



# Local Coordination Operational Policy – Service Providers in Local Coordination Areas

## Purpose

This Policy outlines the connection between individuals with disability, their family member/representative and their chosen service provider, and the service provider relationship with the Department of Communities (Communities).

## Scope

This Policy relates to individuals with disability accessing Local Coordination and service providers which provide funded supports.

## Definitions

A service provider is an entity (such as a disability service organisation) that provides funded services which are identified in the individual plan and funded through Local Coordination.

## Principles

People with disability have the same right as other members of society to participate in, direct and implement the decisions that affect their lives.

People with disability can exercise choice and control in the selection, design and implementation of their supports and services.

The lives of people with disability, their families/representatives and carers are enhanced when they can determine their preferred supports and services and exercise control over the resources included in their individual plan, to the extent that they desire and have capacity for.

Communities maintains a strong partnership with the community sector, with disability service organisations being key stakeholders in the design and delivery of disability services in Western Australia.

## **Service providers on the panel contract**

Individuals choosing to have the funded services identified in their individual plan managed through an organisation, must choose a service provider that is on Communities' Panel Contract for Individual Funding and/or Disability Professional Services.

To be approved on the Panel Contract, a service provider must meet specific governance, financial and qualitative criteria that demonstrate a range of competencies.

Being on the Panel Contract does not guarantee that an individual will choose the organisation to be their provider. A Service Agreement with Communities is established with a new provider when the first individual chooses that service provider. Subsequent individuals are added by variation to the Service Agreement. The agreement is also varied when someone chooses to leave the service provider.

The Service Agreement is a contract that sets out the obligations of both parties. It specifies the type and price of services and activities that the service provider can provide; the outcomes to be delivered; all the reporting and quality requirements and other operational matters as contained in the General Provisions for the Purchase of Community Services by Public Authorities, February 2012.

This Service Agreement operates to ensure that individuals with a disability are provided with a quality service that meets the Disability Services Standards. Service providers with a Service Agreement are automatically involved in Communities' quality management system and will have an independent evaluation within one year of commencement and every three years thereafter, or as determined by Communities.

When a Service Agreement is established, Communities will assign a Service Contract and Development Officer to manage the agreement. This officer is the main point of contact in relation to the content and obligations under the Service Agreement.

All services to be provided by a service provider must meet the goals identified in the individual's plan, often with the assistance of others such as their family/representative and the Local Coordinator. The service strategies to be delivered by the provider must be within those specified in its Service Agreement.

## **Providers of services engaged directly by the individual**

Individuals or their family member/representative who wish to self-manage all or some of the funded supports in the individual plan, and are approved to do so, are free to exercise choice and control over who provides these services. This means that the individual or their family member/representative may select a service provider which is not on Communities' Panel Contract, but reflects the individual's own preferences and circumstances. In these arrangements, Communities is not party to the agreement between the individual and their family member/representative and the entity which provides their services.

The individual, or the family reaches agreement with Local Coordination to self-manage funds for supports as identified in their individual plan and assumes responsibility for:

- receiving and managing any funding provided
- purchasing the supports identified in the plan (including paying any applicable indirect costs associated with the supports, e.g. tax, superannuation or insurances)

- implementing safeguards as outlined in the plan
- the quality of the service being delivered
- acquitting the funds and meeting other agreed accountability requirements.

## Responsibilities

Compliance with this policy is mandatory.

## Other related documents

- Delivering Community Services in Partnership Policy 2011, Department of Finance
- General Provisions for the Purchase of Community Services by Public Authorities, February 2012
- Shared Management Policy November 2011, Department of Communities, Disability Services
- Local Coordination Self- Management Guide
- Local Coordination Operational Policy - Plan Management Decisions
- Local Coordination Operational Policy – Safeguarding
- Disability Services Standards

## Document control

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Feedback and enquiries relating to this Policy may be directed to [programsupport@communities.wa.gov.au](mailto:programsupport@communities.wa.gov.au) .

This document can be available in alternative formats on request.

## Amendments

Version	Date	Author	Description
1.0	30 June 2016	Program Support	Review by 30/6/2018
1.1	20 July 2020	Program Support	Review by 20/7/2022
1.2	16 October 2020	Program Support, State-wide Services, Community Services Division	Review by 16/10/2022