

Review Details	
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DETAILS OF CHANGES

Date of Revision	Revision Description
23/03/2023	Reviewed, updated and changed document layout

PLANNED REVIEW

Date of next Review	Revision Description
17/02/2025	

Related Legislations and Standards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aged Care Quality and Safety Standards • Equal Opportunity Act 1986 • Freedom Information Act 1982 • NDIS Act 2013 • NDIS Code of Conduct • Privacy Act 1988 • Regulated Restrictive Practices Guide
Related Policies and Procedures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restricted Practices Policy and Procedure • Consumer / participants' Rights Policy • Privacy and Confidentiality Policy • Care Plan Policy • Consider Consumers' Financial Difficulty Policy and Guidelines • Consumer / participant Complaint Policy & Procedure • Equal Opportunity Policy • Freedom of Information Policy • Workplace Bully Policy • Workplace Harassment Policy

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1. RATIONAL

The benefits of advocacy, in relation to improve outcomes for consumer / participants, include:

- Consumer / participants can be supported and empowered by having a voice where they may otherwise be unable to communicate their needs or concerns; and
- It enables consumer / participant needs and issues are raised awareness to the service.

2. PURPOSE and SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the service is guided in receiving advocates and in providing an advocacy service for its consumer / participants and staff.

This policy applies to all consumer / participants accessing ViWa's service.

3. DEFINITION

An Advocate	is a person who, with the authority of the consumer / participant, represents the consumer / participant's interests. Consumer / participants may use an advocate of their choice to negotiate on their behalf. This may be a family member, friend or advocacy service. Advocates may be used when information is given, referrals made, grievances or for any other communication between the consumer / participant and ViWa. Guidelines for Advocates are included with the Authority to Act as an Advocate.
Consumer / participants	For the purpose of this Policy, consumer / participants mean persons who access services provided by ViWA and including paid and unpaid workers.

4. PRINCIPLES

ViWa is committed to promotes advocacy understanding, engenders harmonious outcomes, raises awareness and provide solution-focused strategies, to promote better outcomes for consumer / participants.

5. POLICY STATEMENT

- 5.1 Consumer / participants may use an advocate of their choice, including a family member, friend, another staff member, representative from another agency, or advocacy service, to act on their behalf;
- 5.2 Notice of the wish to use an advocate is to be signed by the consumer / participant (see Advocate Authority Form);
- 5.3 The consumer / participant has the right to revoke authority and/or change their advocate at any time, with signed and dated authority overriding any previous advocacy authority; and
- 5.4 Consumer / participant may choose to have an advocate represent their interests during:
 - Assessment;
 - Reviews of the consumer / participant's situation;
 - Complaints; and
 - Any negotiation or communication between the consumer / participant and the service.

6. ROLES and RESPONSIBILITY

6.1 Committee of Management (COM)

The COM assigns leadership responsibility to implement and comply with this policy.

6.2 Manager

- The Manager ensures this policy is communicated to staff, ensures that all staff of the service are made aware of the Advocacy Policy and contribute to any review of the policy based on its applicability to practice.
- Report to COM on matter of serious concern.
- Report to authorities of relevant consumer / participant's funded program; if required.

6.3 Staff and volunteers

- Providing ongoing support to consumer / participants.
- Report to Manager/supervisor if any complaints made by consumer / participants or by themselves.

7. PROCEDURE

Consumer / participant who wishes to use an advocate should inform the Association in writing (if possible) or completing the Advocacy Authority Form.

The consumer / participant has the right to change their advocate at any time and should inform the Association in writing (if possible) of any change.

The Authority to Act as an Advocate form must be signed by the requestor and the appointed advocate.

ViWA's staff will receive training (if necessary) in the use of advocates.

All consumer / participant who are formally referred by the service will receive information regarding the use of advocates.

Pending on the nature of the involvement of a Advocate, the matter may be reportable to the relevant authority.

8. CONTACTS

Information about the Health and Ageing Services Complaints Scheme and its role in consumer / participant advocacy are made available to the consumer / participant at.

Health and Community Services Complaints Commissioner

Telephone: 1800 232 007

Aged Care Complaints Commissioner

Telephone: 1800 550 552

NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission

Telephone: 1800 035 544

Equal Opportunity SA

Telephone: 08 7322 7070

Human Right Commission

Telephone: 1300 656 419