



Section	Client
Policy Title	Client Engagement and Participation

1. LEGISLATION

- a) Disability Act 2006 – VIC
- b) United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) (CRPD)
- c) Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1992
- d) National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013

2. STANDARD/S

- a) Department of Human Services Standards (DHS) (2014)
 - i. Standard 1 – Empowerment
 - ii. Standard 2 – Access and Engagement
 - iii. Standard 3 – Wellbeing
 - iv. Standard 4 – Participation
- b) National Standards for Disability Services (DSS) (2012)
 - i. Standard 4 – Feedback and Complaints
- c) NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission

3. PURPOSE

This policy details the ways in which ConnectGV engages to deliver responsive, quality services to people with disabilities, their parents, carers and significant others. ConnectGV is committed to working in partnership with clients and significant others.

There is a number of key drivers to person-centred care. They include planning, design, delivery and evaluation of service delivery. As the disability sector changes, it is important that ConnectGV responds to the changing needs of clients, their families and significant others.

ConnectGV provides services and supports to a diverse range of people and will tailor client engagement to meet the needs of each individual. Some clients will take an active role in designing their supports while others will rely on their families, carers, advocates, appointed decision-makers and ConnectGV to respond to their needs and ensure their rights are protected and best interests met. ConnectGV is aware that substitute decision making should only be used as a last resort.

ConnectGV has a strong commitment to partnering with clients, parents and/or carers. This is reflected in the Strategic Plan, Vision, Mission and Values statements. ConnectGV Client Engagement and Participation Policy provides the organisational framework for the involvement of people with disabilities, their parents, carers, significant others and staff in the planning, implementation and evaluation of services.

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4. POLICY STATEMENT

Client Engagement and Participation is embedded in the core business of ConnectGV and is central to improving responsiveness, client outcomes and quality service provision. Partnering with people with disabilities, their parents, carers and significant others is underpinned by a commitment to people with disabilities achieving their desired outcomes.

Community participation principles underpin the ways in which ConnectGV will support client engagement and participation. These include:

- trust,
 - respect,
 - openness,
 - equal opportunity,
 - advocacy and support,
 - responsiveness,
 - shared ownership,
 - accountability,
 - dissemination of decisions made and evaluation there of;
- i. ConnectGV has a comprehensive and defined suite of policies that guide and support client engagement and participation.
 - ii. ConnectGV Vision, Mission and Values are embedded within ConnectGV staff position description templates.
 - iii. Recruitment, orientation, education and training opportunities support and develop both staff and client capacity to work in partnership.
 - iv. Person-Centred Practice in service delivery includes and supports client engagement and participation.
 - v. An organisational quality framework supports client engagement and participation at the local level through divisional policies aligning with the DHHS and NSDS standards, and individual support plans.
 - vi. Comprehensive recognition and support of client engagement and participation include access to service awards and other local service recognition processes.
 - vii. Effective client, parent, carer and community feedback mechanisms including the complaints process, consumer feedback forms, surveys, interviews and focus groups.
 - viii. Regular review of the effectiveness of the processes and outcomes of client engagement and participation including a comprehensive suite of participation indicators as well as a range of evaluation strategies are undertaken.
 - ix. It is recognised that clients, parents, carers and significant others may require an advocate for communication support and to ensure key service information is understood

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- x. Active promotion of advocacy services and support will enable clients, parents, carers and supporters to utilise an advocate of their choice.
- xi. The ConnectGV Charter of Client Rights and Responsibilities is actively promoted to clients, parents, carers and significant others throughout the organisation.
- xii. ConnectGV recognises the core principles of supporting people with disabilities and meets its obligations under DHHS, NSDS and into the future Quality and Safeguards Commission.

5. RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION, COMPLIANCE MONITORING, MEASURING AND CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT

Responsibility for implementation, compliance monitoring, measuring and continuous improvement will rest with ConnectGV Board, CEO and General Managers through monthly meetings.

6. SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy applies to all ConnectGV stakeholders.

7. DEFINITIONS

- i. **Clients** are people with disabilities who receive services or support from ConnectGV, their parents, carers and advocates.
- ii. **Participation** is meaningful involvement in decision making about service, support and planning, to enhance client wellbeing in community, social and economic participation. Participation is about Clients, parents, carers and members of the community having their say, listening to the views and ideas of others and working together to reach decisions that include a range of perspectives.
- iii. **Advocate** - is a person who, with explicit authority, represents another’s interests; an informal advocate can be a friend, family member or neighbour. There are also a number of formal decision makers that are appointed to act on behalf of another person.

8. RELATED DOCUMENTS/LINKS

The following documents and links are relevant to this policy:

- Charter of Clients Rights and Responsibilities
- Strategic Plan
- Support Plan
- Service Delivery Policy
- Choice & Advocacy Policy
- NDIS Business Processes Policy & Procedure
- Guide to NDIS decision-making; Office of the Public Advocate



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Accountable	Chief Executive Officer
Responsible	General Managers – Managers – Co-ordinators - Supervisors
Review Date	31/12/2021

REVISION HISTORY

Version	Approved/ Amended/ Rescinded	Approval Date	Management	Committee/ Board	Document Reference
V1	Approved	30/03/2016	CEO		Client
V2	Amended	31/12/2018	CEO		Client