

# Guide Dogs.

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## Service Delivery Practice Standards



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# 1. Purpose.

The Practice Standards set expectations for all Guide Dogs NSW/ACT staff who deliver services for Clients, their families and supports. By meeting these expectations, Guide Dogs NSW/ACT can be confident that our service delivery is high quality, because it is safe, effective and promotes positive Client experiences. A single set of Practice Standards applicable to all staff engaged in service delivery promotes consistency, irrespective of what service is being delivered or who is delivering it.

The Practice Standards are set out in two main sections: principles and standards. The principles are our collective values that guide Client experience during service delivery, whereas the standards are our service delivery behaviours.



## 2. Principles.

This section outlines the Client experience vision that Guide Dogs NSW/ACT strives to achieve during service delivery and the principles that guide how services should be delivered.

All staff at Guide Dogs NSW/ACT are committed to this Client experience vision: Guide Dogs NSW/ACT empowers people with low vision or blindness to live life their way. Together, we create freedom, independence and choice. We strive to achieve this vision through aligning our actions with the following principles.

The principles are the values that influence how services should be delivered in a way that promotes a positive Client experience. Understanding our guiding principles is important, as they explain why we believe some service delivery behaviours should be demonstrated and others avoided. The principles underpin each of the seven standards and are reflected within the respective behavioural criteria.

### **Principle 1: We are a trusted partner.**

We are guided by our Clients, their families and support networks to understand their needs, goals and aspirations. We work together to co-design and tailor services to support our Clients to achieve positive outcomes.

### **Principle 2: We are led by lived experience.**

We listen to our Clients through consultation and co-design. Their voices guide decision-making in all areas of our business, informing our service delivery, social change and advocacy efforts as we strive to create an inclusive and accessible world.

### **Principle 3: We are committed to quality service.**

Our passionate and professional workforce have the knowledge, skills and tools required to deliver responsive, accessible and inclusive services and supports for Clients. This shared responsibility and commitment is demonstrated through our Service Delivery Practice Standards and My [Client] Service Standards.

### **Principle 4: We are empowering.**

We encourage and support Clients to exercise choice and control over their service delivery experience. We focus on Clients' personal aspirations to support them to achieve meaningful outcomes that matter most to them and live the life they choose.



## **Principle 5: We are respectful.**

We value, accept and sensitively respond to the rights, attitudes, beliefs, feelings and preferences of Clients. We value Clients' dignity and support the creation of a safe place for them to express themselves and build trust.

## **Principle 6: We are person-centred.**

Our flexible, individualised and holistic approach acknowledges that each Client has their own preferences, needs and values. We work in collaboration with our Clients, informed by each other's expertise to innovate and create positive change.



# 3. Standards.

This section presents seven standards that Guide Dogs NSW/ACT staff engaged in the delivery of services are required to meet. Each standard is defined, supported by an explanation of its importance, and accompanied by several behavioural criteria that specify how the standard is demonstrated. Not all criteria will be demonstrated in every service interaction and the list of behavioural criteria is not exhaustive.

## **Standard 1: Safe service delivery.**

Safe service delivery refers to the actions that Guide Dogs NSW/ACT staff engaged in the delivery of services take to ensure the activities, environments, equipment, people and materials used during service delivery, protect the physical and psychological health and wellbeing of Clients. Safe service delivery is important, as it protects Clients from physical and psychological harm while supporting their right to make informed decisions and take risks.

To meet the standard of safe service delivery, Guide Dogs NSW/ACT staff are required to demonstrate the following behaviours during service delivery:

- Draw on available information and collect new information about Clients, environments and activities to identify potential safety risks.
- Accurately assess the level of any presenting risks.

- Select and apply controls that are likely to be effective in reducing risk.
- Clearly communicate risks to Clients and include them in decisions about taking and managing risks.
- Continually monitor for risks during service delivery and promptly apply or adjust controls.
- Confirm that Clients feel safe and want to continue participation in service delivery.
- Document risk management processes undertaken and resulting actions in our Client management system and through Client communication methods.
- Report Client incidents and potential incidents in alignment with organisational requirements.
- Identify, raise and report suspected abuse and neglect of vulnerable persons in alignment with organisational requirements.
- Identify potential risks to self during service delivery and take appropriate action in alignment with organisational requirements.

## **Standard 2: Technical knowledge and skill.**

Technical knowledge and skill refers to the application of subject matter expertise to effectively work with Clients to achieve their goals.



Technical knowledge and skills are important to accurately and comprehensively identify Clients' needs to design and implement effective and innovative service delivery and evaluate service delivery outcomes.

To meet the standard of technical knowledge and skill, Guide Dogs NSW/ACT staff are required to demonstrate the following behaviours during service delivery:

- Competently conduct all service delivery activities and tasks as indicated within their scope of practice.
- Recognise the limits of their competence and experience and seek appropriate support as required.
- Select and implement approaches that meet identified needs and support goal attainment in the most responsive and effective manner for each Client.
- Apply approaches used in service delivery that maximise the potential for Clients to build their personal capacity.
- Adapt approaches used in service delivery in a timely, seamless and contextually appropriate way.
- Identify and apply the best available evidence in service delivery and decision making.
- Reflect on the approaches used in service delivery and evaluate the impact on Client outcomes and experiences.
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## **Standard 3:**

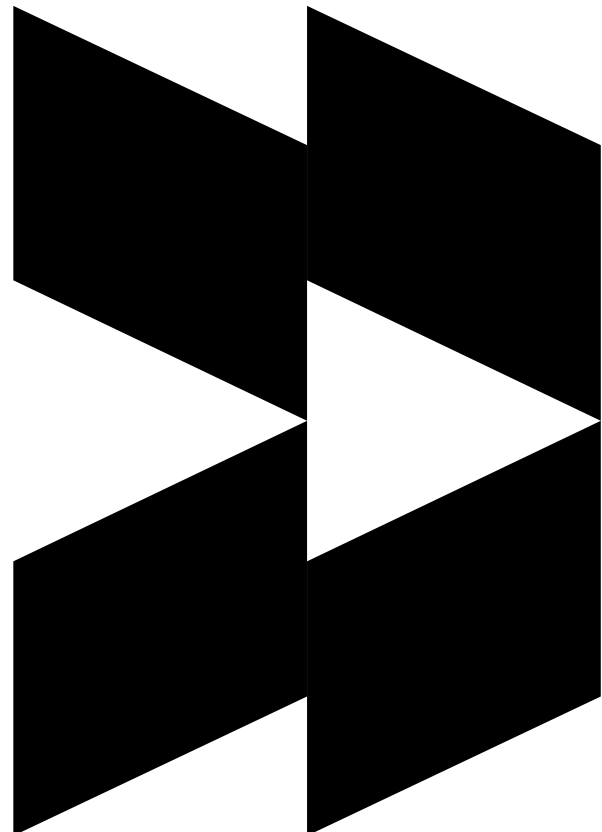
### **Professional conduct.**

Professional conduct refers to the ways in which Guide Dogs NSW/ACT staff engaged in the delivery of services to Clients demonstrate empathy, honesty, integrity, accountability, reliability and responsibility. Professional conduct is important as it promotes a positive reputation and trust in self, organisation and profession. Professional conduct builds safe and effective interpersonal relationships and improves the quality of Clients' service delivery experiences.

To meet the standard of professional conduct, practitioners are required to demonstrate the following behaviours during service delivery:

- Deliver services in alignment with the Guide Dogs NSW/ACT Code of Conduct.
- Positively present their profession and the organisation to Clients, stakeholders and the community.
- Work within the scope of their service area and connect Clients to other supports where additional goals arise.
- Explain, justify and stand by professional decisions, recommendations and advice.
- Be clear and transparent about what Clients can expect from service delivery, including service responsiveness, frequency, duration, activities and outcomes.

- Physical appearance, including attire, is appropriate for the context of service delivery.
- Be punctual for all service delivery interactions.
- Be prepared for each service delivery interaction with a plan and all required resources.
- Do not record or disclose any Client information that is not relevant to service delivery.
- Disclose and manage any known or potential conflicts of interest.
- Respect the confidentiality and privacy of Client information in alignment with organisational policy and procedure.





## **Standard 4:**

### **Collaborative partnerships.**

Collaborative partnerships refer to the way Guide Dogs NSW/ACT staff who deliver services work with Clients, their families, advocates and supports to plan and deliver these services. Collaborative partnerships are important for achieving positive outcomes as they strengthen understanding of Clients' needs and how those needs can be met during service delivery.

To meet the standard of collaborative partnerships, Guide Dogs NSW/ACT staff are required to demonstrate the following behaviours during service delivery:

- Uphold professional boundaries during interactions with Clients, families and supports.
- Use enquiry to support Clients to identify and articulate their needs.
- Listen to what is important to Clients and incorporate the information into service delivery.
- Draw on Clients' experiences, strengths and interests to inform service delivery.
- Provide opportunities and time for Clients to consider and make decisions about how their services are to be delivered.
- Ensure Clients, families and other supports are clear in understanding their roles and responsibilities in the service delivery partnership.
- Maintain a power-balanced partnership with Clients.
- Approach all situations with empathy and compassion, ensuring Client choice and inclusion are at the centre of all decisions.
- Involve Clients' support networks in service delivery planning and implementation where appropriate.
- Model and encourage collaborative partnerships between Clients and their formal and informal supports.
- Encourage, resolve and record feedback and continuous improvement opportunities identified by Clients, their families and supports.

## **Standard 5: Effective communication.**

Effective communication refers to the ways Guide Dogs NSW/ACT staff who deliver services listen, speak, write and use non-verbal language to share information, ideas and feelings with others. Effective communication is important as it contributes to the development of positive relationships and leads to Clients, their families and supports feeling better understood, respected and included during service delivery. While effective communication positively influences safety and effectiveness, it is particularly influential for promoting positive Client experiences.

To meet the standard of effective communication, Guide Dogs NSW/ACT staff are required to demonstrate the following behaviours during service delivery:

- Communicate in the language and mode of communication most suitable to the Client's, families and supports' needs.
- Seek out and listen to contributions from Clients, families and supports.
- Confirm contributions from Clients, families and supports have been understood.
- Identify and adapt to the communication needs and preferences of Clients, families and supports.
- Maintain alignment with professional conduct expectations when adapting communication.

- Provide Clients and others involved in service delivery activities with effective and easily understood instructions.
- Continually monitor the effectiveness of communication and make adjustments quickly and seamlessly.
- Ensure all communication is accessible and easy to understand.





## Standard 6: Embracing diversity.

Embracing diversity refers to the way Guide Dogs NSW/ACT staff engaged in delivering services identify, accept and respond to the differences of Clients, their families and supports to ensure they can positively and effectively participate in service delivery. Beliefs, values, attitudes, preferences, behaviour and appearance can all contribute to diversity. Embracing diversity is important to ensure fair and equitable service delivery experiences for Clients.

To meet the standard of embracing diversity, Guide Dogs NSW/ACT staff are required to demonstrate the following behaviours during service delivery:

- Identify where Clients' diversity may impact the way services are delivered.
- Reflect on own diversity and how this may impact Clients' participation in service delivery.
- Accept Client differences expressed during service delivery, including when they differ from own.
- Respond to Clients' guidance as to how they would like their diversity acknowledged and responded to.
- Seek to creatively and enthusiastically solve problems that promote inclusion.
- Involve Clients in decisions about how to adjust service delivery to accommodate diversity.
- Ensure any required changes to service delivery resulting from diversity are enacted.



## Standard 7: Quality documentation.

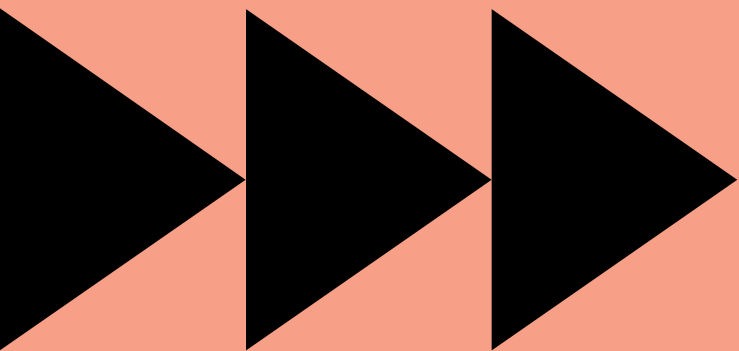
Quality documentation refers to the written communication of service delivery events and outcomes from Guide Dogs NSW/ACT staff engaged in delivering services, for a specific target audience including Clients, families and formal supports (including other Guide Dogs NSW/ACT staff and external stakeholders). Quality documentation is important for providing evidence of decision making, professional judgement and communicating how Clients are progressing towards their goals.

To meet the standard of quality documentation, practitioners are required to demonstrate the following:

- Identify and fulfil the objective of the documentation.
- Include pertinent information that is relevant to the documentation purpose.
- Ensure documentation accurately and objectively reflects service delivery.
- Ensure the Clients' preferences, choices and feedback are reflected in documentation.
- Ensure documentation is accessible and available in the preferred format for the target audience.
- Use language that is appropriate and familiar to the target audience.
- Use a logical sequence and appropriate structure for the type of documentation being written.
- Adhere to spelling and grammar conventions and approved use of abbreviations and acronyms.







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