CLIENT RIGHTS

Allowah is committed to fostering an organisational culture that supports, respects, protects and promotes the legal and human rights of clients and their parents or carers. Allowah ensures clients and their parents or carers are able to exercise those rights as outlined in relevant legislation.

Allowah upholds the principles of fairness, dignity and human rights in all aspects of service delivery. Supports are delivered in a manner that enables clients to exercise choice, control and participation in decision-making, in accordance with their capacity.

Allowah ensures that services are provided in an environment that is safe and free from discrimination, violence, abuse (including financial, sexual, physical and emotional abuse), neglect and exploitation.

Allowah recognises that clients have the right to have their legal and human rights upheld when accessing supports.

Where a client is a child or unable to exercise their rights independently, these rights apply to their parent, carer or legally authorised representative, while still supporting the client's participation to the maximum extent possible.

Clients are provided with information about their rights at the Initial Assessment and these are also accessible on the Allowah website.

Information

Clients have the right to receive information in a format that is accessible, understandable and supports them to exercise their legal and human rights.

Allowah ensures information is provided in a timely, clear and accessible manner, using communication methods appropriate to individual needs, including alternative formats and communication supports where required.

Information about client rights is provided through the Clients Rights document and incorporated into key service information, including the Service Charter, Incidents brochure, Complaints brochure and the Allowah website.

Where required, information is adapted to meet cultural and linguistic needs, and interpreters or translated materials are made available to support understanding and participation.

Person Centred Supports

Clients have the right to receive supports that are person-centred, responsive and tailored to their individual needs, preferences and goals.

Allowah delivers person-centred supports using a child and family-centred approach to ensure the needs, preferences and goals of the client and parent or carer are reflected in decision-making, planning and all areas of service delivery.

Clients are supported to actively participate in planning and review processes, with information provided in clear, easy-to-understand formats to enable informed decision-making.

Where possible, translated information is available (including Arabic and Chinese), and interpreters can be arranged on request to support communication with clients, parents and carers.

Choice, Decision Making and Inclusion

Clients have the right to make decisions about their supports and to be actively involved in planning, delivery and review processes.

Allowah supports choice, decision-making and inclusion through organisational policies (e.g. Advocacy Policy, Community Access and Participation Policy) and through service delivery processes such as Initial Assessment, care planning and regular review.

Clients will receive supports that maximise opportunities for choice, social participation, cultural inclusion and connection with their chosen community.

Allowah will:

- support clients to participate in decision-making to the maximum extent possible, in accordance with their capacity;
- use familiar AAC options to assist with choice-making;
- support informed decision-making, including understanding risks and benefits (dignity of risk);
- facilitate supported decision-making, including involvement of family, carers or representatives where appropriate and consented;
- ensure access to independent advocacy services;
- provide information about available supports and community services to support goal achievement and participation;

- support clients to identify and access opportunities for meaningful community participation;
- support clients to set, review and adjust goals and plans over time; and
- recognise and respect the views of parents and carers, while ensuring the client remains central to decision-making wherever possible.

Where a client is unable to make decisions independently, decision-making will occur in accordance with consent and guardianship requirements. Clients will continue to be involved in decision-making to the maximum extent possible, and support will be provided to enable participation prior to substitute decision-making.

Clients have the right to:

- be at the centre of decision-making and, where possible, have responsibility for decisions that affect them;
- receive support for supported decision-making and, where required, have substitute decision-making occur in accordance with legislation and their preferences and best interests;
- give informed consent to supports, including medical treatments, in accordance with relevant legislation and organisational policies;
- access advocacy services and receive support to engage an advocate;
- determine the involvement of family, carers and representatives in planning and decision-making processes;
- have their preferences, values and choices respected in all areas of daily life and support;
- receive information about available supports and community services to support goal achievement and participation;
- be supported to connect with their chosen community and participate in meaningful social and cultural activities;
- be involved in the development and review of policies and processes that affect them;
- receive supports that recognise and support dignity of risk; and
- receive supports that are flexible, responsive and tailored to their individual needs and goals.

Individual Values and Beliefs

Clients have the right to receive supports that respect their culture, values, identity and beliefs.

Allowah delivers culturally responsive supports that recognise and respect each client's background, preferences and family context. This includes gathering information about the child and family during intake and assessment to ensure culture, values and beliefs are reflected in planning and service delivery.

Information and supports are adapted to meet individual cultural, linguistic and religious needs, and families are supported to communicate preferences that are important to them.

Allowah is committed to providing an inclusive environment that treats all people with dignity and respect, regardless of gender, age, socio-economic status, culture, language, beliefs, disability, family structure or lifestyle.

General Rights

Clients have the right to receive supports in an environment that is safe, inclusive and free from discrimination, abuse, neglect and exploitation.

Allowah upholds these rights through organisational policies and practices, including (but not limited to) the Recruitment and Selection Policy, Child Protection Policy, Code of Conduct, Coaching & Review Policy and the Child and Family Centred Care Framework.

Clients will:

- receive supports in an environment that promotes safety, inclusion and respect;
- be supported to develop self-protective strategies appropriate to their age, development and capacity;
- be recognised to have the same rights and freedoms as all other people; and
- engage with staff who model respectful, professional and inclusive behaviour when delivering supports.

Privacy and Dignity

Clients have the right to access supports that respect their dignity and privacy.

Allowah maintains privacy and dignity through organisational policies and procedures, including the Privacy Policy and relevant clinical procedures and guidelines.

Clients and parents or carers are informed about privacy, confidentiality and the management of personal information at intake and throughout service delivery. Consent for the collection and use of information is obtained in accordance with organisational requirements.

Independence and Informed Choice

Clients have the right to make informed choices, exercise control and maximise their independence in relation to the supports they access.

Allowah supports clients to exercise choice and control by providing timely information in clear, accessible formats and using communication methods appropriate to individual needs.

Allowah:

- recognises and supports dignity of risk, enabling clients to make decisions that involve reasonable risk;
- provides information about the benefits, risks and alternatives of available options to support informed decision-making;
- respects client autonomy, privacy and personal expression, including rights to relationships, identity and lifestyle;
- supports clients and parents or carers to take time to consider options, seek advice and make informed decisions at all stages of service delivery;
- facilitates supported decision-making, including involvement of parents, carers or nominees where appropriate and consented;
- supports access to independent advocacy services and works collaboratively with advocates; and
- ensure decisions are made free from coercion, pressure or undue influence.

Violence, Abuse, Neglect, Exploitation and Discrimination

Clients have the right to receive supports in an environment free from violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation or discrimination.

Allowah maintains a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation and discrimination. Policies and procedures are in place to prevent, identify and respond to such incidents.

Where an allegation or incident of violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation or discrimination occurs, Allowah will:

- take immediate action to ensure the safety and wellbeing of clients;
- support clients and parents or carers to understand their rights;
- provide information about available complaints and reporting processes, including external reporting pathways; and
- inform clients and parents or carers of their right to access an advocate and support them to engage one if they choose.

All allegations and incidents are managed in accordance with Allowah's Incident Management Procedures and in line with the NDIS (Incident Management and Reportable Incidents) Rules 2018.

Allowah will ensure that incidents are reviewed and followed up appropriately, with actions taken to reduce the risk of recurrence and support continuous improvement.

Feedback and Complaints

Allowah recognises that feedback and complaints are an important part of safeguarding client rights and improving service quality.

Allowah maintains a comprehensive Complaints Management Framework, supported by the Complaints Management Policy and a Client Feedback Policy. These outline the processes for receiving, managing and responding to feedback and complaints in a manner that is accessible, respectful and responsive.

The complaints management system is aligned with the NDIS (Complaints Management and Resolution) Rules 2018.

Information about feedback and complaints processes is provided to clients and parents or carers in a variety of formats, including written materials (e.g. brochures), verbal communication and the Allowah website. Staff receive training to ensure they understand their responsibilities in supporting clients to raise concerns and complaints.

Clients have the right to:

- access appropriate feedback, complaint and reporting processes, including external authorities, for allegations of violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation or discrimination;
- raise concerns and complaints without fear of reprisal or adverse consequences;
- receive appropriate support when making a complaint, including access to advocacy services;
- have complaints managed in a fair, timely and transparent manner;
- have their privacy and confidentiality protected throughout the complaint process; and
- be informed of their right to escalate complaints to external bodies.

Allowah will:

- provide clients and parents or carers with clear and accessible information about feedback and complaints processes;
- support clients to participate in the complaint process in accordance with their capacity;
- provide a safe environment for raising concerns and complaints;
- keep clients and parents or carers informed throughout the complaint process;
- support resolution of complaints in a timely and respectful manner; and
- ensure access to meaningful information about complaints policies and procedures.

CONTACT DETAILS

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