



Disability, Access and Inclusion Policy

Document number: SCS-PP-4016 Version 4.0

Approval

Policy owner	Executive Manager, Specialist Community Services		
Business Unit	Specialist Community Services		
Approved by	Executive Manager, Specialist Community Services		
Date approved	25/09/2025	Review date	25/09/2027

1 Purpose

- 1.1 Specialist Community Services (SCS) recognises the importance of being accessible and inclusive to people living with a disability. SCS acknowledges that inclusion and accessibility encompass more than physical mobility and includes such things as visual & audio needs, language, positive attitudes and understanding of people's unique experiences.
- 1.2 SCS aims to ensure that service environments and systems are accessible and welcoming for everyone and, works to safeguard the rights of people with disability.

2 Scope

- 2.1 This is a divisional policy, applicable to all staff and volunteers in the following SCS services:
 - Mental Health Service
 - Homelessness Services
 - Housing Plus
- 2.2 The following considerations also need to be recognised as key considerations in relation to the scope of this policy:
 - Building and site structure that cannot be easily changed to accommodate needs
 - The scope of the service in relation to personal and medical care. SCS services do not provide personal care support.

3 Policy principles

- 3.1 SCS endeavours to ensure that all services are as accessible and inclusive as possible to all people. This includes:
 - Ensuring all individuals are able to participate, contribute and make choices about the service they receive;
 - Ensuring that all individuals feel welcome and part of the service community;
 - Ensuring that wherever structurally possible, all people have access to the physical service environment;
 - Ensuring that all individuals are treated fairly and with dignity, respecting and upholding their rights.
- 3.2 SCS services will work within the structural allowances of existing buildings and site structures. This may be achieved either by making reasonable accommodations where possible or, supporting the service user to obtain assistive devices, where eligible.
- 3.3 SCS staff and volunteers will use language that is inclusive and people first oriented, to avoid inadvertently disempowering, discriminating, stigmatising or, defining a service user to their experience of living with a disability.
- 3.4 SCS recognises the importance of participation and inclusion for people living with a disability by actively promoting and valuing their participation alongside other service users, always upholding their right to dignity of risk and active decision making in this context
- 3.5 Service user individual accessibility needs will be considered prior to being

accepted into the service. This is to ensure that the needs of the service user can be met safely within and by the service, within the existing service structure and scope of services provided.

- 3.6 Entry to and eligibility for the service is always primarily guided by service specific eligibility criteria however, consideration will also need to be given to whether the service is able to meet the required safety criteria for the service user.
- 3.7 Staff will be kept informed of any changes to mobility or any other needs specific to their disability a service user may have during their time with the service, so that they can be supported in the best way, to participate fully in the service without constraint.
- 3.8 Service user support plans will clearly communicate any strategies in place to meet mobility and any other needs in relation to accessibility and inclusion, relevant to the scope of service. (ex HGP)
- 3.9 If a mobility aid and/or assistive device is required, as identified by a relevant health professional, SCS will within the scope of service, support the service user with the referral process to obtain the device(s) and/or relevant funding.
- 3.10 Due to the transitional nature of SCS services, structural and environmental modifications are avoided. However, this decision is at the discretion of the relevant Service Manager, on a case-by-case basis.
- 3.11 In sites that offer accommodation, SCS reserves the right to exit a service user if SCS is no longer able to provide safe and suitable accommodation, relevant to the service user's personal care needs. Should this situation arise, SCS will work collaboratively with the service user and their external support services, to source alternative accommodation more suited to their needs.
- 3.12 Due to the aging and vulnerable nature of some of SCS service users, SCS will within the scope of service, observe, monitor and refer any identified mobility or physical health issues, to appropriate external support services e.g., risk of falls, vision impairment etc
- 3.13 Service users whose mobility has been identified as deteriorating whilst in the service, will be referred for assessment to allied health services which may include, but is not limited to:
 - General Practitioner
 - Physiotherapist
 - Occupational Therapist

4 Roles and responsibilities

- 4.1 The Executive Manager, Specialist Community Services is responsible for maintaining the currency of this policy.
- 4.2 Society representatives are required to adhere to this policy. Failure to comply may be considered a breach of our policies and may result in disciplinary action.

5 Review

- 5.1 This policy will be reviewed at least every two years, after consultation. Some circumstances may trigger an early review; this includes but is not limited to legislative changes, organisational changes, incident outcomes and other matters deemed appropriate by the SCS Management Team or the Executive Manager

SCS.

6 Further assistance

- 6.1 Society personnel should speak with their Manager regarding any questions about the implementation of this policy.

7 References

References made in this policy are:

- 7.1 Mental Health Service, Eligibility Criteria
- 7.2 Housing Plus, Eligibility Criteria
- 7.3 Tom Fisher House, Eligibility Criteria
- 7.4 Wandjoo Bidi, Eligibility Criteria

8 Related documents and legislation

Related documents and legislation at the time of approval include:

- 8.1 A Western Australia for Everyone, State Disability Strategy 2020
- 8.2 SCS-PP-4017 Consumer and Client Handover Policy
- 8.3 SCS-PP-4007 Risk Management Approach Policy
- 8.4 License to Occupy - SCS
- 8.5 The Mental Health Act 2014, *The Mental Health Commission, Government of Western Australia*
- 8.6 The National Standards for Mental Health Services 2010, *The Mental Health Commission, Government of Western Australia*
- 8.7 Licensing Standards. Licensing and Accreditation Regulatory Unit, *The Department of Health, Government of Western Australia*
- 8.8 Specialist Homelessness Service Standards 2016, *The Department of Communities, Government of Western Australia*
- 8.9 The Residential Tenancies Act 1987, *The Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety, Government of Western Australia*
- 8.10 The National Standards for Disability Services 2013, *Department of Social Services, Government of Australia*
- 8.11 The Disability and Discrimination Act 1992, *Federal Register of Legislation, Australian Government.*
- 8.12 The Equal Opportunities Act 1984, *Commissioner for Equal Opportunity, Government of Western Australia*

9 Approval and amendment history

Version	Approval authority	Date	Amendment summary
1.0	CEO	30/06/2019	Initial version
2.0	EM, SCS	28/07/2021	Scheduled review

2.1	EM, SCS	01/12/2021	Conversion to new template
3.0	EM, SCS	01/09/2023	Scheduled review
4.0	EM, SCS	25/09/2025	Scheduled review and renamed previously Mobility and Assistance Policy

10 Definitions

Term	Definition
Accessibility	Being able to access, commence and leave (a service site) in a transparent, fair, equal and responsive way. The National Standards for Disability Services 2013
Dignity of Risk	Dignity of risk acknowledges the life experiences come with risk and, self determination and the right to take reasonable risks are essential for dignity and self-esteem.
Inclusion	“the practice or policy of providing equal access to opportunities and resources for people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalized.” Oxford Languages Dictionary
Mobility	refers to one’s ability to move or be moved freely and easily. This includes physical mobility as well and visual and audio needs that support free movement throughout the service.
Mobility aid	is a device intended to support walking or otherwise improvement the mobility of people with a mobility impairment, such as a wheelchair, crutches or a walker.
Mobility impairment	refers to the limitations of an individual’s capacity, stamina or dexterity
People with Disability	“it is recognised that not all people with disability use services and supports and so the term ‘people with disability’ is used to refer to people with disability in the community in general. The National Standards for Disability Services 2013
Personal support care	Personal care supports relate to assistance with daily personal activities including assistance with, or supervision of, personal tasks of daily life. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • personal hygiene, including showering, bathing, oral hygiene, dressing and grooming • toileting, bladder and bowel management and menstrual care • eating and drinking

Term	Definition
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use of aids and appliances, hearing and communication devices • mobility and transferring, for example moving in and out of bed and on or off the toilet • application of splints, basic first aid due to injuries sustained as a result of a participant's disability. (NDIS.gov.au)
Service User	<p>Is an umbrella terms used to refer to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers – individuals who access Mental Health Services • Clients – individuals who access Passages Youth Engagement Hubs and Tom Fisher House • Residents – individuals residing at Wandjoo Bidi under a License to Occupy Agreement • Tenant – tenants residing in Housing Plus properties
Stigmatise	<p>for the purpose of this policy, to 'stigmatise' is to label someone via negative or discriminatory attitudes in relation to their experience of disability.</p>