

# Continuity of Supports Policy

## 1. Purpose

This policy sets guidelines on providing supports and services where there are staff shortages.

Inala Community House (ICH) National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) will have arrangements in place to minimise the risk of cancellation, no show or late change to a scheduled support, or in the event of an emergency or disaster situation.

Service agreements between ICH NDIS and participants will include details of cancellation arrangements (including rescheduling the support) and advice periods for cancellations and changes to agreed appointments.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all ICH NDIS representatives including key management personnel, Directors, full time workers, part time workers, casual workers, contractors, volunteers, students. For the purpose of this policy, these persons shall be referred to as workers.

## 3. Policy

### 3.1 Commitment to uninterrupted supports

As part of ICH NDIS' commitment to uninterrupted supports, the program will ensure that:

- Day-to-day operations are managed in an efficient and effective way to avoid disruption and ensure continuity of supports
- Supports are planned with each participant to meet their specific needs and preferences
- The participant's needs and preferences are documented and provided to workers prior to commencing work with each participant, to help ensure that their experience is consistent with their expressed preferences
- Arrangements in place include contingencies where possible to help participants access supports without interruption throughout the period of their service agreement
- In the event of worker absence or vacancy, a suitably qualified and/or experienced person will perform the role where changes or interruptions are unavoidable. Alternative arrangements will be made and the participants approval sought
- Where applicable, disaster planning measures will be in place to enable continuation of critical supports before, during and after a disaster.

### 3.2 Avoiding service interruptions

As much as possible, ICH NDIS seeks to avoid service interruptions to participants due to worker absences.

The program will ensure that each participant is provided with appropriate supports at the appropriate time.

Risks related to delegating authority to a different support worker in the risks register will be recorded and managed. If the usual delegated person is unable to attend or fulfil their duties, the responsibility will be delegated to another worker who is suitably informed and qualified.

The program aims to avoid service interruptions to participants by:

- Where practicable, having suitable replacement staff members that can undertake supports when needed ensuring that the replacement staff member has all required knowledge to properly support the participant
- Informing the participant (by phone or in person) if the usual support worker is unable to provide services or attend an appointment
- Obtaining the consent of participants, and/or other relevant parties, before proceeding with services adhering to this policy.

### 3.3 Rescheduling services

When rescheduling services, ICH NDIS will:

- Only be rescheduled if workers can be reasonably sure that:
  - there is insufficient capacity to delegate support duties to a suitable person, and
  - the rescheduling will not negatively impact the participant's safety, health and/or well-being.
- Not reschedule a service if it this has a risk of impacting a participant's safety, health and/or well-being
- Record and manage risks associated with rescheduling services
- Manage service rescheduling by:
  - contacting the participant by phone or in person as soon as it is known that a service reschedule is required, finding a replacement time that is suitable for the participant
  - managing any associated administrative considerations (e.g. room availability) in a timely manner.

### 3.4 Delegation of authority

To manage delegation of authority, ICH NDIS will:

- If applicable, have a recorded system of delegation which details the people/position holders that will step into a role if the usual position holder is absent
- Ensure that the next person in line of delegation has suitable knowledge, qualifications and experience to undertake the relevant duties

- Avoid interruptions to key management activities by:
  - rescheduling any non-essential meetings and other management activities
  - planning essential management activities in advance
  - informing workers about our delegation of authority arrangements
  - informing returning management personnel about the work that has been done during their absence.

### 3.5 Alternative Arrangements

All alternative arrangements put in place to ensure continuity of supports will be planned and recorded. Where changes or interruptions are unavoidable workers will:

- Explain the situation to the participant and outline the alternative arrangements
- Seek the participant's consent before putting the alternative arrangements into place
- Deliver the alternative arrangements in a way that is appropriate to the participant's needs, preferences and goals.

## 4. Review

This policy remains in effect unless otherwise determined by resolution of the Board of Directors.

This policy will be reviewed every two years or sooner as required.

## 5. Related Documents

### Policies

ICH NDIS Maintenance, Records and Audit Policy  
ICH NDIS Incident Management Policy  
ICH Incident Management Procedure  
ICH Document Development Policy  
ICH Privacy Policy

### References

CentroAssist Policy Portal  
NDIS (Quality Indicators) Guidelines (Cth)  
National Disability Insurance Scheme Act (Cth)