

CS2.5 Advocacy

Purpose

1. To ensure SAVVY proactively and effectively supports participants to access and use advocates through their assessment, planning, review, delivery, incidents and complaints related to SAVVY services.

Alignment with Practice Standards

1. Module 1: Rights and Responsibilities

Legislative Alignment

1. Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
2. Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)
3. United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
4. Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
5. Medical Treatments Act 1988
6. Guardianship and Administration Act 1986

Key Responsible Executive

Chief Executive Officer

For More Support

Your People Manager

Policy Statement

1. SAVVY is committed to the principle of respecting and protecting the legal and human rights of individuals and their right to services that meet their needs. To this end SAVVY supports the rights of participants to use an advocate of their choice to negotiate on their behalf. This may be in relation to assessment, planning, review, complaints or any other communication between the service user and SAVVY. We will work cooperatively representing the interests of the service user.
2. SAVVY is also committed to providing participants with advocacy and support when it is requested.

Definitions

1. Advocate – a person who has the authority of the service user and who represents their interests. An advocate can be a family member, friend or an agency appointed by, or for, the service user.

Delegations

Roles	Responsibilities
Board of Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Endorse and ensures compliance with the Advocacy Policy and Procedure • Be familiar with the organisation’s legislative requirements regarding privacy and the collection, storage and use of personal information
CEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead the development of quality service culture that supports privacy and confidentiality, and human rights of participants • Manage and monitor compliance with this policy • Support staff competence and compliance with this policy and procedure • Develop, disseminate and maintain program and service materials, including service user and promotional materials
Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage and monitor compliance with this policy • Support staff competence and compliance with this policy and procedure • Develop, disseminate and maintain program and service materials, including service user and promotional materials
Staff, volunteers, contractors and students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comply with the Advocacy Policy and Procedure • Act in accordance with legislation and SAVVY’s systems in place to protect privacy and personal information

Procedures

1. Supporting advocacy
 - a. Director, participant Services will be responsible for ensuring:
 - i. All staff receive training in the use of advocates,
 - ii. Maintenance of printed materials on relevant advocacy services for distribution to participants, and
 - iii. Maintenance of local advocacy resources/contact lists (see Advocacy Information flyer)
2. Providing participants with information
 - a. Information on the use of advocates is included in the participant intake information and is explained to each participant at the point of first contact or as soon as practical. SAVVY will provide participants with names of local advocacy services available and respect their choice of advocate.
 - b. Staff will ensure participants are aware of their right to use an advocate and remind them of this option whenever appropriate, including when a complaint is lodged or the staff member believes an advocate may be beneficial to the service user.

3. Appointment of advocates
 - a. participants wishing to use an advocate should inform SAVVY in writing of the name of the person they wish to negotiate on their behalf and the capacity in which the person can act. An advocate will be named in an Authority to act as an advocate form and included on a participant's Service Agreement if they have the authority to act on behalf of the participant.
 - b. participants may change their advocate at any time and inform us in writing. A general consent form will be completed for the participant to give consent for the new advocate to act on their behalf. If a participant has difficulty completing the Authority to act form, a staff member will assist them or refer them to an advocacy agency that can assist them in this task.
 - c. Completed Service Agreements and Authority to act forms are kept in the participant's record.
4. Guidelines for advocates
 - a. Guidelines for advocates are detailed on the Authority to act as an advocate form; this is given to the service user and explained to them if they wish to appoint an advocate.
5. Working with advocates
 - a. Where a service user has identified and nominated an advocate SAVVY will:
 - i. Ensure the advocate knows they have been nominated as an advocate and for what purpose
 - ii. Ensure any identified advocate is present at assessment, planning, review or other relevant meetings
 - iii. Communicate and work cooperatively with the advocate
 - iv. Communicate comprehensively with the advocate in accordance with the service user's wishes, and involve them in the care and service planning.
 - b. If an authorised representative is acting on behalf of a service user, SAVVY will require proof of the representing authority. Authorised representatives include:
 - i. Guardians
 - ii. Attorneys under enduring powers of attorney
 - iii. Agents under the Medical Treatments Act 1988
 - iv. Administrators under the Guardianship and Administration Act 1986, and
 - v. A person otherwise empowered by the service user to act or make decisions in their best interest.
 - c. Proof of representative authority will be sighted and a copy of the documentation placed in the service user's record.

References to other SAVVY policies and external sources

1. CS1.1 Human Rights
2. CS1.2 Access and Equity

Summary of attachments

1. CS2.5a Authority to Act as an Advocate
2. CS2.5b Advocacy Information

Version Control

1. 1 April 2023 - New Policy Creation