

<b>Q115</b>	<b>PROVIDING CUSTOMER ADVOCACY and SUPPORT POLICY</b>
-------------	---

## Policy Statement

Enhanced Lifestyles (EL) and Lifestyle Assistance and Accommodation Service (LAAS) is committed to the principles of respecting and protecting the legal and human rights of individuals and their right to services.

To this end Enhanced Lifestyles and Lifestyle Assistance and Accommodation Service support the right of Customers/Clients to use an advocate of their choice to negotiate on their behalf. This may be in relation to assessment, reviews, complaints or any other communication between the Customer/Client and this organisation. The organisations will work co-operatively with any advocate nominated by a Customer/Client and treat them with respect.

Enhanced Lifestyles and Lifestyle Assistance and Accommodation Service is also committed to providing Customers/Clients with advocacy and support when it is requested.

This document complies with NDIS 2018, standard 1.3 Privacy and Dignity and ACIS 2013, section 1.4 Confidentiality. This document is readily available to all Customers/Clients and employees of Enhanced Lifestyles and Lifestyle Assistance and Accommodation Service including the Boards.

<b>Policy context:</b> This policy relates to	
Contractual obligations	Customer/Client Service Agreements

## Actions

### Supporting advocacy

The Quality and Training team will be responsible for ensuring:

- all relevant employees receive information in the use of advocates by way of the employee and member handbooks
- ensure services/programs maintain printed material on relevant advocacy and advocacy services
- maintain local advocacy resource/contact lists

**Q115**

**PROVIDING CUSTOMER ADVOCACY and SUPPORT POLICY**

**Providing Customer/Clients with information**

The Operations team will ensure Customer/Clients and potential advocates are informed via appropriate formats (including verbally and in writing) about their right to use an advocate and the role of an advocate when the Customer/Client is:

- Assessed and re-assessed for services
- Oriented to the service or program

Or if:

- They want to make a complaint about the service
- An employee believes an advocate may be beneficial to the Customer/Client

The Operations team is required to ensure that Customer/Clients are aware of their rights to use an advocate in relation to the service, including having their advocate present for all assessments, meetings and communication between themselves and the organisation.

If the Customer/Client is unsure whether they may want to nominate a person as an advocate, they are to be provided with information (in an appropriate format) on various specialist advocacy organisations that may be able to assist them. If they would like to contact any of these organisations the Customer Relations team will be able to assist them to make contact.

It is the responsibility of the Customer Relations team at the time of first contact with the Customer/Client to discuss any communication issues or requirements.

If a Customer/Client/Client has an advocate it is the Customer Relations teams responsibility to discuss and document any specific communication issues or protocols to be used between the service and the Customer/Client's advocate. The name and contact details of the advocate are to be included in the Customer/Client's personal record.

Employees will not disclose any information about the Customer/Client to an advocate, when the Customer/Client is not present, unless the Customer/Client has provided their permission to do so.

**Q115**

**PROVIDING CUSTOMER ADVOCACY and SUPPORT POLICY**

**Working with advocates (when a Customer/Client has nominated an advocate)**

Where a Customer/Client has identified, or nominated an advocate the Customer Relations team must:

- Record the advocates details in the Customer/Client's personal record
- Ensure the Customer/Client is aware of their advocacy rights including the right to have an advocate present for all assessments, meetings and communication between themselves and the organisation
- Ensure the advocate knows they have been nominated as an advocate and agrees to this
- Ensure any identified advocate is present at assessments and meetings
- Communicate and work co-operatively with the advocate
- Communicate comprehensively with a Customer/Client's advocate and involve them in the care and service planning
- Ensure that the Customer/Client knows they have the right to change their advocate at any time. Any changes should be documented with written confirmation from the Customer/Client using the Individual Support Plan.

If an authorised representative is acting on behalf of a Customer/Client, the organisation will require proof of representative authority.

Authorised representatives include:

- Guardians
- Attorneys under enduring powers of attorney
- Agents under the Medical Treatment Act 1988
- Administrators under the Guardianship and Administration Act 1986
- A person otherwise empowered by the consumers to act or make decisions in their best interests.

Proof of representative authority will be sighted and a copy of that document placed in the Customer/Clients file. Proof of authority includes Guardianship or Administration order or Enduring/ Medical Power of Attorney.

**Q115**

**PROVIDING CUSTOMER ADVOCACY and SUPPORT POLICY**

**Providing advocacy and support**

Where a Customer/Client does not have an identified or nominated advocate and they request assistance from the organisation the request will be considered by the Operations team. The type of individual advocacy and support that can be provided will be dependent on the organisation's capability and resources.

**Documentation**

Documents related to this policy	
Related policies	Q112 - Customer/Client Decision Making and Choice Policy Q300 - Access to Services Policy
Forms, record keeping or other organisational documents	CIMS Customer/Client files