

# SD3

# Support Communication

Thrive Care Group Subsidiaries



This policy is part of Thrive Care Group's (Thrive) comprehensive policy suite, designed to guide and govern operations across all subsidiaries. It establishes a unified framework that ensures consistent standards, accountability, and alignment with Thrive core values and strategic objectives. The policy applies to all employees, contractors, and stakeholders within Thrive and its subsidiaries, supporting seamless governance and compliance throughout the organisation.

# SD3 Support Communication

## Policy Statement

1. Thrive is committed to:
  - a. Ensuring clear, respectful, and effective communication that supports the needs, preferences, and rights of all clients.
  - b. Promoting open, transparent, and person centred communication that upholds clients' dignity, autonomy, and cultural diversity.
  - c. Providing accessible and inclusive communication methods to accommodate diverse abilities, languages, and communication styles.
  - d. Encouraging active collaboration between clients, families, caregivers, and service providers to support informed decision-making and continuity of support.
  - e. Respecting a client's right to confidentiality and privacy while ensuring that important support information is shared appropriately to support their well-being.

## Procedures

### 1. Training

Thrive will:

- a. Provide training regarding engagement skills, crisis support and best practice communication.
- b. Evaluate the effectiveness of communication training and provide refresher training at least annually.

### 2. Communicating with Clients about Decisions

Thrive will:

- a. Provide opportunities for clients to participate in decision-making regarding both service operations and their individual support.
- b. Ensure decision-making opportunities are consistent with the client's level of capacity and may include daily choices about activities, meals and outings, individual support plans, participation in committees, involvement in service planning and review, and contribution to policy development or review.

- c. Support decision-making through individual programs that develop communication and choice-making skills.
- d. Require team members to explain decisions openly and transparently.
- e. Consider clients' choices and preferences in individual planning. Where clients cannot participate directly, a family member or advocate may represent them.
- f. Always ask clients whether they wish to participate in an activity or program. Participation is voluntary.
- g. Obtain informed consent before any treatment, procedure or intervention.
- h. Require team members to provide current, accurate and plainly expressed information to support informed decision-making:

### 3. Information and Communication

Thrive will:

- a. Provide information about choice at each major service point, from intake to end of service.
- b. Make available information to clients about their supports via a client portal, which provides insight into their supports.
- c. Ensure clients with limited literacy or communication capacity understand their rights and opportunities.
- d. Make information available in multiple formats including website links to NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission and the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission, client handbook, support plan, management plan, client newsletters, social media, legal and human rights charter, posters, website content, privacy statement and service agreements.
- e. Support clients to understand their support plan, service agreement, and related terms in formats suited to their needs and cultural backgrounds.
- f. Provide clear information on service agreements, including rights, responsibilities, services, contributions and fees.

### 4. Payment and Invoicing

Thrive will:

- a. Provide clear and accurate information on prices, fees, contributions and payments.

- b. Explain and implement changes to fees only after obtaining informed consent.
- c. Address overcharging and issue refunds promptly.
- d. Present invoices in a timely, accurate, and accessible manner.

## 5. Communication on Safety and Condition

Thrive will:

- a. Record all communications in the client's file in accordance with Thrive's OM8 - Information Management Policy.
- b. Provide contact details for the relevant point of contact at intake.
- c. Respond promptly to concerns raised via the preferred contact details, In accordance with Thrive's OM5 – Feedback & Complaints Policy.
- d. Notify relevant parties when:
  - i. Support commences
  - ii. Needs, goals, or preferences change
  - iii. Risks emerge
  - iv. Incidents occur
  - v. Support transitions happen
  - vi. Critical incidents or emergencies arise

## 6. Communication during Transitions and Incidents

Thrive will:

- a. Ensure communication protocols are followed during transitions of support, incidents and emergencies, including timely notification of all relevant parties and documentation of all communications in accordance with Thrive's OM7 - Emergency & Disaster Management Policy.
- b. Apply open disclosure principles when communicating about incidents or service changes.

## 7. Feedback and Complaints

Thrive will:

- a. Inform clients of their right to provide feedback or make complaints without fear of retribution.
- b. Use feedback and complaints to inform continuous improvement activities.

- c. Link feedback and complaints processes to Thrive's OM5 – Feedback & Complaints Policy and ensure outcomes are communicated to clients and used to improve service quality.
- d. Actively apologise to clients where appropriate.

## 8. Continuous Improvement

Thrive will:

- a. Use communication-related feedback, complaints and incident data to inform quality improvement activities.
- b. Review communication systems and protocols annually and after any significant incident or complaint.

## Related Business Procedures

1. SP1 – Person Centred Assessment & Support Planning Policy
2. SP2 – Choice, Independence & Quality of Life Policy
3. SP3 – Dignity, Respect & Privacy of Clients Policy
4. OM5 – Feedback & Complaints Policy
5. OM6 – Incident Management Policy
6. OM7 - Emergency & Disaster Management Policy
7. OM8 – Information Management Policy
8. SD1 – Delivery of Support & Services Policy
9. SD7 – Medication Management & Monitoring Policy

## Responsible Persons

1. The Chief Executive Officer must:
  - a. Manage and monitor compliance with this policy.
  - b. Support team member competence and compliance with this policy.

2. Management must:
  - a. Manage and monitor compliance with this policy.
  - b. Ensure team members receive appropriate training, supervision and debriefing to comply with this policy.
  - c. Implement systems for support plan development and review.
  - d. Review support plans annually, at a minimum.
3. All Thrive team members must comply with this policy and participate in communication training and continuous improvement activities.

## Definitions

1. **Advocate:** A person who has the authority of the client and represents their interests. An Advocate may be a family member, friend or a legally appointed guardian.
2. **Case management:** The process of coordinating the acquisition and delivery of services to meet the individual needs of the client. Case Management involves assessment, planning, implementation and monitoring to ensure that supports are integrated, person centred and responsive to the client's goals, preferences and circumstances.
3. **Client:** Any individual who receives support or care from Thrive or access the services provided by Thrive.
4. **Consent:** Voluntary agreement to some act, practice or purpose. Consent has two elements: knowledge of the matter agreed to and voluntary agreement.
5. **Guardian:** A substitute decision-maker legally appointed to make personal or lifestyle decisions for a person under guardianship for a specified period of time with defined functions.
6. **Informed Consent:** Consent given by a client who has received all necessary information in a way they understand, and who has the capacity to make the decision voluntarily.
7. **Intake:** The systematic process of gathering information about people's current situation in order to facilitate their access to Thrive services and assist them to make informed decisions about the needed service.
8. **Management Plan:** A document that outlines how Thrive team members will provide support to a client for specific health or care needs. A management plan is a supplementary plan that support the implementation of a support plan. It details the agreed strategies, procedures, and responsibilities required to ensure safe, effective, and consistent support. Examples include an Epilepsy Management Plan, Diabetes

Management Plan, or Enteral Feeding Plan. Each Management Plan includes but is not limited to the purpose and scope of the plan, step-by-step procedures, roles and responsibilities and risk management strategies.

9. **Person Centred:** An approach that places the client at the centre of planning and decision-making, respecting their preferences, values, and needs.
10. **Service Agreement:** A written or verbal agreement between Thrive and the client that outlines the scope of engagement, services to be provided, roles and responsibilities, fees and payment terms, privacy and confidentiality provisions, grievance and feedback procedures, and expectations for respectful and safe conduct. Service agreements are developed in consultation with the client and may take the form of a support plan, or client agreement depending on the nature and duration of the services.
11. **Support Plan:** A document developed in partnership with the client and, where appropriate, their family or Guardian. It outlines the supports Thrive will provide and/or coordinate to meet the client's individual needs and goals. The Support Plan is person-centred and includes, but is not limited to goals, preferences, risks and specific requirements.
12. **Team Member:** All Thrive employees, volunteers and subcontractors.
13. **Thrive:** Thrive Care Group Pty Ltd ABN 68 637 232 752, together with each of its subsidiaries.

## References

1. Aged Care Act 2024 (Cth) and its associated regulations
2. National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Practice Standards and their associated regulations
3. Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
4. Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986
5. Guardianship Act 1987 (NSW)

## Version Control

Version 1            31 August 2025            New policy creation



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