to promote, protect and defend their welfare and justice.

Procedures

1.0 (A) Providing Equitable Access to Better Together Services

Rationale

Better Together is committed to the principles of inclusion and believes that our community is a richer community when it welcomes and celebrates diversity. Better Together is committed to ensuring that no person with a disability and/or mental health issue experiences discrimination or exclusion in their dealings with the organisation.

Detailed Procedure

Better Together will provide:

- information in languages other than English, through print, electronic media, and disability-appropriate methods of communication (Better Together have a partnership with the Caboolture Multicultural Association);
- interpreters or facilitators for the special needs of people from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds by contacting SWITC, a support and interpreting, translating and communication service, and arrange to book an interpreter or translator to assist with service access;
- ongoing opportunities for staff to attend cultural diversity training programs so that they develop knowledge and skills to work effectively from a cultural framework;
- co-ordination and consultation between Better Together staff and other providers and government agencies to ensure co-ordination of services appropriate to an individual's needs;
- records on the people who use the service and employees categorised by their country of birth or their cultural or linguistic background, compared with the percentage composition of the total population in the service target group or catchment area;



- cultural diversity in the membership of its board and workforce by promoting equality and cultural awareness;
- a process for managing complaints regarding eligibility, entry and exit decisions (see Policy 7.0 Complaints and Disputes).

1.0 (B) Prioritisation Process

Rationale

To avoid false expectations, Better Together does not have a waiting list. When Better Together does not have the capacity to provide support to an individual with a disability and/or mental health issue, their details are recorded in a *Referral Register*.

Detailed Procedure

When a vacancy becomes available through block funding, a Better Together key staff person will:

- review the *use of block funding* and prioritise need, by identifying a service user who have been receiving limited emergency support services or are in extreme need for additional support (in consultation with DS); or
- if an existing service user cannot be identified through the above process, notify Disability Services of the vacancy;
- once an individual has been identified, follow Procedure 1.0(D) of this Policy.

When unable to provide a service to an individual who is otherwise eligible for a service and have made a formal application, a key staff person will:

- explain the service access policy;
- provide information about Better Together;
- record their details for the *Referral Register*;
- place the family/carer on the mailing list for Better Together Newsletters and invitations etc.
- advise Disability Services of the unavailability of service
- Advise the person how to make contact with DS

1.0 (C) Community Information Support

Rationale

All people with a disability who meet the following criteria

- Eligibility for assistance under the Disability Services Act (Qld) 2006
- Aged between 18 - 65 years old
- Residing in the Caboolture Region and surrounding areas;



will be eligible to receive information about Better Together and to take advantage of links, community information, and community connection opportunities that are located in the Caboolture Region and promoted by Better Together.

Detailed Procedure

People can access this information via

- our website www.bettertogether.net.au ,
- our Better Together Facebook page,
- make contact with the Better Together office and get information over the phone
- or make an appointment to meet with a representative of Better Together.
- Visit Lagoon Creek Café and Function Room where, along with the Better Together office, Better Together keeps community information

1.0 (D) Offering Block Funded Services

Rationale

Better Together holds a block grant from Department of Communities Disability Services to provide up to 86 hours/per week of support to assist up to 18 people who require assistance to develop meaningful valued roles and relationships in the social, economic and civic life of the local community via participation, membership and contribution in local activities, work (voluntary or paid) groups and events. All individuals supported through Better Together's casual support hours are supported through Targeted Block Funding from Disability Services Queensland or an individual funding consistent with CSTDA 3.01.

Support will be allocated within a set time frame around accessing a valued role in a particular activity which is most reflective with what a person of similar age and interests would be doing - particularly work. All activities will be generic in nature occurring within community environments within the Moreton Bay Region.

For some, Better Together may only need to provide support for as little as a month to six months so as to develop an understanding of relationships and valued roles a person needs in their life, and support them into a valued role and/or recruit a person or persons to form a freely given and enduring relationship with them. Better Together is also aware that many people need support for a more extended time, possible years, to maintain valued roles and relationships so can continue to support such persons for as long as they need within eligibility requirements and available resources.

Depending on the support plan the hours of support can include direct and indirect support e.g. recruiting other people into your life. In addition to the hours of direct support included on the support plan, each person receives up to 2.5 hours/week of indirect support including coordination of support, community research and matching, support planning, monitoring and linking.



- Should Better Together need to cancel support on any given day due to ill health of a worker etc., Better Together will retain the hours for the person to use at another time.
- If a person cancels their own support or is not able to receive support due to reasons such as being away, the hours are then returned to the pool of hours for broader use i.e.: that could be someone with an urgent need, an event for people supported by Better Together, etc.

In the event that the person receiving support does not give reasonable notice of not needing support - their Lifestyle Coach will be deployed to another role within the time allocated.

Detailed Procedure

To be considered for assistance via this funded support through Better Together, the individual must be registered and referred by QLD Department of Communities Disability Services and meet the overarching eligibility criteria under the *Disability Services Act 2006* as well as Better Together's specific access criteria, all which are stipulated below.

Department of Communities Disability Services Process for eligibility

The Disability Service Act 2006 outlines who can be considered for access to specialist disability support. Being assessed as eligible for specialist disability services does not mean you will receive funding. You will be linked to specialist support services if and when they are available.

Eligibility criteria

There are seven criteria that must be met in order to be considered eligible. These are based on the Disability Services Act 2006 and the Disability Services' Eligibility Policy, and are divided into three clusters.

Cluster 1—about you

You are:

1. an Australian citizen, the holder of a visa that gives permanent residency rights, or a New Zealand citizen who arrived in Australia before 26 Feb 2001; AND
2. a Queensland resident; AND
3. aged under 65 at the time of application.

Cluster 2—about your disability

Your disability is:

4. Due to an intellectual, psychiatric, cognitive (including both congenital and acquired impairments), neurological, sensory or physical impairment, or combination of impairments; AND
5. Permanent or likely to be permanent (may or may not be of a chronic or episodic nature).

Cluster 3—about your support needs

Your disability results in:

6. A substantial reduction in your capacity (in one or more of the following areas) for communication, social interaction, learning, mobility or self-care/management; AND
7. A need for specialist disability support.



Eligibility evidence

It is the role of the Disability Services assessor to determine whether you are eligible. The intake officer who books your specialist needs assessment will discuss with you which supporting documentation from the list below to bring with you to your assessment meeting.

Eligibility for Better Together service provision:

Overarching Eligibility Criteria

- The individual must have a disability which is attributable to an intellectual, psychiatric, cognitive, neurological, sensory or physical impairment or a combination of impairments; and
- The disability must result in a substantial reduction of the person's capacity in the areas of communication, social interaction, learning, mobility or self-care/management; and
- The disability must result in the person needing support; and
- The disability is permanent or likely to be permanent; and
- The disability manifests itself before the age of 65; and
- The individual meets the residency requirements; and
- The individual lives in Queensland.

Initiative Eligibility Criteria:

- be eligible for assistance under the *Disability Services Act 2006*;
- Be aged between 18 and 65 years old.
- Not currently receiving a day service
- Would benefit from being involved in community activities
- Have support needs that could be met by Better Together.
- Have a Registration of Needs to DSQ and are referred by Disability services

Better Together staff will record appropriate enquiries from interested parties, but these records will in no way constitute a waiting list. Better Together will refer people to QLD Department of Communities Disability Services if they have not already been assessed for eligibility and been referred by DS (in the case of utilising Block Grant)

A Better Together key staff person will:

- follow Procedure 1.0(B) of this Policy;
- arrange to meet with the identified individual and if it is their preference meet with their family and/or carer/advocate to discuss their unmet need and their eligibility to receive support from Better Together;
- obtain information essential to providing good service and compile and/or update the Individual File (see Policy 4.0 Privacy, Dignity and Confidentiality);
- if applicable, introduce a nominated support coordinator and Lifestyle Support Coach/s to the individual and their family and/or carer;
- develop or update an Individual Support Plan in conjunction with the Safety Management System (see Policy 2.0 Individual Needs and Policy 3.0 Decision-Making and Choice);



- advise the individual and their family and/or carer/advocate of their right to make the final decision on the selection of support staff;
- enter or update the individual's details on electronic Better Together Service User Database;
- update file information annually or earlier as required;
- review Individual Support Plan and relevant Safety Management plans, annually or earlier as required.

1.0 (E) Offering Services for people with individual funding (individual funding from Department of Families Disability Services or brokerage/funded by another organisation)

Rationale

Better Together also has capacity, depending on available human resources, to support a small number of people who have individual funding that is consistent with the Commonwealth State and Territory Disability Agreement (CSTDA)

- **Code 3.01 Learning and life skills development**
 - These programs provide ongoing day-to-day support for service users to gain greater access and participate in community-based activities. Programs may focus on continuing education to develop skills and independence in a variety of life areas (e.g. self-help, social skills and literacy and numeracy) or enjoyment, leisure and social interaction. They are often called Day Programs.
 - Activities under service type 3.01 may include:
 - Attending courses to develop literacy and numeracy, financial and household management skills or classes such as cooking, arts and crafts, water aerobics and fitness.
 - Undertaking trips to art galleries, libraries, movies, zoos, parks and nature reserves or outings that involve fishing or other recreational activities.
 - Undertaking tours to familiarise individuals with their local area and develop confidence in using public transport or visits to facilities such as hospitals, designed to alleviate the stress of future visits.
 - Participating in volunteer programs such as helping at the RSPCA or landscaping and gardening programs.
 - Attending social clubs, e.g., book, music or sporting clubs; and
 - Going on shopping trips or eating out in various venues from food halls to restaurants.
- **Code 1.06 In-home accommodation support**
 - Support involves individual in-home living support and/or developmental programming services for people with a disability, supplied independently of accommodation. The accommodation may be owned, rented, or otherwise provided, but should be independent of the agency providing the in-home support service, otherwise see code 1.04 'group homes'. Where an in-home accommodation support services also provides some other limited assistance, for



example help with banking once a week, then in-home accommodation should be recorded, as it is the primary focus of the support provided.

To be able to access Better Together services with individual funding, or to obtain your own individual funding to purchase Better Together's service you must apply through QLD Department of Communities Disability Services for Specialist support eligibility.

In relation to individual funding, should the person no longer wish to be supported by Better Together, then DS will be notified of need to change service provider and funding will no longer be provided to Better Together. If the needs of an individual change and the support offered by Better Together is insufficient to meet these needs, Caboolture Family Network Association Inc. the auspicing body, will assist the person and their guardian to advocate for a different service and/or funding if required. Should the amount of support required exceed the funding available through Better Together, then the program will not be able to continue to support the individual and will immediately contact Disability Service Queensland so that other service models can be explored. Better Together is committed to exploring a wide variety of options but will clearly define what is and isn't possible within the resources available.

This policy applies to all people regardless of ethnic or cultural background, gender, religion or level of disability.

If at any time there is not the capacity to support people, Better Together will endeavour to assist people to connect with other agencies.

Detailed Procedure

A Better Together key staff person will:

- receive the initial enquiry via email or phone contact from Disability Services;
- or alternatively will receive direct contact from person referred and/or their advocate and/or referring service
- make contact with the individual with a disability, and if required by the person, their family and/or carer/advocate;
- assess the persons needs and discuss various options
- provide and explain the Better Together Service User Handbook with the individual with a disability and their family/carer/advocate;
- determine Better Together capacity to support the person;
- if support can be offered, prepare and electronically send to Disability Services, or the paying service, a costing breakdown on the organisation's Quotation Form;
- on receipt of electronic acceptance and confirmation, contact the person concerned to arrange service delivery;
- obtain information essential to providing good service and commence an Individual File (see Policy 4.0 Privacy, Dignity and Confidentiality);
- introduce nominated Lifestyle Coaches to the person;
- advise the individual and if required by person, their family/carer/advocate of their right to make the final decision on the selection of support staff;



- develop an Individual Support Plan and relevant Safety Management plans (see Policy 2.0 Individual Needs and Policy 3.0 Decision-Making and Choice); and provide this plan to person confirming the service to be offered by Better Together;
- enter individual's details on electronic Better Together Service User Database;
- update file information annually or earlier as required;
- review Individual Support Plan and associated risk management plans annually or earlier as required (see Policy 11.0 Risk and Safety Management).

1.0 (F) Offering "fee for Services" outside of government funded services

Rationale

Any person with a disability may wish to pay for their services. This may include those people with compensation, those who are on a waitlist for government funded services or those who wish to have more service than that which is funded by government.

Detailed Procedure

An application for services can be made for an adult with appropriate consents gained. Applications can be made for all services offered by Better Together.

For those whose applications are successful, services will be explained and developed to meet the individual needs of the adult. A Service Agreement, Terms and Conditions for Services and the Fee Schedule will be discussed when developing the Fee for Service package

1.0 (G) Offering Host Accommodation and Independent Living Guides

Rationale

Host Accommodation and Independent Living Guides (HAILG) is flexible and responsive option for individuals with a disability and/or mental health issue who live with their family and need a place where they can experience living more independently. This support creates an opportunity for a person with disability to develop and strengthen their own skills alongside an "independent living skills Guide while sharing accommodation with the guide for a short period of time.

Some people who are supported through Better Together who have the goal of living independently find it difficult to implement learning in their busy family environments.



HAILG can assist a person already supported by Better Together, where there is critical and urgent need, and resources are available, to stay with a person who can provide support for this individual with a disability by inviting him or her to stay with them and their family for short periods of time. The expectation is that the hosting household will include the individual in their daily routine and activities.

An Independent Living Guide (ILG) is a volunteer or employee of Better Together who offers to support a person in their own accommodation if it will be beneficial for the person's skill development they need for the future.

Our aim for Better Together in this situation is to assist the person to build and strengthen their skills in a setting more comparable to living independently. We aim to provide, within available resources, a quality Host Accommodation and Independent Living Guides service that will allow the person to get a "taste" of a lifestyle the same as other people their age. While at the same time offering a safe place for this to occur and with a trusted "Guide" alongside the person for whatever support they need.

Our philosophy has been born from the values, dreams and visions of the individuals we are supporting, their families/carers and the community as a whole. Host Accommodation and Independent Living Guides options enable individuals to take time out from their usual family routines and develop their own routines in a friendly and supportive atmosphere and have something to boast and talk about with their families and friends when they return home. Of equal importance, the person's families/carers get a guilt-free break, comfortable in the knowledge their family member is having a great time in a safe and caring environment.

The individual with a disability is supported in the home of the Host Guides home. This can be for a number of hours, overnight, weekends or for a more extended period of time e.g. two weeks. It can be as a one-off situation or a regular commitment. The individual with a disability is included in the daily life and routines of the Host Family.

This unique experience can bring an abundance of joy to the lives of the Host Family, the guest and their family. The gift of looking at the world through another's eyes can create many treasured memories and a deeper appreciation for the things that we often take for granted. The feeling of sharing your home and life with another, while assisting that person is priceless. Strong bonds can form between the Host Family and their guest and an extended family relationship often flourishes.

The Host accommodation lifestyle works at encouraging our community to be more inclusive of people with disabilities.

There are two approaches to Hosting:



Firstly, there are people who take on this role for reasons other than remuneration/employment and who wish to become involved in people's lives but in an unpaid capacity. Better Together is very keen to pursue possibilities in this respect.

Secondly, Hosting can be a formal, contracted role, within the resources of available funding.

Detailed Procedure

A Better Together key staff person will:

- provide and explain the Better Together Service User Manual and a An Independent Living Guide (ILG) with the individual with a disability and their family and/or carer;
- identify an appropriate Better Together Host based on the individuals support needs and arrange a meeting with the individual at the Host home;
- obtain information essential to providing good service and to ensure the individual's host stays are enjoyable and safe (see Policy 4.0 Privacy, Dignity and Confidentiality);
- commence an individual file;
- advise the individual of their right to make the final decision on the selection of a host;
- develop an Individual Support Plan and Safety Management plans (see Policy 2.0 Individual Needs and Policy 3.0 Decision-Making and Choice);
- provide a support plan confirming the service to be offered by Better Together;
- arrange a time and date for a host stay or a visit and/or an initial short stay;
- enter individual's details on electronic Better Together Service User Database;
- update file information annually or earlier as required;
- review Individual Support Plan and associated risk management plans annually or earlier as required (see Policy 11.0 Risk and Safety Management).

1.0 (H) Brokering to a Service Provider

Rationale

To enable Better Together to provide flexible support to meet an identified need this organisation may broker additional services.

Detailed Procedure

A Better Together key staff person will:

- assess the needs of the individual with a disability;
- obtain information essential to good service and commence an Individual File if required (see Policy 4.0 Privacy, Dignity and Confidentiality);
- investigate together with the individual and their family/carer, options to provide the required service. Better Together preferred service providers, must offer value for money, provide easy geographical access and operate within a recognised quality



- assurance system including Occupational Health and Safety requirements and insurance cover;
- negotiate the cost, time and the expected outcome for the individual, their family and/or carer;
- prepare a Brokerage Agreement to be signed by both parties with copies sent to the service provider;
- enter details on electronic Brokerage Database and file the Brokerage Agreement in the Individual File;
- develop an Individual Support Plan (see Policy 2.0 Individual Needs and Policy 3.0 Decision-Making and Choice);
- Review Individual Support Plan annually or earlier as required.

1.0 (I) Engaging an Advocate to Speak on behalf of a Service User

Rationale

Better Together will arrange a comprehensive planning session which will include the individual with a disability, and if wanted by the person or necessary, others of the persons choosing. Better Together encourages individuals to use an independent advocate of their choice to represent their interests and assist with negotiations about the level, type and quality of service they need.

Detailed Procedure

A Better Together key staff person will:

- discuss with each person the benefits of using an advocate of their choice;
- support the involvement of an advocate whenever this is the wish of the individual with a disability
- develop links with advocacy groups in the region and inform people of the availability of such assistance.

If a Better Together key staff person identifies that, in a particular situation, a person could benefit from the presence of an advocate, the staff person will:

- ensure all information on advocacy services was provided, in accordance with [1.0\(M\) Providing Service User Information](#));
- remind them of their right to engage an advocate to represent their interests and help them with complaints, disputes or any aspect of service delivery ([see Policy 7.0 Complaints and Disputes](#));
- ensure that a nominated advocate feels welcome.



1.0 (J) Service User Exits

Rationale

People supported by Better Together deserve to be treated with care, dignity and respect when approaching or leaving Better Together. They should be the better for the experience, whether Better Together can meet their needs or not.

Detailed Procedure

Written Notice

Better Together requests 4 weeks' notice in writing if a service user wishes to exit the service.

Better Together ceases to provide a service

If Better Together ceases to provide a service to a person, a key staff person will:

- ensure the person is provided with reasons;
- assure them there will be no retribution if they reapply at another time;
- identify other relevant services if available;
- provide information on any other service options within Better Together which are currently available.

Transferring to another service

If a service user is transferring to another service, a key staff person will:

- assist the person to make the transfer as smooth as possible;
- provide them with any relevant information from their individual file;
- provide details on the service currently provided;
- provide information and contact details on the service they are proposing to use

Releasing information

Only relevant information which is considered important for the well-being of the service user will be communicated to the new service if *Permission to Release Information Form (BTSU025)* has been completed by the service user at their exit meeting.

Individual funding

Better Together will sub contract to another service at an hourly rate set by the Department of Communities until such time as the Service Agreement can be transferred to the new service provider by the Department of Communities.

Block funding

If a person is supported by the block funding and they chose to leave the service, the funding will stay with Better Together and be redirected according to the service agreement with Department of Communities.

Exit Meeting

Before the last support, a key staff person will carry out an exit meeting where the service user will be asked to complete a *Service User Survey (BTCIO22)*, an *Exit Form (BTSU021)* and *Permission to Release Information Form (BTSU025)* if relevant.



1.0 (K) Refusal of Service

Rationale

Better Together's eligibility criteria are consistently applied to anyone wishing to access our services. These criteria are designed to be inclusive of the widest possible group of people who may need to access our services, are non-discriminatory in their application and reflect service guidelines. Certain people are ineligible for a service if they do not meet eligibility criteria or they are excluded from Better Together services. Potential service users who are deemed to be ineligible for a service can appeal this decision.

Better Together reserves the right to temporarily refuse a service due to:

- contagious disease;
- circumstances beyond the organisation's control;
- the likelihood an individual with a disability, their family and/or carer will endanger themselves or others.

Detailed Procedure

A Better Together key staff person will:

- through mutual agreement with the individual, their family and/or carer, be supportive to all parties concerned, to cease service;
- refer the individual, their family and/or carer to Disability Services or an appropriate alternative service;
- Document the refusal for statistic reference (i.e. NMDS reporting) and include the individual, their family and/or carer on Better Together's Referral Register for future capacity to support.

1.0 (L) Providing Service User Information

Rationale

The service manager will approve and review all brochures and other public material about Better Together. A key staff person will ensure organisational brochures are well displayed and available at the Better Together office. Brochures will be provided to community organisations and at times will be displayed at other public venues. Interesting information and ideas that might encourage and inspire people will be distributed in a cost effective manner e.g. newsletters, website, office posters, social media, included in regular mail outs, phone calls, emails and/or informal gatherings.

Detailed Procedure



Better Together will produce and display the following information in a range of formats suitable for our service user target group:

- Better Together Information Brochure
 - distributed throughout community;
 - displayed in Better Together reception and/or office areas;
- Better Together Website (www.bettertogether.net.au)
- Service User Handbook
 - displayed in reception and/or office areas;
 - provided to each person receiving a service;
- Better Together Policies and Procedures
 - displayed in reception and/or office areas; and
 - on Better Together website;
- Better Together Business Plan
 - displayed in reception and/or office areas;
- twice yearly Better Together Newsletter
 - mailed out to all participants, partners and allies of Better Together;
 - displayed in reception and/or office areas;
- Posters, photographs and artwork.

1.0 (M) *Compiling Individual Files*

Rationale

Better Together will only collect personal information necessary for its work. Better Together will not use or disclose personal information about an individual or family and/or carer without their consent (see Policy 4.0 Privacy, Dignity and Confidentiality) and Policy 10.0(H) Staff Training and Development).

Detailed Procedure

A Better Together key staff person will ensure the following information is recorded in the Individual File and reviewed annually or earlier as required:

- Comprehensive Profile including:
 - current contact and address details
 - medical/important health information
 - support requirements
 - individual characteristics/likes/dislikes
 - consent to share information
 - permission to call ambulance and arrange medical intervention
 - nominated advocate
- Medical Authority completed by medical practitioner (if applicable)
- Individual Support Plan/Individual Risk Management Plan/other plans as applicable
- correspondence
- accompanying information regarding brokerage/funding agreements (if applicable).



All service users have a master file at the Better Together office. All files will be reviewed annually or earlier as required. All service users are asked to participate if possible in the review of their file and removal of information no longer needed.

1.0 (N) *Reviewing this Policy*

Rationale

Better Together will engage in a regular process of external evaluation, review and planning of its services and include people with a disability and their advocates in all stages of the process. Better Together is committed to continual improvement of its services to individuals with a disability and/or mental health issue.

Detailed Procedure

Better Together senior staff, in consultation with all stakeholders i.e. other staff, service users and members of management board will:

- review this policy on a minimum two (2) 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 shall be reviewed immediately and amended accordingly;
- conduct the review by asking the following key questions:
 - is the policy being implemented?
 - are procedures being followed?
 - is the policy clear?
 - what has changed that may prompt a change to the policy?
 - have particular stakeholders had difficulty with any aspect of the policy?
 - can their concerns be resolved?
 - how does the policy compare with that of similar organisations?

When changes have been deemed necessary, the service manager will:

- present the updated policy, together with a completed Request for Change Form, to the management board for ratification, a record of which will be recorded in the minutes of the relevant meeting; then ensure
 - the relevant change is recorded on the Continuous Improvement Register;
 - the name of this policy, the date it was originally created, the date it was reviewed and the date it is due to be reviewed is recorded in the Better Together Document Register;
 - the updated policy in the format approved by the management board is published and made available to families/carers and staff;
 - the Policies and Procedures are updated on the Better Together website.



Related Better Together Policies and Procedures

Policy 2.0 Individual Need

Policy 3.0 Decision-Making and Choice

Policy 4.0 Privacy, Dignity and Confidentiality

Policy 7.0 Complaints and Disputes

Policy 8.01 Service Management: Finance

Policy 9.00 Protection of Legal and Human Rights and Freedom from Abuse and Neglect

Policy 10.0 Staff, Recruitment, Employment and Development

Policy 11.0 Risk and Safety Management