

# Human Rights Policy

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## Policy statement

Therapy Connect believes that all people are free and equal in dignity and rights and is committed to working in alignment with the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CROC). Therapy Connect recognises that some people are more vulnerable to direct and indirect discrimination, exclusion from services and access to information.

Therapy Connect ensures that all people who interact with its services:

- are treated with respect;
- do not encounter discrimination;
- experience a safe and secure environment;
- have their privacy maintained;
- are provided with clear and accessible information about services, including any fees;
- are encouraged to contribute to decision-making around services and issues that affect them;
- are able to be represented by an advocate if needed; and
- can safely identify concerns about the quality of service provided and have their concerns dealt with fairly and effectively.

## Scope

This policy applies to all Therapy Connect representatives, both paid and unpaid, including employees, directors, contractors and board members.

## Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of Management to:

- ensure that employees and contractors are supported to understand and demonstrate a human rights-based approach to service delivery;
- assume a leadership role in observing and promoting behaviours and practice needed to support human rights;
- ensure that discrimination on the basis of a protected attribute does not occur in any Therapy Connect undertaking;
- ensure that opportunities are provided for people with disability to contribute to the governance of Therapy Connect, including input into policies and processes that relate to the protection of rights; and

- ensure the Therapy Connect website and other online tools and resources used for service delivery are accessible and comply, where practicable, with Level AA checkpoints from the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.0.

It is the responsibility of employees and contractors to:

- treat all people they work with in a fair and respectful way;
- not discriminate, or support others to discriminate, against individuals or groups due to protected attributes;
- take active steps to understand human rights-based and person-centred approaches and deliver service in a way that upholds these principles; and
- maintain privacy and confidentiality in accordance with the *Therapy Connect Privacy Policy*.

## Definitions

**Discrimination** – Actions, decisions or behaviours that disadvantage a person based on a protected attribute.

**Protected attribute** – A person’s gender or gender identity, age, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage, cultural background, physical or intellectual abilities, country of birth, religious beliefs, sexuality, pregnancy and breastfeeding, marital or domestic status, parental status or family or carer responsibilities, union membership, medical record, or physical appearance (including height, weight, size or other body characteristics).

**Human rights-based approach** – A recognition that all people have certain inalienable rights and that service delivery seeks to support people to achieve these rights, rather than being a charitable act to help vulnerable people. A human rights-based approach empowers people to know and claim their rights by giving them greater opportunities to participate in shaping the decisions that affect them and requires accountability of individuals and institutions.

**Person-centred approach** - An approach that acknowledges that working equitably with people requires an equal partnership where individuals are supported to have a say in decisions that directly affect them. A person-centred approach supports human rights by promoting participation and minimising opportunities for discrimination and exclusion by ensuring individuals are listened to and supported based on their strength, abilities, aspirations and preferences.

## Relevant legislation

- National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 (Cth)
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)
- Racial Hatred Act, 1995 (Cth)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
- Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)

- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (VIC)
- Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011
- Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)
- Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)

## Document control

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