

Policy on Managing Challenging Behaviour

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1. BACKGROUND

OptimumChoice will conduct its business honestly and ethically. We will constantly improve the quality of our services and create a reputation for honesty, fairness, respect, responsibility, integrity, trust, and sound business judgment.

2. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

OptimumChoice was established for the purpose of providing quality services to improve the lives of people with disabilities where their individuality recognised, and their safety is paramount.

The purpose of this policy is to specify processes and performance standards in the management of challenging behavior exhibited by clients. The policy has been framed around Standards 2-8 of the

Disability Services Standards (1993).

National Disability Insurance Scheme (2013)

This policy applies to all programs and activities.

For the purposes of this policy, challenging behavior is defined as including, *inter alia*:

- Self-injury and self-mutilation to the head, face or body which leads to physical trauma and/or disfigurement requiring medical attention.
- Violent or dangerous behavior, which has the potential to cause physical injury or emotional trauma to self and others.
- Persistent refusal to follow necessary treatment procedures for medical conditions such as epilepsy, diabetes or other conditions that, if not treated, will further endanger the person's health or life.
- Constant refusal to participate in agreed activities such as employment, recreation, social events or household routines.

- Absconding from the home and/or creating a nuisance in public including wandering the streets, begging, harassing, soliciting or engaging in criminal activities.
- Extreme manipulative behavior including mischievous accusations against others, inappropriately engaging emergency support services or persistently over-using medical and other professional services.
- Offensive behavior including extracting, eating or smearing faeces or other body products, engaging in sexual activities in public places, or generally behaving in a manner likely to elicit negative community reactions.

As an Organisation that is determined to assist people with disabilities to remain valued members of the local community, we have an additional obligation to promote and demonstrate best practice in the application of affirmative action principles to the employment of people with disabilities.

This policy applies to all of programs and activities.

The management of challenging behavior will be based on the following principles:

- Labelling clients as ‘behavior problems’ or ‘bad’ is not appropriate and failure to recognise that people are a product of their environments.
- Effective management of challenging environments rests on developing a thorough understanding of the person and his or her past and present experiences.
- Common factors which can contribute to the occurrence of challenging behavior include: a history characterised by coercion or over-control, an unstable or insecure lifestyle, medical or psychiatric conditions, a history of rejection or

abuse, lack of independent living skills, lack of group social skills, lack of meaningful personal relationships and lack of communication skills.

- Intervention strategies need to recognise the role of the person's past and present experiences and the person's environment in the formation and maintenance of challenging behaviors.
- Intervention strategies need to be: carefully planned and documented, involve key stakeholders, designed around the individual's circumstances, needs and preferences, focus on positive and measurable outcomes, properly resourced and carefully monitored.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

OptimumChoice is committed to ensuring that challenging behaviors exhibited by clients whilst under the Organisation's care or supervision are dealt with promptly and appropriately, having due regard for the rights of the client, the rights of any other person(s) affected by the behavior and duty of care obligations.

4. PROCEDURES

The following procedures are to be implemented to ensure that the Organisation meets its policy objective of appropriately and effectively managing challenging behavior:

- 4.1 Immediately investigate reports of challenging behavior from other clients, employees, volunteers, family members or the public.
- 4.2 Make a written record of the reported incident including a description of the challenging behavior, the time and place, and

the antecedents (the events leading up to the behavior, which may have been possible triggers) and the consequences (the impact of the behavior on the client and others).

- 4.3 Involve the clients, staff members, key family members (where appropriate) and behavioral consultants (where required) in the development of an individual support plan aimed at ameliorating the challenging behavior, including a thorough analysis of the problem situation, an agreed model for intervening and measurable behavioral goals for the client.
- 4.4 Fully document the individual support plan and provide a copy to all parties involved in its development.
- 4.5 Appoint an appropriate staff member or external consultant if the necessary expertise is not available, to coordinate the implementation of the individual support plan and record the future occurrences of the behavior or other challenging behavior.
- 4.6 Allocate sufficient and appropriate resources to the individual support plan, which may include specific skills training for the staff, environmental restructuring, higher staffing levels during the intervention period, or support from external professionals.
- 4.7 Undertake a formal review of the individual support plan and of the initial plan.
- 4.8 Advise the funding body once considered, if it lacks resources or expertise to manage the behavior or if the challenging behavior persists in a way that compromises duty of care obligations to its clients, staff and the public.

5. PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

The following performance standards must be met to ensure that the procedures specified in Section 4 are implemented effectively:

- 5.1 All new employees and volunteers will be provided with a copy of Policy on Managing Challenging Behavior and a staff copy of the policy will kept in each service outlet.
- 5.2 Reports of challenging behavior will be given within an appropriate timeframe, having regard to the threats posed to the client and others whilst the challenging behavior persists.
- 5.3 Accurate, quantitative written records of the incident(s) are maintained and in accordance with Policy on Privacy, Dignity and Confidentiality.
- 5.4 A thorough analysis of the problem behavior will be undertaken by an appropriately qualified person.
- 5.5 An individual support plan will be developed in concert with key stakeholders and in accordance with Policy on Decision Making and Choice.
- 5.6 Interventions will be implemented in accordance with the Policy on Participation and Integration and the Policy on Valued Status.
- 5.7 Sufficient resources will be allocated to implement the individual support plan.
- 5.8 Progress will be regularly monitored against the behavioural goals described and quantified in the individual support plan.
- 5.9 The Organisation will advise the funding body if it feels that, in attempting to manage the challenging behavior, it lacks the resources or professional expertise to properly meet its duty of care responsibilities whilst the challenging behavior persists.

5.10 Any grievances will be addressed in accordance with the human relations and sexuality principles outlined in this policy and the Policy on Client Grievances.

6. REVIEW OF THE POLICY

This policy will be reviewed on a bi-annual basis. However, if at any time the legislative, policy or funding environment is so altered that the policy is no longer appropriate in its current form, the policy shall be reviewed immediately.