

### 1. Purpose

This document outlines Out Loud DS' policy relating to recognising, promoting, and responding to children's and families' individual values, beliefs, and diversity.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all people who provide work and/or a service as an employee, sub-contractor, student and/or volunteer under the direction of Out Loud DS. These people are collectively referred to as the Out Loud DS "team".

As Out Loud DS is a paediatric service, we use family friendly language. The participant is referred to as the "child" and parents and carers as the "family".

### 3. Objectives

This policy aims to direct workers to:

- identify and respond considerately to the culture, diversity, values, and beliefs of each family and child
- support families' right to practise their culture, values and beliefs while accessing supports.

### 4. Policy

Out Loud DS:

- acknowledges each family's right to practise their culture, values and beliefs
- will communicate with families to identify and record relevant information related to their diversity in order to respond sensitively to their requirements
- will cultivate its work culture and environment to value cultural diversity and respect individual beliefs
- will deliver inclusive, flexible services designed to accommodate the needs of diverse people
- will provide services or information in an alternative way if it is required in order to accommodate a family's diversity
- will promote equity for all people by:
  - treating all people equally according to their human rights
  - ensuring the inclusion of all people regardless of their background, ethnicity, culture, language, beliefs, gender, age, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, level of ability, additional needs, family structure or lifestyle
  - promoting social inclusion for children affected by disability.

#### 4.1 Legal responsibilities

Out Loud DS' policies and practices are free from discrimination and comply with equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation. Unlawful discrimination will not be tolerated by team members or visitors.

## 4.2 Supporting diversity

All families are treated equally, with a welcoming, non-judgemental, and professional attitude. Out Loud DS provides support which is free from stigma, discrimination, and stereotyping. Team members will make themselves aware of specific issues related to, and respond appropriately to, diversity aspects of families, including but not limited to:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- people from cultural and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- people with diverse sexuality or gender identities
- people of different ages
- people experiencing varying degrees of disability or neurodiversity
- people with diverse religious and spiritual beliefs.

## 4.3 Working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

Out Loud DS team members are to have an understanding of the specific cultural and historical patterns that have structured Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's lives in the past and the ways in which these patterns continue to be expressed in Australia. Out Loud DS team members will seek to understand Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's world views, cultures, and communities.

Culturally secure ways of working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are to be practised by team members, providing supports that:

- accommodate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's holistic concept of health and wellbeing
- are grounded in an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's understanding of their traditional life, the impact of colonisation and its ongoing effects
- aim to strengthen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's family systems of care, control and responsibility
- use interpreters and/or plain English for those with English as a second language
- use different Aboriginal learning styles to help children and families to build skills
- work from within empowerment principles
- understand the need for developing trust with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to improve planning and provide good supports.

## 5. Related legislation

- Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cwth)
- Carers Recognition Act 2004
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cwth)
- Disability Services Act 1986 (Cwth)
- Disability Services Act 1993
- Equal Opportunity Act 1984
- Fair Work Act 2009 (Cwlth)
- Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1996 (Cwlth)
- National Disability Insurance Scheme (Provider Registration and Practice Standards) Rules 2018
- National Disability Insurance Scheme (Quality Indicators) Guidelines 2018
- National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 (Cwth)
- Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984 (WA)
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cwth)
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

## 6. Related documents

- Code of Conduct Policy and Procedure
- Family Support Plan
- Family Support Plan SOP
- Intake SOP
- National Standards for Disability Services
- National Disability Insurance Scheme Practice Standards and Quality Indicators (2018)
- National Disability Insurance Scheme Quality and Safeguarding Framework
- Person-centred Supports Policy
- Support Planning Policy

## 7. Definitions

Term	Definition
Culturally and linguistically diverse	Refers to different linguistic, religious, racial and ethnic backgrounds. Cultural diversity embraces Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and multicultural perspectives.
Diversity	Refers to aspects of people such as beliefs, attitudes, languages, social circumstances, ability, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender history, health status and age.
Diverse sexualities	Include people identifying as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, or intersex (LGBTQIA+).
Inclusive language	Is free of bias, discrimination and avoids stereotyping and mistaken assumptions about people on the basis of their, sex, marital status, pregnancy or potential pregnancy, breast feeding, sexual orientation, gender history, health status, race, nationality, colour or ethnic origin, age, religious or political conviction, impairment or disability, family responsibility or family status.

## 8. Approvals and Reviews

Approved by	Review Date
Operations team	19/12/23