Service Access and Continuity of Support Policy and Procedure

(Simple English)

Purpose

This policy makes sure participants get safe, consistent, and reliable support at all times.

It explains what happens when staff are absent, on leave, or when unexpected events occur.

It also provides clear guidance on backfill, urgent actions, and continuity of care, following Care and Support Plans and NDIS Practice Standards.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- All staff involved in providing, coordinating, or managing participant support services, including administrative and management staff.

Definitions

- **Backfill** – Another staff member covering duties when a staff member is absent.

- **Care and Support Plan** – A written plan describing a participant's goals, needs, and supports.

- **Participant Compliance Register** – A record of backfill arrangements and compliance information.

- **Continuity of Support** – Making sure participants continue to get safe and reliable support even when staff are absent.

- **Delegation** – Assigning tasks from one staff member to another to keep services running.

- **Urgent Actions** – Tasks that must be done quickly to keep participants safe or services running.

- **Accessibility** – Ensuring participants can access services without barriers, including physical, communication, cultural, or financial barriers.

- **Inclusion** – Making sure all participants have fair access to services, regardless of abilities or background.

Principles

- Participants have the right to uninterrupted, person-centred support.

- Staff absences should be planned and communicated when possible.

- Backfill and delegation processes should be clear and documented.

- Action points and care instructions should be available for staff covering absences.

- Participants should be informed quickly about staff changes.

- Backfill arrangements should be recorded in the Participant Compliance Register.

- Procedures must follow NDIS Practice Standards and organisational policies.

Procedures

1. Staff Absences

- Staff must tell management as early as possible.

- Management schedules leave to maintain service coverage.

- Urgent actions are delegated according to backfill arrangements.

2. Assessment of Impact

- Identify participants affected by the absence.

- Review Care and Support Plans and Action Plans to see what needs coverage.

3. Backfill and Delegation

- Each staff member's role must have documented backfill arrangements.

- Backfill arrangements are recorded in the Participant Compliance Register.

- Backfill staff must check participant plans before providing support.

- Alternative staff must be agreed to by participants and documented.

- Delegated tasks and urgent actions are recorded in Splose or OneDrive.

4. Participant Communication

- Participants are informed about staff absences and alternative arrangements.

- Participant consent or acknowledgement of alternative staff is recorded.

- All communications are recorded in case notes.

5. Documentation and Case Notes

- Action points are kept up to date for each participant.

- Backfill staff update case notes for tasks, delegated actions, and follow-ups.

- Documentation supports audits, monitoring, and quality improvement.

6. Monitoring and Review

- Management monitors the effectiveness of backfill and continuity processes.

- Feedback from staff and participants is used to improve procedures.

- Continuity arrangements are reviewed when:

  - A new NDIS plan is received

  - Participant needs, health, or circumstances change

  - Feedback indicates a review is required

Responsibilities

- **Staff** – Notify management of absences, update action points, assist with task handover.

- **Management** – Coordinate leave schedules, implement backfill, inform participants, monitor continuity, record backfill arrangements.

- **Backfill Staff** – Review participant plans, complete delegated tasks, update case notes, report issues.

Accessibility and Inclusion

- All participants can access services fairly and safely.

- Information is provided in clear, accessible formats, including Easy Read documents.

- Meetings are held in accessible locations, including homes or community venues.

- Office and meeting spaces are made accessible whenever possible.

- Participants are consulted about accessibility needs and reasonable adjustments are made.

- Feedback from participants, families, and staff is welcomed.

- We follow the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and NDIS Practice Standards.

Related Legislation

- NDIS Act 2013

- NDIS Practice Standards

- Disability Discrimination Act 1992

- Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (SA)

Other Relevant Documents

- Care and Support Plans

- Action Plans

- Bright HR (leave management system)

- OneDrive and Splose (documentation systems)

- Participant Compliance Register

- Staff Absence and Leave Guidelines

- Organisational Policies

Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years or sooner if:

- NDIS Practice Standards or legislation change

- Feedback shows improvements are needed

- Organisational processes, systems, or practices change