

ECHO POLICY

DIGNITY AND CHOICE

The application of this Policy is by adherence to:

Related Aged Care Quality Standard

Standard 1:

Consumer outcome; *"I am treated with dignity and respect, and can maintain my identity. I can make informed choices about my care and services, and live the life I choose."*

Related Documents

Diversity and Inclusion Policy
 Consumer Care Service Policy
 Advocacy Policy
 Risk Management Policy
 Intake Procedure
 Reassessment procedure
 Risk Management Procedure
 Service Agreement
 Care Plan

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to guide staff in understanding and knowing Aged Care Quality Standard 1. It highlights the organisational and staff responsibilities to ensure compliance with this standard and ensure a positive client outcome.

POLICY STATEMENT

Scope

This policy has a bearing on all:

1. ECHO's clients, their representatives, carers, family and friends and others involved in their care and support.
2. ECHO's board members, executive team, management, internal and external staff, contractors, volunteers and allied health service providers.

Organisational Statement

ECHO acknowledges and commits to the importance of Dignity and Choice, and how it forms the foundation for all aged care services. ECHO is committed to continuously:

- maintaining a culture of inclusion and respect for all clients;
- supporting clients to exercise choice and maintain their independence; and
- respecting the client's right to privacy and confidentiality.

This standard is linked with all other Quality Standards, is embedded in all relevant ECHO care and service policies and procedures, and is essential to ensure Consumer (Client)-Centred-Care is provided.

The Aged Care Quality Standard 1 concepts recognise the importance of the client’s right to maintain a sense of self, remain independent, and make their own choices. It also highlights the importance of social inclusion and experiencing health and well-being to the best of their abilities and where practically possible.

The Standard 1 concepts include the following principles:

1. **Dignity and Respect** – essential to ensure the quality of life, empowering independence and supporting the client to live the life they choose. It requires respectful communication and respect for the client’s individuality and choices in all aspects of their lives.
2. **Identity, Culture and Diversity** – essential to understanding the client’s identity, needs, goals and preferences to ensure responsive, safe and quality care and services free from bias, abuse discrimination and exclusion.
3. **Cultural Safety** – refers to the client’s experience of the care and services they receive. Experiencing acceptance, understanding and respect for their cultural differences and needs. It determines the way care and services are planned, delegated and delivered.
4. **Choice** – and more specifically informed choice is a human right and clients must be provided with timely and appropriate information for them to be able to make informed and independent choices about the life they want to live, including care and services they need and how they want those services delivered. Clients must be supported to achieve their goals when they have limited choices or the risks associated with the choices cannot be accommodated.
5. **Dignity of Risk** – is about the client’s right to make decisions about their care and services and their right to take risks. ECHO must respect these choices and work with the client to mitigate the risks which may include providing information about the risks, ECHO’s limitations to providing the service required, and providing the client with options.
6. **Information** – providing timely information, in a language and way the client can understand is essential to the client’s ability to make informed choices. The client’s needs, abilities and cultural diversity may obstruct effective communication. Included in ECHO’s processes are measures to address communication barriers, for example; the use of interpreters and translation services and advocates.
7. **Personal Privacy** – is key to dignity and respect and refers to the way staff act and the way a client’s personal and other sensitive information is collected, used and managed in line with the organisation's privacy and confidentiality policy and procedures, *Privacy Act*, Principles and relevant guidelines.

Requirements

The following requirements form the framework of Standard 1, this policy and related documents.

Number	Requirement	ECHO Policies and Procedure in support of this requirement
Standard 1.1	ECHO’s clients are treated with dignity and respect, with their identity, culture and diversity valued	Dignity and Respect
Standard 1.2	Care and services are culturally safe	Cultural Safety Policy Diversity and Inclusion Policy
Standard 1.3	ECHO’s clients are supported to exercise choice and independence to: (i) make decisions about their own care and the way care and services are delivered;	Client Directed / Centred Care and Choice, Intake Procedures, Assessment and Care planning procedures Diversity and Inclusion Policy

	(ii) make decisions about when family, friends' carers or others should be involved in their care; (iii) communicate their decisions; and (iv) make connections with others and maintain relationships of choice, including intimate relationships.	
Standard 1.4	ECHO's clients are supported to take risks to enable them to live the best life they can.	Dignity and Respect Policy, Dignity of Risk Policy, Risk Assessment and Risk Management
Standard 1.5	Information provided to each consumer is current, accurate and timely, and communicated in a way that is clear, easy to understand and enables them to exercise choice.	Communication and Client Information Policy

Monitoring and Compliance

Two yearly reviews of this policy, as required when changes to the Aged Care Act and Aged Care Quality standards are published or as part of ECHO's continuous development procedures.

Implementing regular client and staff surveys and feedback, staff performance reviews and audits for the opportunity to review compliance and accuracy of the policy and related documents.

Application	All Employees and Volunteers (ECHO people)		
Process Owner:	General Manager (Operations)	Exceptions:	Nil
Author:	General Manager (Operations)	Reviewed By	Quality Manager
Approved:	CEO	Approved Date:	10/01/2023
Issue:	For review every two years as a minimum	Next Review Date:	10/01/2025
References	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aged Care Diversity Framework, Aged Care Sector Committee Sub-Group, December 2017 • Centre for Cultural Diversity in Ageing • Cultural Respect Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Health 2016 - 2026 • Sexuality Assessment Tool for Residential Aged Care Facilities 2013 • Supported Decision-Making in Aged Care: A Policy Development Guideline for Aged Care Providers in Australia • <i>Australian Privacy Principles 2013</i> 		

Revision history		
Rev #	Date	Summary
01	18/07/2023	Updated some grammatical and spelling errors.