

## Client Advocacy Policy

Policy area	Advocacy
Document type	Policy
Applicable to	Compass Care Group Pty Ltd
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Related policies	Support Planning Policy Service Access and Exit Policy Service Delivery Policy Safeguarding Against Violence, Abuse, Neglect, Exploitation and Discrimination Policy Transition of Care Between Different Environments Policy Client Living Alone and Receiving Personal Care Support from a Sole Worker Policy Client Health and Wellbeing Policy Duty of Care Policy Client Feedback and Complaints Management Policy Client Money and Property Policy Manual Handling Policy Diversity Policy Consent Policy Conflict of Interest Policy Incident Management Policy Privacy Policy
Authority	NDIS Act 2013 NDIS Practice Standards and Quality Indicators NDIS Code of Conduct UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Aged Care Act 1997 Aged Care Quality and Safety Standards Aged Care Code of Conduct Privacy Act 1988

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to explain our organisation’s commitment and approach to client advocacy.

### SCOPE

This policy applies to all our workers (employees, contractors and volunteers).

### DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Advocacy	Services provided by a nominated individual, family or professional entity, to actively support a person by speaking on their behalf and representing their best interests (even if

	<p>that interest does not reflect the advocate's own beliefs, opinions, conclusions, or recommendations).</p> <p><b>Note:</b> the advocate does not make decisions on the person's behalf, they are speaking on their behalf. For example, if the person does not have the confidence to speak up and further their own cause themselves.</p>
<p><b>Advocate</b></p>	<p>Based on the definition of advocacy above, an advocate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● aims to protect the interests and welfare of the person for whom they are advocating;</li> <li>● is not a substitute/alternative decision-maker and does not have the capacity to make decisions on behalf of the individual for whom they are advocating;</li> <li>● operates from the perspective of the person for whom they are advocating when negotiating an outcome; and</li> <li>● respects the privacy and confidentiality of the person for whom they are advocating.</li> </ul> <p>An advocate may be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● an informal advocate (e.g. family member or friend);</li> <li>● a formal, independent advocate (e.g. Aged and Disability Advocacy Australia, Australia (ADA Australia), Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN), National Disability Advocacy Program); or</li> <li>● a legal advocate (e.g. lawyer).</li> </ul>

## CONTEXT

Our organisation recognises the rights of clients to access and engage with an advocate of choice to speak on their behalf. We value the important contribution of the advocacy role in upholding human rights and ensuring each individual has a voice.

## POLICY STATEMENT

### 1. Expectations and Limitations of Advocacy

- We acknowledge the expectations and limitations of the advocacy role and will implement processes to manage risk (training workers, implementing Conflict of Interest Policy).

### 2. Access to an Advocate

- We will encourage and support a client's right to access an advocate of their choice and assist them to engage an advocate, if they request one, or if we consider it is in their best interests to have someone speak on their behalf.

### **3. Engaging with an Advocate**

- We will communicate effectively and work cooperatively with an advocate at the direction of, and to the extent requested by the client or their family/alternate decision-maker.
- We will ensure the client is aware of their right to change their nominated advocate at any time and support them to do this if requested.

### **4. Acting on Concerns and Resolving Issues**

- We will act promptly and resolve issues or concerns that an advocacy arrangement is not in a client's best interests. For example, where there is a conflict of interest or where the advocate does not consider, or adequately consider the client's rights and wishes.

### **5. Information and Record-keeping**

- We will ensure information and records are accurate and up to date - including the contact details of a client's nominated advocate.
- We will ensure the client has provided us with all required written consents.
- We will store the information securely to ensure privacy, dignity and confidentiality and make sure it is accessible to the client and only other stakeholders authorised to access it.

### **6. Worker Training and Supervision**

- We will maintain a skilled and trained workforce which is aware of clients' right to freedom of expression, self-determination and decision-making by using an advocate.
- We will maintain processes to adequately monitor and supervise workers.

## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

Related procedures and forms include:

- Authority to Act as an Advocate Form
- Easy Read – Authority to Act as an Advocate
- Easy Read - Advocacy
- Third-Party Information Release Consent Form
- Conflict of Interest Register
- Conflict of Interest Declaration Form
- Client Advocacy Procedure

- Diversity Procedure
- Client Feedback and Complaints Management Procedure
- Support Planning Procedure
- Service Access and Exit Procedure
- Service Delivery Procedure
- Safeguarding Against Violence, Abuse, Neglect, Exploitation and Discrimination Procedure
- Manual Handling Procedure
- Transition of Care Between Different Environments Procedure
- Client Living Alone and Receiving Personal Care Support from a Sole Worker Procedure
- Client Money and Property Procedure
- Incident Management Procedure
- Reportable Incident Management Procedure

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

Community Services Manager is responsible for:

- maintaining this policy, its related procedures and associated documents;
- ensuring the policy is effectively implemented across the service;
- monitoring workers compliance with the requirements of this policy; and
- ensuring training and information is provided to workers to carry out this policy.

All workers are responsible for complying with the requirements of this policy.

## **COMPLIANCE**

Deliberate breaches of this policy will be dealt with under our misconduct provisions, as stated in the Code of Conduct Agreement.