

Policy 18	INDEPENDENCE
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Record of policy development		
Version	Date approved	Date for review
2.3	December 2020	December 2022
2.2	May 2019	February 2021
2.1	February 2018	February 2020

Policy purpose: The independence of service users is supported, fostered and encouraged.	
Policy:	
COASTLINK is committed to empowering clients to play an active role in decisions that affect their lives and to make choices for themselves:	
The organisation will:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inform clients about the opportunities for choice available to them • support clients to make informed choices which will provide them opportunities • keep records of client preferences regarding their service • enable clients to build self-reliance and maintain social inclusion • work with clients to mitigate any potential risk associated with their choices 	
Relevant Standards	
NDIS Practice Standards:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rights and Responsibilities 2. Provider Governance and Operational Management 3. Provision of Supports 4. Support Provision Environment 5. High Intensity Daily Personal Activities 6. Specialist Behaviour Support 7. Implementing Behaviour Support Plans 8. Specialised Support Coordination 9. Specialist Disability Accommodation 	
Aged Care Quality Standards	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consumer dignity and choice 2. Ongoing assessment and planning with consumers 3. Personal care and clinical care 4. Services and supports for daily living 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Organisation's service environment 6. Feedback and complaints 7. Human resources 8. Organisational governance

Related Legislation & References

[Aged Care Act 1997 \(Cth\), Schedule 2 User Rights Principles 2014. Charter of Rights and Responsibilities – Home Care](#)

[Aged Care Quality & Safety Commission](#)

[Better Practice Guide to Complaints Handling in Aged Care Services \(2013\)](#)

[Children and Young Persons \(Care and Protection\) Act 1998](#)

[Commonwealth Home Support Programme Guidelines](#)

[Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988](#)

[National Disability Insurance Scheme \(Provider Registration and Practice Standards\) Rules 2018](#)

[National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013](#)

[National Disability Insurance Scheme Code of Conduct](#)

[NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission](#)

[United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#)

Related Procedures

Documents/Forms

Service User Handbook

Shared drive

Responsibilities and delegations

This policy applies to:

Clients
Employees/volunteers

It will be distributed through:

Service User handbook, Coastlink website, Coastlink brochures
Employee/volunteer handbook, shared drive

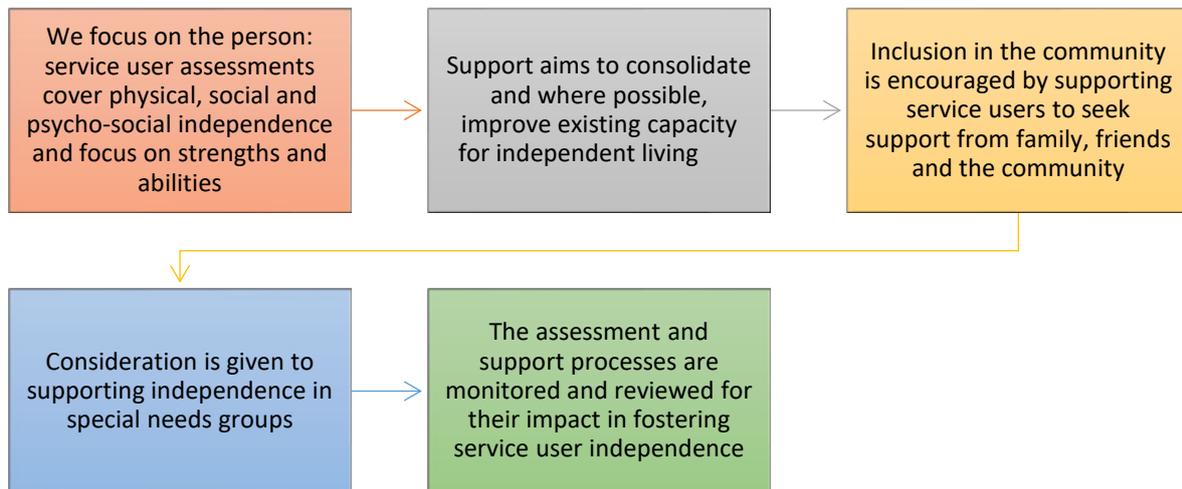
Policy approval

CEO

Definitions

Refer to Definitions list at front of Coastlink Policy and Procedure Manual

INDEPENDENCE PROCEDURE OVERVIEW



INDEPENDENCE PROCEDURE

18.1 Focus on the Person

COASTLINK believes that the independence of each individual should be supported and our support emphasises a focus on the person as a whole, recognises each individual's strengths and abilities and aims to empower the individual to identify their own support goals. We apply the [CHSP Good Practice Guide](#)¹ and the NDIS Practice Standards, along with the NDIS Act 2014 which allows for choice and control to our work.

In particular we ensure that the NDIS Practice Standards are implemented. These include:

- Respecting the right of each person to be at the centre of decision making and to have responsibility, as much as possible, for each decision which affects them.
- Working with each service user to build self-esteem, reliance, confidence and independence to empower each person to make choices about the kind of life she/he wants to live.
- Supporting each person to determine the involvement of their family, carers and advocates in planning and decision-making processes.
- Respecting the views of family and carers in planning and decision-making processes with the person with a disability having the final say in the process.
- Responding in innovative and flexible ways to each person's need for support which reflects their individual and cultural needs.
- Build community networks to link service users to the community in ways which meet their needs and helps each one to fulfill their goals.
- Making every effort to enable a person to make a decision, or assist families, carers and advocates to come to an agreement before a substitute decision maker is engaged (See 18.4 Failure to Reach a Decision).

In accordance with the NDIS Practice Standards, COASTLINK ensures each participant is supported to make informed choices, exercise control and maximise their independence relating to the supports provided. In practice this includes:

- Active decision-making and individual choice is supported for each client including the timely provision of information using the language, mode of communication and terms that the client understands.
- Each client's right to the dignity of risk in decision making is supported. When needed, each client is supported to make informed choices about the benefits and risks of the options under consideration. COASTLINK will work with the client to understand risks and mitigate such risk where required.
- Each client's autonomy is respected, including their right to intimacy and sexual expression. COASTLINK will ensure that the privacy and dignity of clients is adhered to.
- Each client has sufficient time to consider and review their options and seek advice if required, at any stage of support provision, including assessment, planning, provision, review and exit.
- Each client's right to access an advocate (including an independent advocate) of their choosing is supported, as is their right to have the advocate present.

¹ Department of Social Services Living Well at Home: CHSP Good Practice Guide Commonwealth Home Support Programme Australian Government June 2015

18.1.1 Consumer Directed Care and Individual packages

We offer Consumer Directed Care and Individual Packages as part of our aged and disability services to maximise the service user's choice and control, decision making opportunities, foster wellness and re-enablement and foster their connection with carers, family and their community (as they wish).

We consult with service users regarding their preferences for support and care based on their own goals. If we cannot accommodate the service user's preferences, we negotiate with the service user and document the issues in their records. We may decline a request from a service user when²:

- The proposed service may cause harm or pose a threat to the health and/or safety of the consumer or staff.
- The proposed service is outside the scope of our services.
- COASTLINK would not be able to comply with its responsibilities under aged care legislation or other Commonwealth or state/territory laws.
- The consumer's choice of service provider is outside the home care provider's preferred list of service providers and all reasonable effort has been made to broker an acceptable sub-contracting arrangement.
- The requested service provider will not enter into a contract with the home care provider.
- There have been previous difficulties or negative experiences with the consumer's suggested service provider.
- Situations in which a consumer may want to go without necessary clinical services (resulting in a possible compromise of their health and/or wellbeing) in order to "save" for a more expensive non-clinical service.
- The cost of the service/item is beyond the scope of the available funds for the package.
- COASTLINK is not an approved provider of category under the NDIS

18.1.2 Assessment

The Coordinators are trained to promote independence which includes an assessment of:

- Fostering client choice and control
- Focusing on ways to meet the goals of the individual which facilitates independence through skill development
- Focusing on the individual's strengths and abilities.
- The ability to maintain independence whilst staying connected within the community.
- Mobility and dexterity in activities of daily living.
- Maintaining adequate nutrition and hydration (the ability to source and prepare food).
- Social networks including family and community links.

See Section 10: Assessment.

18.1.3 Support Planning

Where appropriate, support focuses on sustaining or improving a person's capacity to live independently. Support plans are developed using a wellness approach and focus on strategies to promote and foster service users' independence. Detailed support plans are developed that ensure

² Department of Health and Ageing August 2013 *Home Care Packages Program Guidelines*

the strengths of service users are recognised and built on and not undermined through the delivery of support in areas where the service user can manage. Support planning may include sourcing services and supports, equipment and aids or fostering community connections depending on the program funding the support.

A copy of support plans is maintained in the frail aged service user's home (for in-home services) to ensure:

- The service user understands the supports provided.
- Areas where a service/support is not provided are clear to the service user.
- The service users' role in the support process and in ensuring their independence.
- To ensure all support workers deliver consistent support in accordance with the support plan.

See Section 11: Support Planning and Delivery.

18.1.4 Service User Information

Information on our focus on promoting and maintaining independence is included in the Service User Handbook and is explained to service users on assessment and reviews and any other time when services may need to be modified.

See Section 14: Information Provision.

18.1.5 Staff Training

All staff and volunteers participate in training to foster independence and the use of documentation appropriate to their roles.

18.2 Inclusion in Community

COASTLINK recognises that an important strategy in maintaining and developing independence, is for service users to maintain and enhance their links in the community. To this end, service users are encouraged to seek support (when required) from family, community groups, others and resources as appropriate to their circumstances and needs. COASTLINK assists service users in identifying resources, contacting them and accessing them. We also work with family members/representatives to identify and clarify their role in ongoing services. COASTLINK maintains links with the local community.

See Section 4: Community Understanding and Engagement.

18.3 Risk Taking

Choosing to take risks is an important part of being independent. COASTLINK recognises that service users may want to engage in activities that carry risk and enable them to assess the benefits and risks of each option available to them and trial approaches, even if we are not in agreement with the selected activity.

To indemnify our service from liability through service users choosing to engage in risk activities we request them or their advocate, carer or guardian to sign an Activity Waiver.

18.4 Failure to Reach a Decision

Where the service user, family/carers and/or an advocate fail to reach a decision essential to the well-being of the service user, we may engage a substitute decision maker. Before this occurs every effort is made to enable a person to make a decision or assist families, carers and advocates to come to an agreement.

18.5 Special Needs Service Users

See 4.2 Service Users with Special Needs.