

## INDEPENDENCE

**The independence of service users is supported, fostered and encouraged.**

We focus on the person: service user assessments cover physical, social and psycho-social independence and focus on strengths and abilities

Support aims to consolidate and, where possible, improve existing capacity for independent living

Inclusion in the community is encouraged by supporting service users to seek support from family, friends and the community

Consideration is given to supporting independence in special needs groups

The assessment and support processes are monitored and reviewed for their impact in fostering service user independence

### FORMS AND RECORDS

Service User Handbook

Shared drive

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## 18.1 Focus on the Person

Sherwood Respite Service Inc. (herein known as SRS) believes that the independence of each individual should be supported and our support emphasises a focus on the person as a whole, recognises each individual's strengths and abilities and aims to empower the individual to identify their own support goals. We apply the Age-friendly Principles and Practices<sup>1</sup> to our work.

### 18.1.1 ASSESSMENT

The Assessment Agency and/or Coordinator are trained in assessment to promote independence by focusing on the individual's strengths and assessing their:

- Ability to maintain independence whilst staying connected within the community
- Mobility and dexterity in activities of daily living
- Ability to source and prepare food, thereby maintaining adequate nutrition and hydration
- Social networks including family and community links.

See Section 10: Assessment.

### 18.1.2 SUPPORT PLANNING

Where appropriate, support focuses on sustaining or improving a person's capacity to live independently. Support plans are developed using a wellness approach and focus on strategies to promote and foster service users' independence. Detailed support plans are developed that ensure the strengths of service users are recognised and built on and not undermined through the delivery of support in areas where the service user can manage. Support planning may include sourcing services and supports, equipment and aids or fostering community connections depending on the program funding the support.

A copy of the support plan is given to the service user to ensure:

- The service user understands the supports provided
- Areas where a service/support is not provided are clear to the service user
- The service users role in the support process and in ensuring their independence and
- To ensure all support workers deliver consistent support in accordance with the support plan.

See Section 11: Support Planning and Delivery.

### 18.1.3 SERVICE USER INFORMATION

Information on our focus on promoting and maintaining independence is included in the [Service User Handbook](#) and is explained to service users on assessment and reviews and any other time when services may need to be modified.

See Section 14: Information Provision.

### 18.1.4 STAFF TRAINING

All staff and volunteers participate in training to foster independence and the use of documentation appropriate to their roles.

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<sup>1</sup> Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council (AHMAC) 2005 *Age-friendly Principles and Practices*

## 18.2 Inclusion in Community

SRS recognises that an important strategy in maintaining and developing independence is for service users to maintain their links in the community. To this end service users are encouraged to seek support (when required) from family, community groups and others and resources as appropriate to their circumstances and needs. SRS assists service users in identifying resources, contacting them and accessing them. We also work with family members/representatives to identify and clarify their role in ongoing services. SRS maintains links with the local community.

See Section 4: Community Understanding and Engagement.

## 18.3 Special Needs Service Users

See 9.3 Service Users with Special Needs.

## 18.4 Monitoring Independence Processes

Independence processes and systems are regularly audited as part of the SRS audit program and staff, service users and other stakeholders are encouraged to provide ongoing feedback on issues and areas where improvements can be made. (See [Corporate Calendar](#) and Section 5: Continuous Improvement)