

## SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 BACKGROUND

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) has developed the 'NDIS Practice Standards' to ensure that all NDIS registered service providers in Australia adhere to the national quality standards. Implementation of the 'NDIS Practice Standards' ensures that all NDIS registered service providers in Australia can meet these standards and fulfil their obligations under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (Provider Registration and Practice Standards) Rules 2018. The Service access and Equity policy refers to a range of outcomes and quality indicators outlined in Schedule 1 Core Module - Part 2. Governance and Operational Management and Part 3 Provision of Supports. The procedures under this policy provide guidelines for families to access information about the supports we deliver, make application for supports, client intake and exit.

### 1.2 PURPOSE

Fairstart Early Intervention has a role to play in assisting families to access information on a range of supports and services available within their community. This will enable families to make informed decisions about which services and supports meet their individual and cultural needs. Sharing information and working collaboratively with other organisations enables a responsive referral network. Consistent messages about a service's availability and access procedures will ensure that families are treated equally and fairly. This policy places the needs of families and children with disabilities as its focus and enables equal access to supports and services.

### 1.3 SCOPE

This policy applies to Fairstart Early Intervention staff and service users.

### 1.4 DEFINITIONS

Word/Term	Definition
Client	Child, Participant, Parent, Participant's representative, Family Member, Guardian or any other person receiving services from Fairstart Early Intervention
Consent	A Client/Participant's representative, Parent, Family Member, Guardian or other person responsible for the care of the child giving approval or permission on behalf of the child
Referrer	Person contacting Fairstart to enquire about services. This may be a parent or guardian or an Advocate with the family's consent
Advocate	A person who publicly supports another person or who puts a case on someone else's behalf

### 1.5 LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

- The *National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 (NDIS Act)* provides the legislative basis for the provision of services to all NDIS participants in Australia.

- The *Disability Services Act 1993* (NSW) provides the legislation regarding the provision of disability services for people with disabilities in NSW. No 1 “(d) persons with disabilities have the same rights as other members of Australian society to services which will support their attaining a reasonable quality of life; and (e) Persons with disabilities have the right to choose their own lifestyle and to have access to information, provided in a manner appropriate to their disability and cultural background, necessary to all informed choice.
- The *UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013* enable greater community access to national disability insurance services in Australia. The Act protects and prevents individuals from experiencing harm that can arise from poor quality or unsafe supports and services provided under the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

## 1.6 STAKEHOLDERS

This policy will benefit children with developmental delay and or disabilities and their families, and staff from Fairstart Early Intervention.

## SECTION 2 - POLICY

### 2.1 OBJECTIVE AND GOALS

- Fairstart Early Intervention will make information available about FCC services
- Fairstart Early Intervention will have clearly defined processes to access services
- Fairstart Early Intervention will support referrals and collaborate with other organisations to increase client’s support options

### 2.2 POLICY STATEMENT

Each family is assisted to access the relevant FCC supports and services of their choice for their child.

## APPLICATION & IMPLEMENTATION

In relation to NDIS Practice Standards  
Fairfield City Council:

- will clearly define and document supports available, and any access / entry criteria (including any associated costs). This information is communicated to each client using the language, mode of communication and terms that the client is most likely to understand

This will be achieved by:

- provision of information about Fairstart Early Intervention services on the Fairfield City Council website and within our clinic. This information is available

to current and prospective clients, referral and partner agencies and the community.

- costs of supports is published for community access via the council website. Community members are welcome to phone (with communication support if necessary) to discuss the costs of services they are specifically interested in at any time
  - information on Fairfield City Council website can be translated in community languages for community access
  - providing or forwarding information to community members who make phone enquiries
  - providing information for alternative referrals to families who are unable to fund or access Fairstart services, unable to access services for other reasons or who require the service of other agencies
  - use different modes of communication to assist the diverse needs of the community Fairfield City Council uses Translator Interpreter Services (TIS)
  - where possible, delivering information in families' first language through the employment of community language aides, and bilingual staff or written translated information
  - ethically managing a waiting list for persons aged 0-11 years that we do not currently have the capacity to deliver desired services to. This waiting list will manage people according to date and the person's access to an active funding source. Enquiries for the waiting list for persons who do not yet have an active funding source, will be managed separately, with an expectation that the referrer contacts Fairstart to inform them of their new active funding source. The applicant will then be moved to the active waiting list
  - regularly reviewing information, policies and practices for service access
  - responding quickly to requests for information
- will ensure reasonable adjustments to the support delivery environment are made and monitored to ensure it is fit for purpose and will support each client's health, privacy, dignity, quality of life and independence

This will be achieved through:

- giving clients choice as to where they would like their supports to take place
- conducting personalised risk assessments for clients, in collaboration with their family
- ensuring that our environments meet access criteria for our clients
- listening to clients' identified needs or concerns and responding quickly.
- provision of spaces where supports and/or conversations can be delivered in privacy
- following WHS-001 Policy and system
- staff creating Risk assessments and Safe Work Method Statements to identify and reduce risks associated with activities, engaging in training signing off on procedures
- practicing risk identification procedures including following through corrective actions to conclusion when identified

- conducting workplace inspections – minimum of 6 monthly
  - conducting risk assessments on new equipment that is required to conform to Australian Safety Standards before purchase and frequent evaluation whilst in use. Only equipment suitable to the age and abilities of each client will be used and recommended
  - When supports are to be delivered in the home environment, conducting a preliminary home visiting checklist to identify risks in the clients home
- will support each client to understand under what circumstances supports can be withdrawn. Access to supports required by the client will not be withdrawn or denied solely on the basis of a dignity of risk choice that has been made by the client

This will be achieved through:

- creating a QMF- 01.2 Service Level Agreement (SLA) with service users detailing; services to be delivered in line with the clients choices, expectations of Fairstart, the client, consent and use of personal information, how to access policies and information and cancellation policy.
- Fairfield City Council will expect all clients receiving ongoing supports (not including medicare services) to engage create and sign a SLA before supports commence.
- A copy of the SLA is automatically emailed to the client after both parties sign the agreement. We will provide a hard copy of the agreement for the client at their request. If a client chooses not to keep a copy of the agreement, we will forward them a copy at any time in the future at their request.
- inclusion of information regarding the circumstances under what circumstances supports can be withdrawn, in the SLA
- supporting clients to understand under what circumstances supports can be withdrawn, through SLA meeting and in writing in the SLA. The Service Level Agreement is explained to clients at the Service Level Agreement meeting with communication supports engaged when necessary in a language or mode of communication and terms that the client is most likely to understand.
- Access to supports required by the client will not be withdrawn or denied solely on the basis of a dignity of risk choice that has been made by the client

## SECTION 3 - GOVERNANCE

### 3.1 RELATED POLICIES/PROCEDURES

<b>Policy Number</b>	<a href="#">QMPOL-FS-01.1 Human Rights</a> <a href="#">QMPOL-FS-01.2 Feedback and complaints</a> <a href="#">QMPOL-FS-03.1 Client Support Provision</a> <a href="#">QMPOL-FS-05.1 Participation and inclusion</a> <a href="#">QMPOL-CS-106 Intake Policy</a> <a href="#">Disabilty Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP plan)</a> <a href="#">QMPR-CS-004 Fairstart Intake Process</a>
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	<p><a href="#">QMP-CS-035 Fairstart - Adding, modifying and removing families on the Fairstart Early Intervention Waitlist</a></p> <p><a href="#">QMP-FS-02.1 Fairstart-Family Vacancy Identification from Echidna Waitlist</a></p> <p><a href="#">QMP-FS-02.2 Fairstart-Family Orientation Procedure</a></p> <p><a href="#">QMP-FS-01.2 Creating an SLA_Fairstart Early Intervention</a></p> <p><a href="#">QMWI-CS-037 BDS_Fairstart Setting up a new Echidna plan_Fairstart Early Intervention</a></p> <p><a href="#">QMP-FS-03.5 Client Risk Assessment Guide Procedure</a></p> <p>WHS-001 Policy</p>
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### 3.2 RESPONSIBILITY

<b>Policy Owner</b>	Children and Family Services
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### 3.3 RISK

Clients may not have equitable and fair access to services they desire or know how to access services.

### 3.4 VERSION CONTROL AND CHANGE HISTORY

Version Number	Approval Date	Approved by	Amendment
Version 2	3/3/14	Children and Family Services Manager	Inclusion of controlled forms and attachments
Version 4	3/06/2020		Update to allow for NDIS Practice standard requirements
Version 5	1/11/2020		Make NDIS practice standard – practices more visible

### 3.5 REVIEW DATE

This policy will be reviewed every five years or when a change to governing legislation occurs, whichever occurs sooner.

## SECTION 4 - PROCEDURES

### 4.1 PROCEDURE

	Procedure steps	Responsibility
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Attending to an enquiry</b> Any family or organisation may make enquiries about services available to their child and family at any time. Enquires can be made via phone, email, online (through the Fairfield City website, or in person. Families can use an advocate to make the referral on their behalf. The referrer if not the child's parent will be recorded in the Echidna note recording details of the referral.	All staff
<b>1.1</b>	Ask questions using the Fairstart Access flow chart to ascertain family's needs and details. If staff are not available at the time <a href="#">Client information form</a> can be used	All staff
<b>1.2</b>	Inform families of waiting list and price breakdown of service.	All staff
<b>1.3</b>	If referrer feels that Fairstart services are not relevant, offer information regarding other pathways and services.	All staff
<b>1.4</b>	If referrer feels Fairstart services are relevant, ascertain funding source for therapy	All staff
<b>1.5</b>	With consent Enter contact details of child and parent/ guardian on Client management system-Echidna; preferably recording 3 types of contact e.g. mobile, email and home address using <a href="#">Echidna_ Waiting list questions checklist</a>	All staff
<b>1.6</b>	Child is placed on waiting list/s for requested services using Echidna_Clasify tab_assign categories. If waiting list is significant, referrer is encouraged to place their name on waiting lists with other organisations as well. Staff provide a local list of services if desired by the referrer.	All staff
<b>1.7</b>	At the time of the referral, families will be informed of waiting times and the process of when Fairstart will contact them. When referrals are received indirectly without contact from the family, Fairstart will encourage the referee to inform the family of the above.	
<b>1.8</b>	Extend Invitation to the family to visit our office or attend playgroups to discuss their child's needs	All staff
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Offering a position</b>	
<b>2.1</b>	Therapist goes through wait list, to offer relevant service, by prioritisation of date	Therapist
<b>2.2</b>	Staff member calls family to offer service. All conversations and family requests and responses are recorded as a note in Echidna	Therapist
<b>2.3</b>	If family chooses to deny the service they are offered they will be informed that they will go to the bottom of the waiting list with the current date	Therapist
<b>2.4</b>	In the instance that the family identify that they no longer need that service, the staff member will enter an end date for the wait list for that service. If the family no longer wish to be contacted by Fairstart for any services the staff member will	Therapist



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	update the profile tab 'current' to 'No'	
2.5	If family choose to go ahead with service, organise for relevant documents to be shared ; NDIS plan, Medicare referral, reports where appropriate	Therapist
2.6	For Medicare clients, therapist organises appointment time and details and explains payment and claim details with family. Progress to 3.1 Family complete Client information form on initial visit	Therapist
2.7	For NDIS and Fee for Service clients, set appointment time with family to meet with Team Leader to complete Client Information form and discuss options to complete a <a href="#">Service Level Agreement</a> . Families are encouraged to bring a support person to the SLA meeting if they wish. Cultural support worker / FCC Interpreter support / Translator Interpreter Service phone support organised if desired	Therapist
2.8	Prepares Service Level Agreement in line with client's preferences and funding source capability and explains components of the SLA to the family All SLAs will include 1 hour billable for Progress report for each therapist working with the child and also 1 hour billable for an Intervention Plan. Billable attendance at an IFSP meeting is factored into the therapist service delivery hours in the budget.	Team Leader
2.9	Families are informed that Fairstart services include therapy sessions, but also involve Individual Family Support Planning meeting, (IFSP) Intervention planning session and progress report to include input by each therapist involved, as per ECEI best practice.	Team Leader
2.10	SLA is signed by both parties and copy emailed to client's representative. A hard copy is available at request.	Team Leader
2.12	Families are informed of their rights as participants. A list of advocacy organisations is accessible on the client information link on FCC website identified in their SLA	Team Leader
2.13	Scan completed Client information form, SLA, NDIS plan / Medicare referral Echidna documents through notes	Therapist
2.14	Create NDIS portal Service Booking- if relevant Set up plan according to SLA, including assigning notes with travel/ resource (room) bookings for appointments (excluding closure periods and school holidays if family have identified that they do not want service during school holidays)	Administration assistant
3.0	<b>Commencing service</b>	
3.1	Staff member calls family to organise first visit, as per the arrangement of sessions, indicated in the SLA and completes note in Echidna	Therapist
3.2	The child's developmental, cultural and linguistic needs are determined in conjunction with families and service personnel - Parent/ Participant's representative communication preferences are recorded on their Echidna Contact record. - The family and therapist discuss, draft and sign off on Client Risk Assessment	Therapist/ Family

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<b>3.3</b>	Family is emailed Client consent form for completion	Therapist
<b>3.4</b>	Services commence with the therapist providing information during or after supports to the family, taking into account their preferred communication styles	Therapist
<b>3.5</b>	Through an IFSP meeting; an Intervention plan is developed and implemented, reviewed and modified. All parties involved in the IFSP are encouraged to sign. With the client's consent, copies are shared with the parties involved in the client's Intervention	All FS staff/ Family/ Collaborative parties
<b>3.6</b>	Supports and goals will be reviewed in three months, if not initiated by the family or therapist before that time	Family / Therapist
<b>3.7</b>	For NDIS funded clients, NDIS progress reports are completed prior to the end of the participant's plan, to indicate progress made in goals and to advocate for further funding/support	
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Existing Client wants additional services –other therapy</b>	
<b>4.1</b>	Child goes on the regular waiting list for requested additional service, with current date (i.e. date service was requested)	All staff
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Existing Client wants to increase frequency of services with current therapist e.g. fortnightly to weekly</b>	
<b>5.1</b>	Therapist records date and request in Echidna notes and keeps personal wait list for when capacity that suits this client becomes available. Higher priority to regular Waiting list	All staff
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Client has changed their details</b>	
<b>6.1</b>	Create Echidna note to identify what details have been updated with the consent of the client and paste in old details (to ensure we do not delete the record entirely). Update details in client and / or parent/ caregiver contact tab	All staff
<b>7.0</b>	<b>Exiting service</b>	
<b>7.1</b>	Families are invited to complete Exit Survey	Therapist
<b>7.2</b>	When at least two weeks' notice is given to exit the service, as indicated in the initial SLA, families will be supported to transition to another service. A progress report can be completed. With written parental permission, all relevant information including reports, Individual Family Support Plans and Individual intervention plans can be passed onto the receiving service.	Therapist
<b>7.3</b>	Echidna Administration Discharge note is completed documenting details of why client is discharging.	Therapist
<b>7.4</b>	Therapist emails admin team to initiate discharge and archive procedure. Therapist informs admin team if the family wishes to receive future emails form Fairstart or not.	
<b>7.5</b>	Update Echidna_Classify tab_Category - end date for client status - add category for 'inactive email only', if client wishes to	Admin



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	continue to receive emails about services from Fairstart	
<b>7.6</b>	Update Echidna_Profile tab_ current status to 'No' if client wishes to have no further contact from Fairstart	Admin
<b>7.7</b>	The child's record is archived to Objective once discharged	Admin
<b>7.8</b>	Children who have exited the service and who later wish to re- apply for Fairstart services may apply for re-entry by placing their name on the relevant waiting list/s with the current date	All staff

## 4.2 FORMS AND RECORD MANAGEMENT

### Supporting Documents

- QMF-FS-01.1 Client Information and Consent form
- QMF-CS-01.2 Service Level Agreement
- QMF-FS-02.3 Client Consent
- QMF-FS-03.5 Client Risk assessment
- QMF-FS-02.4 Client feedback survey
- QMF-FS-02.12 Client Exit survey

### Appendix

- FAIRSTART ATTACHMENT Fairstart access flow chart
- FAIRSTART ATTACHMENT NDIS Provider flyer
- FAIRSTART ATTACHMENT SOS Feeding Group flyer
- FAIRSTART ATTACHMENT Hanen flyer
- FAIRSTART ATTACHMENT Social Skills Program flyer
- FAIRSTART ATTACHMENT Key Word Sign flyer
- FAIRSTART ATTACHMENT Fairstart Philosophy
- FAIRSTART ATTACHMENT Fairstart pamphlet Vietnamese
- FAIRSTART ATTACHMENT Fairstart pamphlet Chinese
- FAIRSTART ATTACHMENT IFSP tip sheet

*Fairstart welcomes your feedback. If you would like to give us feedback on this or any of our policies or procedures, please contact us by emailing [fairstart@fairfieldcity.nsw.gov.au](mailto:fairstart@fairfieldcity.nsw.gov.au)*