

Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) has clearly documented criteria to determine eligibility and outline entry for its all services, support programs and schools. Aspect's individualised services, supports and schools provide a range of programs and services directed at developing student's/participant's skills across communication, social, academic, economic, daily living, recreation, employment and leisure domains. Aspect also provides support and information to parents and carers, families and service providers. All services provided for students/participants are collaborative, inclusive and support meaningful participation in each individual's family and chosen community life, in line with their goals, strengths and the focus of the service, support or school program.

### Service Entry Principles

The following principles guide decisions about eligibility for service and allocation of service:

- Aspect prioritises service access to people on the autism spectrum whose support needs primarily relate to their autism.
- All services, supports and schools within Aspect will have clearly outlined, transparent service descriptions, associated costs and entry eligibility criteria, which are publicised in a variety of accessible formats and freely available to anyone in the community.
- Entry and access to services are provided on the basis of the individual's eligibility to participate in a funded program or access a program of fee for service, and relative need.
- Services respond appropriately and sensitively to the diversity of needs, values and beliefs of the entire community; including people who identify as:
  - living with disability;
  - lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, intersex, queer/questioning and asexual (LGBTQIA+);
  - culturally and linguistically diverse; or
  - Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.
- Access and equity principles are applied in decision-making to ensure fairness, and that access to services is without discrimination.
- Services are provided within the limit of available resources; and Aspect's ability to make reasonable adjustments to support service delivery that meets the individual needs of the student/participant.

- Individuals and families who are refused service are provided with reasons that are specific to the eligibility criteria relevant to the service, support or school where the application was made, and are given the opportunity to have their application reviewed.
- Individuals and families have access to Aspect's feedback and complaints process. All people who interact with Aspect are encouraged to provide feedback about the service entry process, either positive or negative, including when service entry was refused, to support the organisation's continuous improvement practices.
- Regular reviews regarding service entry eligibility criteria against funding body criteria, anti-discrimination legislation and service capabilities are conducted to support the removal of any barriers to service access.

Each service, support or school within Aspect maintains its service entry eligibility criteria based on a number of factors, which may include the:

- age of the individual and residential location;
- goals of the individual's plan or funding arrangement;
- assessed needs and established skills of the individual;
- individual's formal diagnosis;
- relative severity of the individual's need and/or family situation;
- availability of service resources;
- time served on waitlists (where applicable);
- availability of alternatives for the individual;
- requirements to pay for the service if a contribution or fee is sought by Aspect;
- need for vacancies to be available in existing services or schools where numbers are limited;
- program, service, support or school's purpose (for example, Autism specific services with a goal to support individual's to transition to environments that are not autism specific); and
- guidelines and requirements of government or other agencies that fund the program or service.

Aspect schools and services work in collaboration with the individual, their family/circle of support and the broader community, as consented to by the individual (or their person responsible), to make appropriate referrals, and/or release appropriate and necessary information to third parties, where required.

### **Leaving, transitioning from and exiting services**

Aspect offers transition support in the event students/participants and their families exit Aspect programs of support, services and schools. Where possible, this is done in a planned and documented manner, in collaboration with the student/participant and their family, as well as any other relevant Aspect service or support, or wider community service which they consent to include.

Students/participants may exit an Aspect school, support or service for one or more of the following reasons:

- they have completed a program, or achieved the goals and outcomes desired from their participation with Aspect;
- leaving an Aspect program or service is a goal and an indication of skill development;
- they are transitioning to a different program within Aspect or external to Aspect in the wider community;
- eligibility criteria for the service or program have changed;
- funding arrangements for the service or program have changed;
- individualised funding has expired;
- they are relocating to an area outside of the geographical catchment area of the program or service;
- the program of service no longer meets the needs of the person we support;
- they no longer wish to use the service or program;
- they have exhausted funding available to pay for the service;
- they have not paid fees in accordance with Aspect's outlined fees and / or service agreement;
- Aspect discontinues the program or service.

In consultation with the student/participant and their family/circle of support (as required), Aspect may decide to exit a person we support from a program or service if we are no longer able to meet the needs of the student/participant. This includes when, after applying all risk management strategies in collaboration with the student/participant and their family (where relevant), Aspect is unable to maintain a safe environment for other people we support and staff. Reasons for discontinuation, suspension or withdrawal of service as outlined in this policy will be identified where possible in a service or enrolment agreement. Where this is not possible, a copy of this policy shall be provided to students/participants and their family on service, support or school entry.

### **External Framework**

The Service Access policy demonstrates Aspect's implementation of the:

- NDIS Practice Standards (2018) and NDIS Code of Conduct, specifically within the NDIS Practice Standards & Quality Indicators:
  - Core Module: 1. Rights and Responsibilities, under all Outcomes.
  - Core Module: 2. Provider Governance and Operational Management, under the relevant Outcomes.
  - Core Module: 3. Provision of Supports, under all Outcomes.
  - Core Module: 4. Support Provision Environment, under all Outcomes.
  - Supplementary Module: 2. Specialist Behaviour Support Module, under the relevant Outcomes.

- Supplementary Module: 2a. Implementing Behaviour Support Plans, under the relevant Outcomes.
- Supplementary Module: 3. Early Childhood Supports, under all Outcomes.
- Supplementary Module: 4. Specialist Support Coordination, under all Outcomes.
- Disability Standards for Education (2005), specifically:
  - Part 4: Standards for Enrolment.
  - Part 7: Standards for Student Support Services.
- NESA Registered and Accredited Individual Non-government Schools (NSW Manual), specifically:
  - 3. Requirements for Registered Non-government Schools, under requirements for Curriculum; Premises and Buildings; Facilities; Safe and Supportive Environments; Discipline; and Attendance.
- Standards for Registration and Review of Registration of Schools in South Australia, specifically the relevant quality related criteria for:
  - Standard 1 School Governance.
  - Standard 2 Student Learning and Assessment.
  - Standard 3 Student Safety, Health and Welfare.

## Legislation References

### National

Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)

Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)

Disability Services Act 1986 (Cth)

Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cth)

National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 (Cth)

National Disability Insurance Scheme Amendment (Quality and Safeguards Commission and other measures) Bill 2017 (Cth)

National Disability Services Standards 2014 (Cth)

National Standards for Disability Services 2014 (Cth)

Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)

Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)

Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)

### New South Wales

Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW)

Community Services (Complaints, Reviews and Monitoring) Act 1993 (NSW)

Education Act 1990 (NSW)

Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW)

## **Victoria**

Disability Act 2006 (VIC)

Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (VIC)

Human Services Standards Victoria 2012 (VIC)

## **South Australia**

Disability Services Act 1993 (SA)

Disability Services (Rights, Protection and Inclusion) Amendment Act 2013 (SA)

Education Act 1972 (SA)

Education and Early Childhood Services (Registration and Standards) Act 2011 (SA)

Education (Compulsory Education Age) Amendment Act 2007 (SA)

Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (SA)

Health and Community Services Complaints Act 2004 (SA)

## **Australian Capital Territory**

Disability Services Act 1991 (ACT)

Discrimination Act 1991 (ACT)