

# Service Delivery: Client Choice and Control in Decision Making Policy

Date Reviewed: 08 February 2022 (V2)



## 1. Summary

Lighthouse Disability supports the rights of clients to make decisions in regard to how and where they wish to live their life. Our Framework for Positive Living outlines our commitment to supporting clients to live a happy and meaningful life. To support this Lighthouse Disability recognises As an organisation we work by six (6) key principles related to:

- Choice and control
- Belonging in the community
- Contributing to everyday life
- A supportive environment
- Engagement with families
- Financial sustainability

Lighthouse Disability is a committed to ensuring the client is at the centre of what we do and involved in making decisions that impact upon their day to day life. In recognising the potential barriers to self-agency, faced by many people living with disability, we actively ensure through our service and support that clients have choice and control in their lives and in decision-making.

## 2. Scope of Policy

This policy describes how Lighthouse Disability provides for and ensures clients have choice and control in decision-making. This policy relates to all employees, contractors and volunteers responsible for working with the client, their family/guardians in relation to any aspects of the service of support they need and want.

## 3. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that clients and families/guardian(s) are given sufficient information, including options, to make clear decisions about the services and support they receive.


## 4. Policy Statement

In recognising the potential barriers to self-agency, faced by many people living with disability, we actively ensure through our service and support that clients have choice and control in their lives and in decision-making.

## 5. Responsibilities

These positions are responsible for implementation and compliance monitoring of the policy in their work areas:

- a. An employee at the service level
- b. Line Management
- c. Senior Leadership
- d. others as required

Title:	SERV-POL Client Choice and Control over Decision Making Policy V2		
Authorised by:	Michelle Holian CEO	Authorising signature:	
Next review	08/02/24	Date Approved:	22/03/22



## 6. Supporting Self Determination

**Self-determination** is the ability to make choices, have voluntary control over ones decisions and actions and the resulting consequences. Self-determination ensures clients are in control of their life both in the small actions and decisions that make up ones everyday life and in the larger decisions that shape their goals and life directions.

When a person is a risk of reduced self-determination due to such factors as disability, mental capacity, legal rights and autonomy, it is important that their rights, choice and control in decision-making, and active consent are respected and protected. Lighthouse Disability recognises that enhancing personal choice and control in decision-making in everyday life contributes to improved quality of life through emphasising a person rights, their personal responsibility, and enabling and expanding opportunities and choices in everyday tasks.

## 7. Choice and Control

Lighthouse Disability believes that if clients are supported to have greater choice and control over their services, they are better able to select the services that best meet their needs. We in turn, as a service provider, are better able to facilitate their community integration to enhance opportunities to develop their personal relationships and networks, and facilitate greater independence in their day to day life.

We recognise that at times however there may be conditions that reduce a client’s capacity for choice and control. Rather than let this be a detractor, we actively support each individual to maximise their choice and control within their capacity, wishes and any factors that may otherwise limit this. We do this to ensure that clients are afforded have the right to live and participate in their community and enjoy a good quality of life which includes being supported to exercise choice and control over their own lives.

## 8. Dignity of Risk and Duty of Care

**Dignity of risk** refers to the legal right of every person, including those with a disability, to make choices and take risks in order to learn, grow and have better quality of life. Inherent to the concept of dignity of risk, is the recognition that a person’s life experiences come with an element of risk, which even the best planning and support cannot eliminate. Dignity of risk affords a person the right (or dignity) to take reasonable risks, and that the impeding of this right can negative impact personal growth, self-esteem and the overall quality of life.

This can be challenging for service providers who have the duty of care to ensure clients are safe and recognising that not all people with disabilities have the capacity to weigh the potential risks inherent in a particular situation and may not be able to make informed decisions for themselves.

Lighthouse Disability will work with client’s families/guardian’s to consider each individual circumstance and support the client to make choices and decisions, where there is an element of risk in balance with the organisation’s duty of care to provide a safe environment.

To achieve this balance, Lighthouse Disability recognises the importance of empowering clients to make informed decisions by ensuring they have access to the tools and information they need to make such decisions effectively so they are better able to exercise their dignity of risk within their needs and abilities. In doing this we support clients to develop the confidence they need to make and have control over, their own decisions.

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## 9. Decision-Making

As a supported independent living provider the clients who choose to receive services and supports from Lighthouse Disability usually have a disability that impacts their ability to live independently. This also includes, to varying degrees, the person’s ability to make independent decisions. We recognise that the level of support required in assisting clients to make day to day decisions will vary depending on the individual client, their disability, and any conditions that may be in place such as Guardianship orders.

Lighthouse Disability supports clients to achieve choice and control in decision-making by ensuring informed consent processes apply to and are clearly documented in relation to;

- Services they choose through their Service Agreement
- Community Participation supports through their CP Agreement
- Health practitioners and health services they choose as part of Health Support Planning
- Active supports to maximise opportunities for client choice, control and decision-making in every activity they wish to enjoy and through their day to day domestic responsibilities associated with supported independent living in their home.

And in relation to;

- The client’s communication needs
- The client’s capacity and scope/wishes for decision-making
- Any restrictions, limitations or conditions through law/guardianship
- Involvement of clients’ families and guardian/s in this process

## 10. Potential for Harm

The right to choice and control in decision making does not extend to any actions that lead to actual or potential harm and staff cannot be directed to support a client in such an action or decision. This does not remove the client’s right to dignity of risk. Where, in rare circumstances, a client acts, or makes a decision to act in a way that has the potential to cause harm to themselves or others, Lighthouse Disability is required to exercise its duty of care, and implement risk management processes and procedures to prevent harm. The reasons for implementing such risk management processes will be discussed with the client, family/guardian/s.

Lighthouse Disability will take every action to ensure that implementation of any risk management processes and procedures acts only to address the actual or potential immediate harm and will not restrict the client’s choice and control in decision-making in any other aspect of the person’s life. Risk management processes and procedures will comply with Lighthouse Disability policies and procedures and will be monitored through incident reporting.

## 11. Quality of Life

Lighthouse Disability recognises that enabling and supporting client’s choice and control in decision making is a core contributor to their quality of life and a human right and are underpinned by the values of dignity, equality, empowerment, self-determination, non-discrimination, and inclusion and should be a measure of the outcome of the services and supports we provide.

All clients are actively supported, focusing on a strengths based approach, to make decisions about their service and supports with Lighthouse Disability in relation to their interpersonal relations, social inclusion, personal development, physical and emotional support, health and well-being and their daily activities.

Our performance and commitment to client’s choice and control in decision-making is measured through;

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- Internal Audit Schedule
- Safety and Quality Committee
- Client, family/guardian feedback and complaints mechanisms
- Client Reference Group
- Family Advisory Committee
- Staff Satisfaction Surveys
- Client Satisfaction Surveys
- Staff Training and Professional Development

## 12. Employee training and development

Staff will be made aware of this procedure through email. This procedure will be uploaded on the Lighthouse Disability document centre on the Intranet. This procedure, along with the suite of policies and procedures regarding client rights will be tabled on Staff meeting agendas whenever reviewed.

New staff will receive mandatory induction training that covers

- Clients Rights
- Informed Consent
- Privacy
- Active Support
- Support Planning

## 13. Related policies and procedures

- Lighthouse Disability's Framework for Positive Living
- Client Consent Policy
- Client Rights Policy
- Restrictive Practices Policy
- NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission: Incident Management and Reportable Incidents

## 14. Standards and Conventions

- NDIS Practice Standards: NDIS Practice Standards and Quality Indicators
- National Standards for Disability Services

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