

Interchange Policy & Procedure Manual

Policy 2.1 Access to Service

DATE OF BOARD ENDORSEMENT	JANUARY 2008
LAST REVIEW DATE	APRIL 2015
NEXT REVIEW DATE	AUGUST 2016
CURRENT VERSION	V1.2

Reference Documents

- National Standards for Disability Services (Standard 5)
- Interchange 'New Customer Interview Form'
- Interchange 'Customer Registration Form'

Policy Statement

Interchanges services are open to all people with a disability, regardless of race, sex, religion, sexuality, marital status, or political belief. We give priority to people who live within a 10 minute radius of an Interchange Service Centre.

We recognise that the effectiveness of any access and equity policy depends upon the organisational and individual decision making processes and the "hands on" practices of workers and volunteers. We aim to create a positive and non-prejudicial environment and atmosphere in all our contacts and activities.

Access to Interchange's services is based on a formal assessment to determine the extent to which the potential customer's needs can be addressed by the services Interchange is funded to provide, and their need for services relative to others. This assessment will be conducted by the Chief Executive Officer or his senior delegate.

We recognise that there are barriers to access to services for some people, including people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, Indigenous people, and people whose behaviours are challenging. Available funding means that Interchange is limited in the extent to which it can provide specialist responses to differing needs, but we are committed to identifying, acknowledging and addressing these issues to the best of our ability with the resources available to us.

If we are unable to offer a service to a potential customer, we offer information and provide referral advice regarding other services that might be able to assist them.

Equity and Access Considerations

Interchange is committed to ensuring fair and equal access to physical environments, information, communication and services. For the communication and implementation of this policy, this may include:

- Considering the suitability of physical environments
- The use of augmentative and alternative communication methods to supplement or replace speech or writing for those with impairments in the production or comprehension of spoken or written language. These methods include the display of

Interchange Policy & Procedure Manual

text, large print, tactile communication, easy English, accessible multimedia and accessible information and communications technology.

Cultural Diversity

Employees are to ensure that services are provided with sensitivity to and an awareness of the cultural beliefs and practices of clients from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. This includes an awareness of the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, their families and communities.

Communication about this policy should be done in a way that suits each individual with regard to their cultural background e.g. if required, the use of an interpreter or easy English documents. Interchange will develop connections with culturally appropriate organisations and groups to influence the meaningful participation of people with disability.

Where relevant, when attempting to strengthen relationships with people from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds, Interchange will firstly utilise the advice and influence of key community members and organisations.

Procedures

1. Potential customers complete Interchange's New Customer Interview Form and Customer Registration Form, and then attend an assessment meeting with the Chief Executive Officer or his senior delegate. The purpose of this interview is to determine:
 - The customer's goals and aspirations, and the extent to which these can be met through the services that Interchange is able to provide.
 - Any special needs that must be taken into account if Interchange is to provide a service, and the extent to which Interchange can meet those needs.
 - The customer's relative need compared to others who want to access an Interchange service.
2. If the customer, and the Chief Executive Officer agree that Interchange will provide a service, this will be confirmed to the customer in writing.
3. Along with the confirming letter, the new customer will be provided with a "New Customer Service Pack" containing information about Interchange, a Parent/Guardian Permission form for transport and emergency medical care, information about customer rights and responsibilities, opportunities for family involvement at Interchange, customer complaints policy, and procedures for management of medication while the customer is in Interchange's care.
4. The Customer Registration Form will be the starting point for the development of an Individual Service Plan for the customer.
5. A review will be conducted six months after commencement of service to ensure that services are being delivered in the manner that the customer expected.
6. If Interchange is unable to provide a service to a potential customer, Interchange will advise the customer of other organisations that might be better placed to provide the service they require.