

CLIENT SUPPORT POLICY

Northern Occupational Support Service Inc (NOSS) support staff assist clients to access the community through pursuing their chosen social, leisure, pre-vocational and vocational activities. The level of support offered to clients is based on their individual strengths and needs with staff/client ratios of 1:1 or 1:2.

Employees should ensure that they are at all times positive role models in term of dress, language and behaviour.

MATCHING STAFF AND CLIENTS (Community Access)

To ensure positive outcomes for both clients and staff, great care is taken in matching support workers with clients. When selecting staff to support a new client and/or fill a vacancy, the following criteria are to be carefully considered:

- Common interests
- Personalities
- Communication skills
- Behaviour management skills
- Relevant medical condition

It may, at times, be more beneficial for both clients and support workers to have different support workers working with a particular client on different days of the week.

If an existing employee fits the criteria for supporting a particular client, that support may be offered to that employee. If no existing employee is suitable, the position must be advertised in accordance with the Human Resource Policy.

If, as a result of staff or client needs, changes are necessary, staff will be notified prior to implementation of those changes with as much notice as possible. At the end of each year, the staff/client roster will be reviewed and staff asked for their input. Although staff input will be considered, client needs will be given priority when determining staff/client matches.

All new members of staff will undertake an Orientation process prior to commencement of work.

CLIENT INFORMATION

In order to safely and effectively meet clients' individual needs, NOSS will coordinate client records in accordance with the following procedures.

1. NOSS will ensure that comprehensive client information is received during the referral process.
2. All client files will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in accordance with the NOSS Privacy Policy.
3. All essential information for support workers will be held in a separate file, including:

- Referral Form;
 - Personal Plan;
 - Current medication details (including details of allergies etc);
 - Any behaviour management, communication, meal time management plans etc;
4. The Community Access Manager will ensure that all staff supporting a client (including relief staff) read and sign off all essential information before supporting that client. It is the responsibility of staff to ensure that they review client files regularly.
 5. New staff supporting clients will be “buddied up” with an existing support worker. This will provide an opportunity to gather practical hands-on information.
 6. Client files will be reviewed annually to ensure that information is updated and all non-essential information is destroyed.

MEDICATION

NOSS has a number of clients who need to take medication during community access hours. Residential staff or parents/carers are responsible for providing the correct client medication to NOSS staff each morning.

Medication will be administered in accordance with the Disability Services’ Guidelines for the Administration of Medication for People with Disabilities Receiving Community Based Disability Services January, 2009 (copy attached).

All NOSS support staff will undertake training in the administration of medication (including First Aid) and will not administer medication until such training has been completed.

The Community Access Manager will ensure that medication details are obtained on admission to the service and updated regularly. The client’s residential service or parent/carer is responsible for informing NOSS of any change to medication.

The name and contact details of the ‘person responsible’ will be nominated on the Referral Form. If there is a dispute as to who should be the ‘person responsible’, NOSS will require a guardianship certificate or Statutory Declaration declaring that they are the person responsible.

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

NOSS adopts the Aversive, Restrictive & Intrusive Practices in Services for People with a Disability, February 2007 (copy attached). The following is a brief summary only and employees must familiarize themselves with the attached policy.

In accordance with the principles and standards of the Tasmanian Disability Services Act 1992, people with a disability have the right to receive services in a manner which results in the least reasonable restriction of their rights and opportunities. Programs and Services are to be designed and administered so as to be as free as possible from aversive, restrictive and intrusive treatment practices.

NOSS acknowledges that there may be occasions when some form of restrictive practice may need to be employed to manage some instances of challenging behaviour. Such practices should only be used as part of a challenging behaviour intervention plan (approved by the Disability Services

Ethics Committee) except in emergency situations where duty of care provisions apply. The 'least reasonable restriction' should always be used.

Emergency situations are occasions where challenging behaviour occurs for the first time or so infrequently that it is unpredictable. The challenging behaviour must be of such intensity and duration that it is highly likely that it will cause injury to the client, support worker or others without the use of restraint or seclusion.

The 'least reasonable restriction' is an intervention that:

- is not more restrictive or intrusive than is necessary to prohibit the person from inflicting harm on themselves or others
- is applied no longer than necessary to prevent or contain the danger

Physical restraint (the use of manual means to prevent, restrict or subdue the movement of any part of a persons body without their consent) may be necessary in an emergency situation.

DECISION MAKING AND CHOICE

Employees will empower clients to make decisions and explain the consequences of such decisions. The NOSS Client Consent Policy explains the concept of consent and the range of options open to employees in relation to assisted decision making.

PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS AND SEXUALITY

NOSS adopts the Disability Services' Personal Relationships and Sexuality Policy, July, 2007.

REPORTING OF ACCIDENTS AND INCIDENTS

Employees must report any accident, major incident or incidence of restraint to Management as soon as possible, by phone or in person in accordance with the NOSS Reporting Policy. Such incidents may include injury to any person, seizures or challenging behaviours.

Employees must provide a written report of the Accident/Incident, using an Incident Form, within **24 hours** of its occurrence.

PRIVACY

Employees will treat information about clients, both written and verbal, as confidential. Issues regarding a client should only be discussed with relevant stakeholders such as other NOSS support staff who work with that client, their residential workers and the persons nominated on their Consent form. It is a condition of employment that employees protect confidential information in accordance with the NOSS Privacy Policy.

OTHER

NOSS recognises that work related stress can be detrimental to ones health. Should any employee feel that they are becoming stressed at work, this should be immediately reported to Management so it may be addressed. Management are available at all times if any assistance is needed during the day. In addition, the Community Access Manager will visit support workers in the community from time to time.

It is the responsibility of the residential service or parent/carer to support clients when they are unwell. Support staff should make an early assessment of a client to ensure that they are well enough to access the community. If not, they should contact the NOSS office for further advice.

RELATED POLICIES

This Policy should be read in conjunction with

- Client Consent Policy
- Decision Making Policy
- Missing Clients Policy
- Individual Needs Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Reporting Policy
- Entry Policy
- Occupational Health and Safety Policy