

<b>CAL POL-011</b>	<b>Service Access</b>
--------------------	-----------------------

The purpose of this policy is to ensure: -

- Caringa proactively informs people with disability, their family and carers about the broad range of supports and services from Caringa that are available to meet their needs
- Each person who makes an enquiry about a Caringa service is treated fairly, honestly, ethically and without discrimination by Caringa
- Caringa meets and exceeds the National Standard for Disability Services and complies with all relevant legislation

#### Record of Policy Development

Version	Date Approved	Date for Review
1	27/03/2019	27/03/2020

#### Responsibilities and Delegations

This policy applies to	Board of Directors, Senior Management, Caringa Frontline Workers
Specific Responsibilities	None
Policy Approval	Board of Directors

#### Policy Context- This policy relates to:

Standards	The NDIS Rules NDIS Practice Standards
Legislation	National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 National Disability Insurance Scheme (Quality Indicators) Guidelines 2018
Contractual Obligations	N/A
Organisation Policies	Caringa Code of Conduct and Ethics Conflict of Interest Policy Customer Service Charter
Forms, record keeping, other documents	First Contact Enquiry (CTARS) My Support Plan

#### Policy Details

Fair, honest, ethical and non-discriminatory service access will be achieved by:

- Proactively communicating information about Caringa services and supports, their different features and capacities as part of our broader CAL community engagement activities
- Ensuring that each person in the Caringa workforce can direct a potential customer to someone who is familiar with, and has a clear understanding of the service and supports Caringa offers, the eligibility criteria, cost and Caringa capacity to provide the support in the local area and or in other locations
- Ensuring all enquiries by a potential customer are responded to in a timely manner by someone who can provide access to the information on which they can make a decision. This includes but is not limited to information in languages and forms of communication either verbal or written other than English
- Reviewing the information about service access with potential customers, their family and carers to identify and minimise any barriers that could prevent fair, equal access to the supports Caringa can

provide. We will make all reasonable adjustments to accommodate cultural/language needs and those of their family/significant others/advocates and in particular, respecting the social structure of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities

- Providing potential customers with all options we are aware of in the community that could be of benefit to them and expand choice in any aspect of their life
- In consultation with each potential customer, and existing customers, regularly review our client intake process and ongoing access to Caringa supports to ensure that we are not discriminating or unintentionally creating barriers to equal access. This should include issues of conflict of interest, favouritism, avoidances or unjustified refusal to provide a support. We will communicate with customers about any changes and improvements we make based on their feedback
- Openly supporting potential customers' right to complain about any aspect they are not happy with in relation to their access to the supports that are important to them and for them, their family and carers
- Monitoring the diversity of the people accessing our supports and services to ensure we are reaching the whole community, in particular those groups who are known to experience additional barriers to accessing services and support because of gender, culture, ethnicity and aboriginality

## **Procedures**

### **Eligibility criteria**

To be eligible for assistance from Caringa, the person must have a disability which is:

- Permanent, or likely to be permanent;
- Be at least 7 years of age at time of request for service
- Have or able to receive funding for their requested service from the NDIS or other funding body / funding method

These criteria will be consistently applied to anyone wishing to access the service.

The Client Services Manager (CSM) will review the eligibility criteria at least annually, in consultation with the COO

### **Management of requests for a service**

Requests for service by clients are made by:

- Telephone or email request
- Face to Face
- Via Caringa's Website, or Social Media

Referrals from other agencies are accepted under the following circumstances:

- Directly from the NDIS, via e-mail to CSM
- Where the agency is able to demonstrate that they have the person's consent to share information
- Where Caringa has capacity to accept referrals.

Any staff member receiving a request or for service will ensure:

- the person has a clear understanding about the services available and the eligibility criteria
- advocates, support services and interpreters are involved as required
- the person's needs are assessed
- if eligible, the person is provided with access to the service
- if ineligible or excluded from the service, the person is informed of the reason for refusal of service, advised of their right to appeal and provided with information about alternative options and a referral to an appropriate agency wherever possible
- decisions are consistent and transparent
- a record is kept of who has requested a service, how they were referred, their eligibility and any onward referrals made, this is recorded in the First Contact Enquiry Form in Caringa's CRM.

### **Access / Intake Procedure**

To access the services of Caringa Australia, an individual with a disability or a family member, carer, or advocate must first make a request for service and be determined eligible to receive support.

From the initial contact the individual's eligibility will be determined by confirming a number of details with the potential customer, and completing the intake form. Arrangements will be made to meet with the client and their informal support network either face to face, or via e-mail. For purposes of finalising intake information and initial client risk assessment.

The information will then be sent to the CSM or intake panel for further assessment. In the event Caringa believes it could adequately meet the expectations and needs of the person, and arrangements are assessed as within Caringa's risk tolerance (considering Business factors such as Financial, Environmental, Practice, and Branding Risks) the application for Service Access will progressed.

If the Intake Panel or Client Services Manager believes that Caringa is not the best fit for the Person or that providing service to the person would present an unacceptable risk to Caringa. The Request for Service and all accompanying documentation will be referred to the COO for further Assessment.

The COO will then make a determination, If Caringa is unable to provide service to the person. The outcome of the request for service and the reasons why we are not able to provide service will be explained to the person.

Caringa will then assess its frontline capability to provide the service. Should we not have immediate capability to provide the support to the person; with the person's consent and direction, the application for service Access will be placed on a waitlist, or alternatively informal referral will be made to another NDIS service Provider as directed by the person. If Caringa has sufficient frontline capacity to provide the service, the request for service is approved. The Approval is communicated to the Customer and a Quote for Service Provided, along with Caringa's welcome pack.

Caringa's Welcome Pack contains critical policy information and other documents in easy read format. A Meeting will be scheduled prior to services starting to complete service agreement and My Support Plan.

At a specified interval after intake, an intake evaluation survey is sent to the customer. Feedback from the evaluation will be considered, and added to Caringa's Continual Improvement System as appropriate.

## **Making referrals**

Informal referrals are made by providing the client with contact information about other services or agencies.

Formal referrals are made to other agencies as directed by the Client. For Support Coordination Clients, and Plan Management Clients, Referrals for Direct Service are made within the context of Caringa's NDIS and Conflict of Interest Policy.

When a referral is made to another agency, the staff member making the referral will ensure that:

- confidentiality and privacy of the client is maintained at all times
- they have clarified with the client the service needs they have expressed
- the client is given an accurate picture of the other agency and its service
- the other agency is given full and honest referral information
- records of contact with the client and the other agency are kept
- the culturally specific needs of the client are considered e.g. referring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients to services provided by Aboriginal community organisations

---

*End of Document*

---