



# **Family and Disability Services**

Participant Information Book

# Welcome to Disability Services

UnitingCare Disability Services team is committed to facilitating the best possible life outcomes for the people who purchase our disability services. We will work with each person to design supports that will assist in living a full, meaningful and inclusive life.

The information in this booklet will outline how we will support your individual needs, as well as guidance on your rights, responsibilities, how we protect your privacy, and helpful contact numbers in case you require additional support.

If you or your family member/guardian need assistance with translating this booklet into a format that better suits you (e.g. if you are vision impaired), please let us know and we will arrange assistance.



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# Service approach



## Our service vision

Create opportunities for you to imagine and to achieve a personally meaningful future
Promote individual choice for you to lead a life that is both purposeful and aspirational
Empower you with choice, opportunity and belief to create and realise your aspirations

Our vision will be informed by the following five principles:

- 1. Rights-Based:** We will empower you to have control and actively participate in the design and oversight of your supports.
- 2. Individual:** Everything we do will be done with you.
- 3. Partnership:** You and your families will be partners in all aspects of the supports we provide you, including how services will be provided, where they will be provided and who provides them.
- 4. Transparency:** We will be clear about all aspects of the support we provide, including providing the right information to allow you to determine whether you are receiving both quality services and value for money.
- 5. Sustainability:** We will focus on ensuring that the support we provide is viable and sustainable in the longer term. We will implement a continuous improvement approach to our work, respond to your feedback, use tools that measure your outcomes and regularly review our performance and quality.

## Our approach to your support

Our service goal is to deliver the best possible life outcomes for the people who purchase our disability services.

This will be shown by the five valued experiences:

- 1. Increased community presence** in your local area
- 2. Expanded community participation** through deepened relationships and friendships
- 3. Valued social roles** encouraged to enhance their reputation and increase the number of ways you can contribute to the community
- 4. Active promotion** of choice and control in your life
- 5. Supporting your contribution** through identifying your unique gifts and assisting you to develop more competencies.

## National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) standards and code of conduct

We are a registered NDIS provider and comply with the NDIS Quality & Safeguards Commission (NDIS) Practice Standards. All our support staff undertake the NDIS Worker Orientation Module and adhere to the NDIS Code of Conduct. A copy of the NDIS Code of Conduct can be found at <https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/workers/ndis-code-conduct>.

## Worker screening

All existing workers hold a Yellow Card and Blue Card if required. As from February 1 2021, all new workers are screened for suitability to work with people with a disability by the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission. Existing workers will transfer over to NDIS screening as their Yellow Cards come up for renewal. The NDIS assesses potential staff on whether they could pose a risk to working with people with a disability. A person can be either ‘cleared’ or ‘excluded’ from working with a person with a disability based on what they have done in the past.

## Our services

### Supported accommodation

Our supported accommodation team can assist you in creating the kind of place that you want to live in — be it the family home, a sole or shared residence. Based on your goals and aspirations, we help you negotiate your living arrangements and provide practical skills development related to household management, relationship building and community engagement. So, whether it’s learning how to shop, clean and cook, pay the bills and do the banking, use public transport or drive, we can empower you to take ownership of your day-to-day responsibilities. We will also help you to understand what services are available and how they can be accessed or delivered to ensure your needs are met.

### Capacity building

Capacity building is all about a person with a disability being supported to live a good life and become an active part of their community. Staff assist people to develop goals in consideration of their talents, skills and interests. Support is provided in areas such as helping people become a member of a club, volunteering, getting a job or making friends.



## Beyond Borders Travel

Beyond Borders Travel offers fully supported small group holidays including festivals, cruises, tours, rail packages, and local short-stays like camping escapes and pamper packages. The organised holidays are designed to help people with a disability make new friends, participate in the community and develop skills with a range of holidays offered in exciting destinations. The program also facilitates bespoke holidays, customised to suit all levels of mobility, taking care of all the considerations and logistics, making the world barrier-free for all of the people we support.

## Better Lives

Better Lives assists people with a disability to actively participate actively in their community. We facilitate this process by concentrating on the unique needs, interests and identified outcomes of individuals and families. We identify skills, strengths, capacities, networks and areas for growth; then, with your input, we design, implement and support access to tailor-made opportunities that provide inclusion in meaningful participation in community life.

## Disability Employment Service (DES)

Our DES team supports people aged 14-65 years of age who have a disability, illness or injury and require specialist support to prepare for, gain and maintain employment in the local labour market. Our DES Services currently provides support to around 400 participants via our sites located in Toowoomba, Laidley and Gatton. The team also delivers outreach services to Ipswich, Crows Nest, Oakey and Pittsworth. The DES team works with each participant on a one on one basis to define employment goals and develop a pathway to achieve these.

## Project SEARCH

The Project SEARCH Transition-to-Work Program is a unique, business-led, one-year employment preparation program that takes place entirely at the workplace. The program assists young people aged 17 – 23 with a disability to develop workplace skills and secure pathways into stable and rewarding employment in the open labour market. Project SEARCH is an unpaid experience where participants undertake an internship that provides on the job training across three particular roles within large service organisations including The Wesley Hospital and Blue Care. Total workplace immersion facilitates a seamless combination of classroom instruction, career exploration and hands-on training.

## Allied Health Unit (AHU)

The AHU supports people with a disability to live meaningful and inclusive lives. Services are holistically delivered in a person's home or their local community. The AHU is focused on delivering a service that is flexible and responsive to the changing needs of each person and firmly believe in working towards "the good life". Services include Speech Pathologists, Occupational Therapists, Behaviour Support Practitioners and Resource Development.

## Our locations

To find a service near you, please see Disability Services Directory at the end of this booklet.

# Service provision, rights and responsibilities



## Decision making and individual choice

We are committed to upholding your rights to make decisions about your life in relation to the service you receive, and to have the information you need to make decisions and choices.

We will:

- Create opportunities for you and the people in your support network, to participate in decision making in relation to your life, daily activities and the services you receive from us.
- Give you the support you need to develop the skills to participate in decision making processes. This includes ensuring you can have formal or informal advocacy supports in decision making processes if this is a support you require.
- Give you information and support to access an independent support person of your choice to assist you in making decisions and choices
- Write down decisions you make, and review this regularly to make sure we are implementing your decisions.
- Train our staff to support you to participate in decision making processes
- Make sure we use the least restrictive alternatives if you are unable to make decisions for yourself.



## Service agreements

Before we start providing you with a service, we will both sign a Service Agreement. The Service Agreement explains the support you are purchasing from us, when the support will be delivered, how much we will charge your NDIS plan for our services and your rights and responsibilities (See Rights and Responsibilities section for further details).

### What support can we give you?

The NDIS will fund you to have the supports you need. When you tell us what you would like from us, we will write this down on a Table of Support, which will tell you:

- What type of support you would like to purchase from us, for example help around the house, help going out into the community
- When this support will be delivered, for example, how many hours support workers can be with you and on what days
- How much the support costs
- How to pay for your supports using your NDIS funding.

We cannot help with things you might like to do that are not listed on the Table of Support, however we can help you either find another service that can help you, or help you ask the NDIS for more funding.

### What if you want to cancel your shift or change the time that your support worker comes over?

Sometimes you might like to do something else and not have support from us on the day we agreed. If you want to cancel your shift or change the time your support worker comes over, you will need to let us know as soon as you can so we can make another time.

Also, if your support worker cannot come to work with you on the days we agreed to, we will let you know as soon as possible. You can decide if you want a different worker, or have your support on a different day with your regular worker.

### Sometimes you will still have to pay us if you cancel your shift or don't want support from us:

You will still have to pay us for a shift if:

- You are not at home when your worker comes over
- You don't want your support worker to come over and only let us know about it just before the worker is supposed to start.

### When and how do I pay for my support?

You only need to pay after you get support from us.

- If you look after your own funding from the NDIA, you will pay for our services yourself. We will send you a bill so you know how much to pay
- If you have someone else looking after your funding for you, we will send them a bill so they know how much to pay.

### What if we want to make any changes to the Service Agreement?

If you, or us, want to make any changes, we will talk about it. If we are both happy with the changes, we will put this in writing.

What if you want to stop getting support from us?

If you decide that you don't want to get support from us anymore, you will need to let us know:

- 6 weeks before you want to stop the support if we provide you with "Supported Independent Living"
- 2 weeks before you want to stop the support if we provide you with other services such as "Community Participation".

### You will stop getting support from us if:

- We are not able to meet your support needs or requests (we will discuss this with you and try to change our supports to meet your needs wherever possible).
- You stop getting funding (money) from the NDIS.

### How will I understand my Service Agreement?

We will give you a copy of your Service Agreement in your preferred communication style, e.g. Easy Read English, Compic, audio or visual.



## Support planning and reviews

After you have signed your Service Agreement, we will develop a Support Plan with you. The Support Plan will include:

- Your goals
- Strategies to achieve your goals, including your strengths and support needs
- Other people we should talk to for advice and support for you to achieve your goals.

At the same time as writing the Support Plan, we will complete a Risk Assessment, to identify strategies to keep you and your support staff safe.

We will review and update your Support Plan every year, or earlier if:

- You want to change your goals
- We need to update the strategies we have agreed on
- Your support needs change.

Your support staff will help you track your progress in achieving your goals, and will develop a report for you to take to your next planning meeting if you would like support to share how your goal progress is going. Should you require this support, we will include report writing time in your table of supports.

At all times, you are welcome to have a support person with you when we are developing and reviewing your Support Plan (see Advocacy section). We will only share your Support Plan with other people if you give us permission. (see Confidentiality, Privacy and Consent section)

## Your rights

We comply with and respect the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Queensland Human Rights Act 2019. All staff that support people with NDIS funding must follow rules of the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission Code of Conduct. The Code of Conduct outlines how staff must behave when they work with you, to make sure your rights are respected. You can expect your support staff to:

### Treat you with respect

This means that you have the right to:

- Make your own decisions on how you want to live, and what supports you want
- Ask questions if you don't understand decisions that are being made about you
- Practice your faith and live according to your culture
- Have personal relationships with people you choose.

### Respect your privacy and dignity

This means that staff:

- Speak to you politely
- Do not gossip about you
- Ask for your permission to help you with personal care, and only give you the help you want.

## Keep you safe

This means that you have a right to:

- Feel safe with your Support Workers
- Choose which Support Workers you want to help you with personal care
- Have support workers trained in how to support you safely, and who
- do not do things differently to how they are trained and what you agree to
- Must be honest with you about the skills they have and not do anything that they have not been trained to do.

## Help you if you feel unsafe or if you are not getting a good service

This means that staff must:

- Fix up or throw out anything that is unsafe
- Tell their manager if they see other staff ignoring you or hurting you
- Stop staff doing things that are unsafe or make you unhappy
- Tell their manager if they see staff not following your support plan
- Help you to make a complaint if you are not happy with the service you are getting from us or from another service provider.

## Ensure you are free from any violence, abuse, neglect or exploitation

This means that staff cannot:

- Hurt you physically, yell at you, tease you or lock you up
- Ignore you if you need help
- Ignore your suggestions about what you want to do
- Use any of your personal possessions, for example eat your food or borrow money.

## Ensure you are free from sexual misconduct

This means that staff:

- Must not help you wash yourself in the shower or bath without your permission, including touching your private parts
- Must not kiss you, stroke you or have sex with you
- Must not hug you, unless you are feeling upset and ask for one
- Must not sit next to you in bed unless you need help and you ask for help
- Must not talk to you about their sex life
- Must not show you sexual material such as videos, photos, text messages, websites, books or magazines.



## Your responsibilities

In order to provide you with the best possible supports, we need you to assist us by helping out with the following:

Tell us how you want your supports to be delivered

It's important for you to let us know if your support needs change, for example you might want more support to go out, or if you would like to change the times you get support from us.

### Tell us if you have any problems with the support we are providing

Please let us know if you are unhappy about the supports we are providing, for example, you may want different staff, or for staff to do things differently with you.

### Accurately tell us about your NDIS Plan and the part of the Plan we are providing

This is important as we can only provide you with the supports you have been funded for. We cannot provide a service that is not in your NDIS Plan, or provide the same service that you are paying another organisation to provide.

### Tell us straight away if your NDIS Plan changes, is suspended, or if you stop using the NDIS

Again, we cannot provide services that are not funded in your plan. If you stop using the NDIS but still want our services, we will have to look at other ways you can pay us.

### Treat our staff with courtesy with respect

You, your family members and visitors are expected to be respectful and considerate of our staff. Any kind of intended violence, harassment or abuse towards our staff is not acceptable.

### Respect the rights of staff to work in a safe environment

Please let us know about any risks our staff may have when providing supports in your home. We ask that you take steps to address any risks at your own expense (for example, loud or aggressive pets or difficulties with access).

### Share relevant information

It is important that you share information about yourself so we can provide you with safe, quality supports. This may include up-to date information or any problems you have with your support or services. Please also see the 'Confidentiality, Privacy and Consent' section of this booklet

## Diversity and inclusion

### We recognise and celebrate all forms of diversity including diversity of religion, spirituality, ability, sexuality, gender identity, culture and heritage.

We will work with you to identify staff that support, respect and value your lifestyle choices. We will explore with you what is important to you and how we best support you to do the things you like, for example, rostering staff on to assist you to attend special days or events that are important to you.

## Confidentiality, privacy and consent

### What does confidentiality mean?

Confidentiality means that the people who support you have to keep the information about you in a private and safe way. This includes the information you give us about yourself and the information we collect about you.

### What does privacy mean?

We all do things in private, for example, using the bathroom, spending time in your bedroom or keeping a personal diary. Privacy means that no-one else can come in to your private space unless you give them permission. It is important you let someone know if you are not happy with staff being in your private space without permission.

### Sharing information about you

Sometimes we may need to share the information we have about you so that we can provide you with the best possible support and help you reach your goals. We will talk with you about what information we need to share, why we need to share it, and ask you to tell us if it is okay, or not okay to share the information. When we agree on who we can talk to, we will ask you to sign a Consent Form. The Consent Form lists all the people that you say are okay for us to talk to.

### Can I change my mind about who you talk to about me?

Yes. If you decide that you don't want us to talk to someone anymore, you can ask us not to. We will write this down in a new Consent Form.

### If we are worried about your safety, we may need to share information to keep you safe

If we are worried about your safety and think something may happen to you or someone in your life, we may have to tell someone who can help to make sure you or other people in your life stay safe. We may also need to share this information with services like the police or hospitals. We will tell you if we are going to do this and explain who we are talking to and why.

## We keep information about you in your file

Only people who need to see your information will have access to it. Your personal information is stored safely on a work computer program that is password protected or in a locked filing cabinet. Your information might list things such as why you are supported by us, as well as your health needs, your goals, the things you do, your education, your family, your strengths and achievements or any other information that you would like to share with us, to help us support you.

## How long do you keep my information?

We only keep your information for as long as we need it or if the law tells us we need to keep it. If we don't need to keep your information we will make sure that no-one else can see it.

## Can I see information that is written about me?

Yes, you can ask to see your records/file. You can ask us in person, or send an email to your regional office saying what you would like to see. You can also complete a Request to Access Personal Information form and send it to your regional office if you wish. There may be information we cannot give you by law. We will let you know if this is the case.

## Can I change any information that is written about me?

Yes. If you think that we have information about you which is wrong, you can ask us to fix it. For example, if we have incorrectly written down your medical condition, you can ask us to change it. You can also ask us to change written information about you if you think it is not respectful, true or is out of date.

### How can I find out more?

-  [unitingcareqld.com.au/about-us/governance/privacy-policy](https://unitingcareqld.com.au/about-us/governance/privacy-policy)
-  [privacy@ucareqld.com.au](mailto:privacy@ucareqld.com.au)
-  1800 008 993
-  UnitingCare, GPO Box 45, Brisbane, 4001

# Incidents, feedback and complaints



## Handling incidents and fixing problems

Incidents are when you are hurt, have an injury, become sick, if your rights are not being met or if someone commits a crime against you (for example stealing from you or hitting you).

Staff must report incidents to their manager. Both managers and staff are responsible for finding ways to make things safe for you. Fixing incidents helps us learn how to:

- Make our supports and services better
- Make sure we keep you safe.

## How do we try and stop incidents from happening?

To try and stop incidents from happening, we:

- Talk to you and your family/guardian/advocate about finding the safest way to support you
- Train our staff to safely support you. This includes things like:
  - How to safely help you with medication
  - How to safely help you with any physical support you need
  - Making sure your home is safe by supporting you to fill out safety checklists and fixing any problems
  - How to safely help you if you get upset or angry
  - Stopping other people from hurting you.

## What happens if there is an incident?

- The first thing staff will do is make you safe. For example, if you become very ill, we will call an ambulance
- Staff will ring your family member/guardian/advocate and let them know what happened
- If a crime has been committed, staff will also call the Police
- Staff may also need to let other people know about a serious incident, for example, the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission.

## Reviewing incidents

Your staff and managers will look at what happened and how to fix it so that it does not happen again. While they are doing that, they will also:

- Let you know what they are doing to fix things
- Ask you for your ideas on how to fix things
- Ask your family/guardian/advocate for ideas on how to fix things
- Keep a record of all the things they are doing about the incident
- Let you know how we can all work together to stop the incident happening again.





## Feedback and complaints

### It is always okay to speak up

It is important to us that we give you the best service possible. While we try to do this, sometimes things go wrong. It is important for us to know so we can fix it. It is always okay to speak up. You can talk to us when something goes wrong with your supports or services. A complaint helps us learn how to make our supports and services better and makes sure we keep you safe.

### Please tell us if something

- Has gone wrong
- Is not working well
- Has not been done the right way
- Makes you unhappy or you feel you have been treated badly.

### What we will do

- Listen to your complaint
- Work with your family, advocate, and/or guardian if you want their support
- Work with you towards achieving a resolution of any problems as quickly as possible.
- Aim to make your supports and services better.

### We handle complaints in a way that:

- Helps you get what you need
- Is clear, simple and done the same way each time.

### How do you make a complaint?

There are a few ways you can make a complaint:

- You can ring your regional office and ask to speak to a Manager
- You can ring our central office on 07 3253 4000 who will direct your call to the relevant service
- You can lodge a complaint online by following the link on the UnitingCare Queensland website: <https://unitingcareqld.com.au/feedback-and-complaints>
- You can send an email to [feedback@uccommunity.org.au](mailto:feedback@uccommunity.org.au)

If you don't feel OK about talking to us about your concerns, or if you don't think we have fixed your problem, you can talk to the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission.

- You can call the NDIS on **1800 035 544**
- You can fill out a complaint form on their website: <https://ndiscommission.gov.au/about/complaints>

The NDIS has videos in English and Auslan that explains how they manage complaints. You can watch these videos by clicking this link: <https://discommission.gov.au/understanding-complaints-ndis-commission>

## Advocacy

Sometimes it can be hard making a complaint, or to ask for what you want, without the help of an advocate. An advocate is someone who will stick up for you and make sure your voice is heard. An advocate can be a family member, friend or someone from an advocacy service. An advocate can:

- Give you information about your rights and responsibilities
- Listen to your concerns
- Help you resolve problems or complaints
- Speak with us on your behalf
- Refer you to other agencies when needed.

Your Support Worker can help you find an advocate. See 'Other Useful Contacts' section at the end of this booklet for a list of advocacy services that could help you. Another way of finding an advocate is by going to the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission website that also has a list of advocates. You can go to their website <https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au>, or directly follow this link: <https://disabilityadvocacyfinder.dss.gov.au/disability/ndap/>



# Contact information

## Disability services directory

Supported Accommodation and Capacity Building		
Brisbane North/ Sunshine Coast	Ground Floor, 766 Gympie Road, Chermside	(07) 3867 2555
Brisbane South/ Gold Coast	Level 1, 483 – 485 Ipswich Road, Annerley	(07) 3363 2200
South West (Ipswich)	Level 1, 38 Limestone Street, Ipswich	(07) 3432 6100
South West (Toowoomba)	130 Mort Street, Toowoomba	(07) 4688 3915
Townsville	59-69 Patrick Street, Aitkenvale	(07) 4775 9169
Better Lives	Ground Floor, 766 Gympie Road, Chermside	(07) 3867 2555
Disability Employment Services		
Toowoomba	3 Finchley Street, Toowoomba QLD 4350	(07) 4688 3900
Laidley	45 Patrick Street, Laidley	(07) 4688 3925
Gatton	25 Maitland Street, Gatton	(07) 4688 3929
Project Search	3 Finchley Street, Toowoomba QLD 4350 unitingcareqld.com.au/project-search	(07) 4688 3900
Travel		
Beyond Borders Travel	Ground Floor, 766 Gympie Road, Chermside QLD 4032	(07) 3867 2518
Allied Health		
Allied Health Unit	Level 1, 483 – 485 Ipswich Road, Annerley AlliedHealthUnit@uccommunity.org.au unitingcareqld.com.au/alliedhealth	(07) 3363 2200

## Other useful contacts

Advocacy Services	
Aged and Disability Advocacy Australia	Ph: 1800 818 338
People With Disability Australia	Ph: 1800 422 015
Speaking Up For You Inc.	Ph: (07) 3255 1244
AMPARO Advocacy Inc.	Ph: (07) 3354 4900
Queensland Advocacy Incorporated	Ph: (07) 3844 4200
NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission	
The Commission investigates complaints about NDIS funded services	1800 035 544 ndiscommission.gov.au
Office of the Public Guardian	
If you have impaired decision making capacity about issues concerning your health, accommodation or support services you receive (or want), you can have a Public Guardian appointed to you. The Guardian can make decisions on your behalf and advocate for you to get services you need.	1300 653 187 publicguardian@publicguardian.qld.gov.au
The Public Trustee of Queensland	
If you need help managing your finances, you can appoint a Financial Administrator from the Public Trustee to help you with budgeting, savings and spending.	1300 360 044 clientenq@pt.qld.gov.au
Queensland Ombudsman	
The Queensland Ombudsman investigates complaints about state government agencies, local councils, (including state schools and TAFE), and public universities.	(07) 3005 7000 1800 068 908 (Toll free outside Brisbane only)

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