

# PARTICIPANTS HANDBOOK

Your Life Your Choice



ABN: 87 182 934 53  
118 St Andrews Drive  
Yanchep WA 6035  
Mobile 0433 003 092

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## Welcome to Your Life Your Choice

We want your experience with us to be a positive one and to make a real difference in your life.

Your Life Your Choice works with individuals, families, carers, friends and the community so people living with disability can live a better life and can live fulfilling, active and celebrated lives in the community.

Our values of honesty, acceptance, fairness, commitment and participation are at the heart of everything we do. They're the blueprint for how we work.

This handbook provides you with important information about using our services.

If you would like to talk to someone about Your Life Your Choice, or any of the information in this handbook, you can speak to a staff member, visit our website [Your Life Your Choice.org](http://YourLifeYourChoice.org) or call us on 0433 003 092.

## Your Life Your Choice - Who are we?

- We are a small community-based organisation dedicated to ensuring Australians lead active and fulfilling lives in their community.
- We work with individuals, families and the community to help people imagine and achieve better lives.
- We advocate for change to make sure people can access the best possible care and information when they need it.
- We provide a range of services and assistance for people with mental health issues, disabilities, youth and those requiring community care.
- We value who you are and your lived experience. Many of our staff and volunteers have a lived experience. This means they have also been affected by mental health issues and/or a disability.
- This lived experience shapes who we are as an organisation and how we work.
- We were established in 2014 by families advocating to improve the services, information and support available to people with disabilities, their carers, families and communities.
- Your Life Your Choice deliver services in Western Australia

## What Can You Expect from us?

All our services are focused on supporting you to live the life you want in the community. This may involve developing skills, building confidence and connecting with others.

We provide services and supports to:

- individuals
- families and friends
- the community

We work with all these people so everyone in our community can actively support each other to create welcoming and inclusive communities, free from stigma.

We work with a person-centred approach to create capacity and capability for the individual

We focus on hope and possibility rather than illness or impairment. We call this the Community Recovery Model.

## Your Rights

As a participant of Your Life Your Choice you have rights.

These rights are protected by law and set out in national standards.

Information about these rights must be given to you in a clear way that makes sense to you.

We will talk with you about your rights when you first meet with us and throughout your time with the service.

If you are ever unsure about what your rights are, please let us know.

You will be asked to sign an acknowledgment of rights and responsibilities form which states that information about your rights and responsibilities have been explained to you and you understand this information.

Depending on which service you are receiving, you may also be asked to sign a service agreement, which explains the details of the service you will receive. If you are ever unsure about what you are signing, ask a Your Life Your Choice staff member or volunteer to talk through the information with you again before you agree to sign.

You may also like to speak to a peer worker about the service, your rights and responsibilities or contact independent groups such as commissions or advocacy services (see Appendix A on page 25).

A peer worker is someone who has their own lived experience of mental health issues or disability and recovery,

## A Quality Service that is right for you

We are committed to providing you with a quality service to meet your needs. This means offering you services and supports that are based on research and lived experience – what people say works for them.

You have the right to services and supports that:

- are available for you at the time you need it
- enable you to be part of the community
- are consistent and reliable
- build on your strengths
- enable you to reach your goals
- are designed around who you are as a person

## Choice and Control

We believe you are the best person to make decisions about your life, including the services and supports we provide you.

You have the right to:

- be involved in all discussions and decisions about your supports and services
- choose who is involved in your supports and services, including family members, friends and carers
- have a choice of worker, wherever possible
- access peer support
- choose to use other mental health or disability services
- give your consent to supports and services
- seek a second opinion or refuse services or support options recommended to you at any time without consequence
- have independent advocacy or support to make decisions
- receive services and supports based on your preferences and needs

If you are receiving mental health service support, you have the right to:

- create an Advanced Statement which outlines your treatment and personal preferences should you become unwell and need mental health treatment

If you are receiving disability support, you have the right to:

- be responsible for your own finances or appoint someone you trust to act on your behalf

## Respect and Identity

We are committed to providing you with a service that is welcoming and inclusive of who you are. This means you should always feel safe and respected. It also means recognising the things that are important to you, such as your culture and identity.

You have the right to:

- be accepted for who you are
- have your needs and identity recognised
- with respect to culture, religion, gender, sexuality, language, disability or mental health
- be offered an interpreter if required •
- have your personal privacy, dignity and lifestyle respected

## Safety

We want you to feel safe and be safe when using Your Choice Your Life services.

You have the right to:

- an inclusive service that is free from abuse, discrimination, neglect, force or favouritism
- have an environment that is safe, physically accessible, clean and secure
- support which does not restrict your right to freedom of movement, choice or control unless it is absolutely necessary to prevent you or someone else from harm

## Child safety

We are committed to ensuring the safety, wellbeing and empowerment of children and young people.

This means:

- a zero-tolerance approach towards all forms of abuse and neglect of children and young people
- creation of child safe services and environments
- engagement and empowerment of children and young people and their families,
- Our commitment to child safety complies with all relevant state and territory obligations.

## Involving family, friends, carers or others in your service

We recognise how important it is for you to choose who is involved in the services and supports you receive. This may be family, friends, carers or other significant people in your life. We can help you to identify or connect with others who can support you. We can also provide you with information on services and supports for the important people in your life.

You have the right to:

- choose who will be present at any discussion or meetings, including a support person
- identify a nominated person to receive information about your service and support
- ask a family member, carer or friend to act as an advocate for you
- ask for an independent person to act as an advocate for you

## Privacy and Confidentiality

We care about your privacy and confidentiality and are committed to protecting it.

When providing you with a service, we may need to collect information about you and how we are working together. We will only do this when it is relevant to your service or it is required by law.

When referring to 'information' we mean both personal and sensitive information.

Personal information is basic information such as your name, address and contact details.

Sensitive information refers to information about your health and wellbeing.

In protecting your privacy, we must:

- keep confidential all information we collect about you
- respect your safety, privacy and dignity when using your information
- protect information from any misuse or loss
- take steps to ensure that the information we have about you is accurate, complete, up to date and relevant to the service you are accessing
- not share your information with anyone else unless you have given clear consent or if it is necessary to maintain your safety or otherwise required under law.

## Privacy and confidentiality (Continued)

You have the right to:

- complain if you feel we have not respected your privacy
- know why and how your personal information is collected
- know how your personal information is used, who it may be shared with and when
- give or refuse consent before information is collected about you
- look at your information and take copies
- collaborate with your worker on what is being recorded about you
- ask for information or records to be explained or changed if you believe it is inaccurate, misleading, incomplete or out of date
- ask for other people such as family, friends or people who support you to have access to this information
- refuse to have marketing material sent to you

## Making a complaint and giving feedback

We want you to tell us what you think about our services.

We know the best way for us to improve our services is to receive complaints or feedback from you.

### **You have the right to:**

- make a complaint at any time
  - be listened to respectfully
  - have your complaint kept private
  - have your complaint responded to fairly and quickly
  - give feedback on what's working well or what could be improved at any time
  - be informed of what has happened with your complaint or feedback
  - be supported to connect with an independent advocate or support person
  - have an independent advocate or support person involved.
- be safeguarded from any negative consequences should you make a complaint We will review all feedback and complaints to evaluate the quality of our services, identify what is and what is not working well, and consider how we can improve our services.

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## Making a complaint and giving feedback cont'd

How can you make a complaint or provide feedback?

You can raise a complaint, compliment or give feedback to a worker, coordinator or manager.

Otherwise, you can talk to someone else you trust like a peer worker or independent advocate who can pass this information on to someone on your behalf.

Complaints and feedback can also be given via:

- phone us: 0043 003 092
- letter 118 St Andrews Drive Yanchep WA

## Appeals

If you are unhappy with the way, we have managed your complaint or feedback you can lodge an appeal with our Manager. Alternatively, you can seek advice about how to resolve this or appeal to the Mental Health Complaints Commissioner Ombudsman or Disabilities Services Commissioner Ombudsman in your state or territory

## Your Responsibilities

When you use a service you not only have rights, you also have some responsibilities.

It is your right to be told what these responsibilities are and what happens if you don't uphold them.

A service or program may have some responsibilities which are unique to that service. If so, these will be explained to you in a service agreement.

The responsibilities you have are towards all people connected to Your Life Your Choice – including yourself, other participants, staff and volunteers.

These responsibilities are:

- to respect the rights of others, such as privacy and safety
- to help create a safe environment for all, free from harm and violence
- to tell us about what you need and if you have any problems as soon as you can
- to help create a welcoming environment

## Have Your Say and get Involved

We want you to have a say and get involved in what we do.

You have the right to:

- have a say on what services and supports we offer and how they should be delivered
  - give feedback and have input on what we do as an organisation
  - give feedback and have input on the health care system advocate for better services and supports, or changes to the systems that affect you
  - have an opportunity to contribute to the development, delivery and evaluation of our services and programs
  - opportunities to develop your skills and confidence to have a say and get involved
- Ways to get involved:
- keep up-to-date by subscribing to our Newsletter at your Life Your choice.org
  - connect with Your Life Your Choice on Facebook
  - join our reference group
  - provide feedback online, in person or via survey
  - attend a local listening space – these are informal meetings with staff and people who use our services to provide feedback
  - contact Your life Your Choice to discuss opportunities to get involved in forums, committees and other roles.

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## APPENDIX A

Contact details of State and Territory Commissions for making complaints or lodging appeals.

### **Australian Capital Territory**

Disability and Community Services Commissioner:

Health Services Commission

Office Address: Level 4, 12 Moore Street Canberra ACT 2601

Postal Address: GPO Box 158 Canberra ACT 2601

Phone: (02) 6205 2222 SMS: 0466 169997 TTY: (02) 6205 1666

Website: [hrc.act.gov.au/health](http://hrc.act.gov.au/health)

### **Queensland**

**For complaints and appeals about recovery services contact the**

Office of the Health Ombudsman Office Address:

400 George Street Brisbane QLD 4000

Email: [complaints@oho.qld.gov.au](mailto:complaints@oho.qld.gov.au)

Phone: 133 646

**For complaints and appeals about children's services and disability services**

Queensland Office of the Public Guardian:

Office of the Public Guardian Office Address:

Level 4, 154 Melbourne Street South Brisbane QLD 4101

Postal Address: PO Box 5653 West End QLD 4101

Email: [child@publicguardian.qld.gov.au](mailto:child@publicguardian.qld.gov.au)

Phone: 1800 661 533



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### **New South Wales**

New South Wales (NSW) Health Care Complaints Commission (HCCC):

Office Address:

Level 13, 323 Castlereagh Street (corner of Hay Street) Sydney NSW 2000

Postal Address: Locked Mail Bag18 Strawberry Hills NSW 2012

Phone: (02) 9219 7444 Toll free: 1800 043 159 TTY: (02) 9219 7555 or contact the National Relay Service on 133 677 Email: [hccc@hccc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:hccc@hccc.nsw.gov.au)

Website: [hccc.nsw.gov.au](http://hccc.nsw.gov.au)

### **Tasmania**

Tasmanian Health Complaints Commissioner (HCC):

Office Address:

Ground floor, 99 Bathurst Street Hobart TAS 7000

Postal Address:

GPO Box 960 Hobart TAS 7001

Toll Free: 1800 001 170

Email: [health.complaints@ombudsman.tas.gov.au](mailto:health.complaints@ombudsman.tas.gov.au)

Website: [healthcomplaints.tas.gov.au](http://healthcomplaints.tas.gov.au)

### **Victoria**

Mental Health Complaints Commission (MHCC)

Office address:

Level 26, 570 Bourke Street Melbourne VIC 3000

Toll free: 1800 246 054

Email: [help@mhcc.vic.gov.au](mailto:help@mhcc.vic.gov.au)

Website: [mhcc.vic.gov.au](http://mhcc.vic.gov.au)



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Office of the Disability Commissioner (DSC)

Office address: Level 30, 570 Bourke Street Melbourne VIC 3000

Free call: 1800 677 342 (landline)

Email: [complaints@odsc.vic.gov.au](mailto:complaints@odsc.vic.gov.au)

TTY: 1300 726 563

Website: [odsc.vic.gov.au](http://odsc.vic.gov.au)

Skype: calls are available by appointment during business hours. To make an appointment you can call, TTY, fax or email the ODSC.

### **Commonwealth funded programs**

National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)

Until full implementation of the NDIS in 2019, complaints about service funded under the scheme should be directed to relevant state or territory complaints commissioner.

**Registered Training Organisation (RTO)** Australian Skills and Qualification Authority (ASQA):

ASQA accepts and considers complaints from students about their training. However, ASQA is reluctant to deal with complaints until people have exhausted the internal process.

Complaints can be made to ASQA through:

Link: <https://rms.asqa.gov.au/registration/newcomplaints.aspx>

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### Western Australia Useful Numbers

Help line	Mental Health	1300 111 500
Alcohol and Drug		9442 5000
Life Line		131 114
Parenting Line		9272 1466
Seniors Line		9328 855
Crisis Care Counselling		9223 111/1800 199 008
Carers Australia WA		1800 242 636