



Community Engagement and Referral Policy

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

People with disability have the same right as other members of Australian society to realise their full potential. They should be supported to participate in and contribute to social and economic life. Inclusion of, and access for, people with disability to mainstream and community-based activities and other government initiatives. (National Disability Strategy 2010-2020)

To inform the community of Easy iCare Pty Ltd's service provision capacity including the priority of access process and eligibility criteria requirements. We will encourage and manage requests for service from potential participants and referrals to and from other agencies.

This policy is inclusive of all community groups and will include people such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, culturally and linguistically diverse, various ages and stages of development, sexual orientation and disability. This policy will apply to all Easy iCare Pty Ltd services and employees who are managing services for all participants.

Easy iCare Pty Ltd is committed to support our participants to access offerings of their community.

POLICY

Easy iCare Pty Ltd will access links between other service systems (for example, education) which will improve and support the varying needs of people with disability, their families and carers.

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Author/Reviewer	Kerry Bolton (Safety & Compliance Manager)		
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We will:

- Facilitate the provision of fair, equitable and transparent services in consultation with our participants.
- Work with services in the community to ensure our participants are provided with contacts to other services and community networks to facilitate their personal goals, outcomes and aspirations, and be in line with their support plan.
- Actively encourage and support our participants to maintain personal networks, make community connections and participate in their community.
- Use networks and community engagement feedback to inform management processes.

Referral may be received for services through face-to-face contact, email, website information, and / or advertising materials. All information gained from potential participants will be recorded and assessed to ensure privacy and confidentiality is maintained. Participants; whom we are unable to assist will be referred to a relevant organisation.

To ensure that Easy iCare Pty Ltd refers participants to appropriate external services within the community, through timely responsive service integration and referral, and in a manner appropriate to meet individual needs. Easy iCare Pty Ltd will contact organisations and networks within the community and relevant to target group. Staff will be required to contact networks and maintain contact on a regular basis.

Easy iCare Pty Ltd's commitment is to make sure people with disability are connected into their communities by:

- Providing information on mainstream services and community activities which will benefit people with disability, as well as their families and carers.
- Contributing to linkage and networks within the community.
- Providing participation and inclusion of people with disability by working in partnership with community organisations.

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- Supporting carers to build the capacity of carers and families to help sustain their caring role, by linking them into direct carer support services.
- Linking carers and families to social and recreational activities that provide carers with a break from their caring role and connect them with the community.
- Sourcing activities that promote carer's well-being such as personal development, peer support and mentoring.

Easy iCare Pty Ltd is committed to identifying and liaising with other stakeholders including: local community support organisations, job networks, training organisations, housing agencies etc.

PROCEDURE

Easy iCare Pty Ltd will actively engage with the community to ensure appropriate supports for the participant. This may include:

- Actively pursuing contacts that have been chosen by the participant.
- Contacting local communities such as cultural, religious, sexual orientation groups or spiritual groups including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
- Contacting government agencies to support individual participants.
- Seeking community members and groups to receive input into the service including policy or support mechanisms.
- Contacting advocates to assist with the development of community support plans for participants.
- Actively supporting the rights of the participant to seek contact with those in the community; relevant to their wishes, goals and aspirations. Participant will be encouraged to participate with relevant community links as required.
- Following the participant's aspirations and needs to actively participate in the community.

Easy iCare Pty Ltd will make relevant contacts for the participant to assist in initial involvement.

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- Establishing and communicating with community including community leaders and elders.

The outcome for people with disability will maintain their ability to:

- Be connected and have the information they need to make decisions and choices.
- Have the skills and confidence to participate and contribute to the community and protect their rights.
- Use and benefit from the same mainstream services as everyone else.
- Participate in and benefit from the same community activities as everyone else.
- Actively contribute to leading, shaping and influencing their community.

Easy iCare Pty Ltd will work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and culturally diverse groups to actively engage with their communities. Support from community will be incorporated within the support plan. This support will be assessed, monitored and reviewed to ensure that goals and aspirations of participants are met using the relevant support.

Easy iCare Pty Ltd will listen to feedback from community members regarding services to determine if services and processes are meeting participant's need to engage in their community. Data gained will inform management of participant's supports and may lead to adjustment of policies and procedures. This information will be included in

Continuous Improvement Plan and referred to Strategic Plan (Corporate Governance Policy and Procedure).

REFERRAL PRINCIPLES

Easy iCare Pty Ltd's referral principles will ensure that we will:

- Engage with and inform community organisation of how to access services provided.

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- Undertake assessment/re-assessment, and consultation with the participant will identify the need for referral.
- Undertake consultation with the participant and/or representative regarding: Suitable referral agencies and, consent to liaise with agencies on behalf of the participant, and
- Make every effort to follow-up with participant and / or referral agency to facilitate external services.

Networking and engagement

- Manager will liaise with stakeholders including local community support organisations; job networks; training organisations, housing agencies and others as relevant.
- Networking and coordination of other services is promoted through attendance at network meetings, education, conferences and telephonic discussions.
- Easy iCare Pty Ltd maintains a contact database and range of brochures that outline other relevant community services and supports to assist in referrals.
- Easy iCare Pty Ltd maintains a register of clearances where evidence of current checks and registrations are held (as required).

Identifying the need for referral

- The need for referral may be identified at initial participant's consultation or as / when support needs change.
- A referral to another service provider may be required in the following circumstances:
 - Change in eligibility requirements to access funded programs.
 - We do not have the capacity to provide the required services due to lack of appropriately skilled staff or funding to provide the required services.
 - The needs of the participant changed, or
 - The participant requires or requests specific assistance from another service provider.

Referral process for ineligible service contact

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- Ineligible service contacts are provided with contact details of agencies that may be able to meet their stated needs.
- If appropriate, our staff may contact the agency to confirm eligibility and to make an appointment for the person.

Referral process for exiting participants

The referral process generally includes the following steps. The Manager:

- Liaises with the participant and/or their representative and identifies the need for services from another agency.
- Explains the need for a referral to another agency including the reasons for being unable to provide the required or requested services.
- Identifies referral options and discusses these with the participant.
- Continues to provide existing services (as applicable).
- Obtains consent to liaise with other providers on behalf of the participant.
- Contacts other appropriate service providers and discusses the service needs of the participant.
- Checks to see that all disability service checks / working with children checks and registrations required are current and does not refer where credentials are expired.
- Refers the Participant to another provider and completes an Agency Referral form.
- Follows-up with the participant and/or provider referred to, to check on the outcome of the referral.
- Shares any further information to the other provider as required.
- Documents any relevant information in the participant's record.
- Updates new agencies / changes to current agencies within the community resources information held by Easy iCare Pty Ltd.

Monitoring participant referral processes

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Participant referral processes and systems are regularly audited as part of our audit program, and staff, participants and other stakeholders are encouraged to provide ongoing feedback on issues and areas where improvements can be made.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Participant Information Consent Form
- Easy iCare Pty Ltd suite of assessments
- Support Plan
- Agency Referral Form

REFERENCES

- Privacy Act (1988)
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011
- Disability Discrimination Action 1992 (Commonwealth)
- NDIS Practice Standards and Quality Indicators 2018
- Privacy Act (1988)

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