

POLICY

9.0 - PROTECTION FROM ABUSE, NEGLECT, EXPLOITATION AND DISCRIMINATION

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure Better Together affirms the right of people with disabilities to live their lives free from abuse, neglect, exploitation and discrimination. It will also guide the appropriate conduct and reporting to ensure wellbeing of service users. This policy will also specify processes for the management of challenging behaviors exhibited by service users.

This policy has been framed around meeting an individual's needs while upholding their legal and human rights as specified in the Disability Services Act (2006) and the National Disability Insurance Scheme Practice Standards (1).

Applicability

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, advocates, management committee members, other service users and Contractors/Suppliers who may act on behalf of the organisation from time to time.

Policy Statement

Better Together wants all those who participate in our programs and services to have a safe, enjoyable, and fulfilling experience.

Better Together has a duty of care to ensure that the rights of service users are respected, receive the proper standard of care and their well-being is safeguarded. Services are also free from any form of abuse, neglect, exploitation, and discrimination. We expect that everyone who is associated with our organisation, and is involved in providing support, will share our commitment to the organisation:

- recognises the safety, wellbeing and best interests of the service user are paramount.
- provides an environment that is free from abuse, neglect, exploitation, and discrimination.
- upholds the value and dignity of people with a disability.
- maintains a rigorous and consistent recruitment, selection and worker screening process and provides training and information sessions to ensure employees respect the rights of service users.

- understand this policy and are aware of current legislation about abuse and neglect.
- empowers service users by helping them to understand their rights
- makes everyone feel safe and supported to raise concerns.
- will respond quickly, considerately, and effectively where harm or abuse has occurred, to protect the client from any further harm.
- fosters collaboration with other organisations in upholding service users' rights and preventing abuse, neglect, exploitation, and discrimination.

Preamble

Better Together's procedures are to be implemented to ensure the legal and human rights of each individual with a disability will be upheld and action will be taken to prevent and/or respond to allegations of abuse, neglect, exploitation and discrimination. Identified categories can include:

- physical, sexual, verbal, psychological, material, financial abuse.
- deprivation of human rights such as privacy and freedom of worship.
- physical, medical, emotional, nutritional, passive and active neglect.
- physical, financial, sexual, labor, fraud and verbal exploitation.
- domestic servitude; and
- discrimination that provides any negative interaction based on an individual and their personal self and situation.

In reporting a concern/allegation, staff will ensure that the service user's right to dignity, confidentiality and privacy is maintained (see Policy 4.0 Privacy, Dignity and Confidentiality). Duty of care, however, carries greater weight than the duty to maintain confidentiality in matters of care and protection. This means that the matter may be discussed between those reporting or investigating, but not with any other person. This includes confidentiality of service user and alleged perpetrator information.

Better Together is committed to ensuring that challenging behaviors exhibited by service users whilst under our care or supervision are dealt with promptly and appropriately, having due regard for the rights of the individual, the rights of any other person(s) affected by the behaviour and the organization's duty of care (see also Policy 3.0- Avoiding or Minimising Risks Associated with a Service User's Decision).