CLIENT MANAGEMENT / SERVICE PLAN POLICY

Policy number		Version	1
Drafted by	Management Team	Approved by MC on	23.06.2020
Responsible person	Management Team	Scheduled review date	June 2021

Policy context: This policy ensures that each client has a well-planned approach to service delivery that is focussed on family priorities.	
Legislation / Standards or other external requirements	National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 National Disability Insurance Scheme Rules and Guidelines 2018 - 2019 NDIS Quality and Safeguards Framework, 2018 NDIS Code of Conduct for Workers 2018 United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986ECIA ECIA Best Practice in Early Intervention Guidelines The Privacy Act 1988 Privacy Amendment (Enhancing Privacy Protection) Act 2012 Information Privacy Act 2000 Children and Young Person (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (State)
Contractual obligations	NDIS Service Registered Service Provider obligations DoE - Sector Capacity Building Project Contract and Funding Terms and Conditions (Funding Agreement)

POLICY STATEMENT

Early Connections - Coffs Coast is committed to using a strength based, family centred approach to the delivery of best practice early Childhood Intervention supports, services and client case management. Our model of service delivery aims to support client families throughout their enrolment with Early Connections – Coffs Coast including –

1. The beginning – the enrolment process and the Service Agreement.
2. The middle – during the ongoing delivery of supports and services, education and therapy.
3. The end – transition to another service provider; and
4. Addressing and minimising risks associated with the delivery of Early Childhood Intervention supports and services.

ENROLMENT / INDUCTION –

During Enrolment Early Connections – Coffs Coast will:

- Listen to and support each client family to identify their child's individual needs and their family preferences, and develop goals that will promote each child's development towards independence and inclusion in their community
- Show a commitment to working with and referring to other community supports and providers to meet the diverse needs of children and their families.
- Clarify the role and responsibilities of participants, families, parents / carers and Key Workers and the purpose of the client case management process.
- Ensure that families, parents / carers are involved in the development of Service Plans, NDIS Service Agreements and Schedule of Supports.
- Gather information from NDIS Plans to enable comprehensive goal setting, assessment, and ongoing intervention needs.
- Assist and support active involvement and decision making by all families, parents and carers and other relevant family members and advocates.
- Provide information about service delivery options.
- Prepare a Service Agreement and Schedule of Supports (quote) explicitly outlining the services and conditions of the service contract between families and Early Connections – Coffs Coast.
- Provide a Schedule of Supports which allocates a Team Around each Child and family, which will include a Key Worker. Depending on the needs and preferences of the family the Team may also include a Teacher, Speech Pathologist, Physiotherapist, Occupational Therapist or Family Worker.
- Prepare a Service Plan outlining goals prioritised by the family and distribute this to all participants
- Assign a Key Worker to develop, deliver, coordinate, monitor, and evaluate the Service Plan, in collaboration with the Team around the Child.
- Support clients to transition to other services or cease services as required.
- Support and monitor team member caseloads to ensure staff are able to deliver effective Service Plans.
- Ensure Key Workers have the necessary skills and experience to undertake the role and provide them with regular structured supervision and staff development.

PROCEDURE

The Enrolment Meeting and the Service Agreement –

A Service Agreement is required for each client family which gives consent for the EC-CC team to begin providing supports and services to a child and family. The following steps will occur during the Service Agreement meeting process –

1. A meeting will be scheduled with the Management team and the new client family.
2. Each new client family will receive a *Family Information Pack,* which includes Service Agreement, Schedule of Supports (quote), Enrolment Form, Consent Form, Risk Assessment (Home Visiting and Venue), Family Information Handbook, Family Facts Sheet, Your Rights Brochure, Your Information is Private Brochure, and the Complaints and Feedback Brochure.

3. Each client family will also receive a welcome email with links to ECIA Best Practice Handbook and Policies on the Early Connections Website.
4. The Service Agreement must be signed by the parent / carer and a representative of EC-CC.
5. A copy of the Service Agreement will be placed in the child's Echidna file.
6. The parent / carer will receive the original copy of the Service Agreement for their records. If it is not possible to provide the parent/carer with a copy of the Service Agreement a note will be made in the child's ECHIDNA file explaining the reason this has occurred.
7. If the Service Agreement is delivered electronically to clients and it cannot be signed, alternative consent will be collected within an Echidna Consent Form / Agreement Form. This allows the client to electronically TICK and sign that they consent. This Form will then be filed in the individual Echidna file.
8. A funding source e.g. a NDIS package, will be required prior to signing the Service Agreement. The funding source will be used to determine how the quote (Schedule of Supports) is created.
9. Consent of the parent / carer will also be sought prior to exchanging any client information with other services that will be involved in providing services as part of the Service Agreement.
10. The rights and responsibilities of the participant (client family / parents / carers) will be explained and discussed during the Service Agreement meeting.
11. The role and responsibilities of the Organisation, the Key Worker and Team around the Child– including the role of the practitioners in facilitating access to service delivery, will be explained at the Service Agreement meeting.
12. The *Complaints Management Policy and procedure* will be explained and a link to this policy will be provided to each client family in the Welcome email.
13. During the enrolment meeting the Management team will discuss with the client family the organisation's philosophy and service delivery model. The enrolment meeting will also provide time and support for the client family to discuss their needs, preferences, cultural requirements and preferred methods of service deliver. All of this information will be used to create a customised Schedule of Supports (quote for each client family.)
14. During the Enrolment meeting families may indicate their preferred EC-CC team members that they would like to provide supports to their child and every effort will be made to meet these requests (depending on capacity of the team members). Should a team member not have capacity at the time of enrolment, families will be informed of alternative team member's availability or the need for them to go on a waitlist to wait for supports from their preferred Team member, once they have capacity for this.

After the Enrolment Meeting –

15. After enrolment a *Family Engagement Checklist* is commenced for each client by the Program Manager. This document is then provided to the assigned key Worker to complete a set of duties / tasks / with each client family in an agreed timeframe.

16. A Routines Based Interview will take place with the Key Worker and the parent / carer. The RBI aims to give families the opportunity to share information on their daily routines, culture and values of their family and think about the goals they want to prioritise when implementing the program.

The Routine Based Interviewing (RBI), involves discussion, planning and review with families, parents and carers to establish goal priorities. The RBI is a semi-structured interview (1-2 hours) that helps Key Workers

/ Teachers and Therapists examine the day to day activities of children within the context of their family culture and community settings. The goals of the RBI are to begin to -

- develop a relationship with the family and/or caregivers,
- obtain a rich description of how the child functions within his/her daily activities,
- obtain insight into the cultural values of the family, and
- create a list of functional child and family outcomes/goals.

These outcomes / goals are based on the family's priorities and concerns. Family preferences around supports and how supports are delivered are gathered during this process and then taken into consideration when developing a program (Service Plan) for the child. The RBI can be used in a care-based / school setting, as well as in interviews with the family.

The Service Plan –

1. A Service Plan is drafted by the Key Worker using goals determined by the NDIS Plan goals and family goals identified during the RBI. Evidence based use of COPM (Canadian Occupational Performance Measure) is used for families to determine their priorities for goals as well as creating an initial measure which can later be reflected on to gauge progress.
2. A team around the child (transdisciplinary team) is assigned to each client family and collaborative Case Conference Meetings are used for the team to evaluate the Service Plan and further discuss actions needed.
3. The Service Plan is distributed to the Team around the Child (family and Transdisciplinary team) and comments or changes sent to Key Worker.
4. NDIS Goals and Routines Based Interview Assessment assist in developing a priority of order in regards to how supports will be delivered to the child and family– e.g. specific assessment of Goal 1 (highest priority goal). Key Worker and any relevant team members engage in specific assessment of this goal area in conjunction with the family.
5. Outcomes of NDIS Goals and Routines Based Interview Assessment are written (developing an individualised program for the child) and uploaded to Echidna system by the Key Worker.
6. Scheduled Therapy and Education appointments / sessions follow as specified by the Service Agreement / Schedule of Supports / Service Plan. These appointments are led by the family and Key Worker who invite other team members to provide consultation sessions when deemed appropriate. Service Plan reports outlining each visit goals and outcomes are documented by all team members in Echidna.
7. Continued reviews and further Goals addressed as needed.
8. Service Plan Review – 6 monthly with family, or by request of the family. Further Service Plan established if needed.

CLIENT MANAGEMENT AND DOCUMENTATION –

Each client file will be maintained by the Key Worker. The file will be kept online through Echidna Online. Each client file will contain:

- Referral details
- Enrolment/Intake forms
- Service Agreement

- Schedule of Supports
- Service Plan and any other funding plans such as NDIS Plan
- Observations and notes
- Therapy reports and notes
- Record of communication and correspondence regarding the child and family
- A Service Plan written in a standard format, and all Plans should be completed on the current template.

Each client file may also contain: -

- Assessment documentation
- Medical reports and information
- Other relevant information

The Service Plan will include –

- Child's updated personal information
- Current diagnosis
- Recent assessments
- Child/Family Goals and priorities
- Service delivery plan and structure
- Review dates
- Service Plan distributed to primary Parent / Carer and any other party designated as recipient by the Primary Caregiver
- The client file will be updated and made available to the client for review at any time.

STAFFING

All Team Members / Key Workers will be provided with ongoing supervision and caseloads will be monitored and reviewed on an ongoing basis. All Team Members will be supported and monitored through annual staff appraisals and feedback session. Professional Development opportunities will be offered to support ongoing staff growth and to support any areas of identified need.

TRANSITION OUT OF EARLY CONNECTIONS-COFFSCOAST

Transition is the process through which client families transition out of Early Connections – Coffs Coast. The circumstances which will lead to transitioning include:

- The child turns 7 years of age.
- The client moves away from the area.
- The client is no longer eligible for an NDIS Plan.
- The client transitions to school.
- The client transfers to another service provider.
- Lack of available resources or funding.
- The client's family chooses to cease the Service Agreement.
- The family are unwilling to meet the reasonable conditions required in the service agreement and thus affecting the safe delivery of supports to the child and family and the health and wellbeing of the staff.

- No contact between the family and EC-CC for over 3months.
- Continued non-payment of service delivery fees incurred during supports provided by EC-CC.

We know that transitions in and out of our Program can be a challenging time for client families. We will identify, document and respond to risks associated with each transition. Risks identified during the transition into accessing supports through EC-CC may include: -

- Delays in supports being provided,
- Child not accessing the appropriate supports to meet their NDIS goals;

The following strategies may be implemented during a client families transition from EC-CC to another program to support the process and reduce risk –

- Lack of referral to a new provider to ensure ongoing supports
- Lack of available and suitable alternative providers to refer the child and family on to;
- Loss of knowledge around the child's skills and areas of need, thus impacting on the continuity of program delivery;
- Conflict of interest when referring onto new providers

TRANSITION PROCEDURE –

1. During and after a client family transitions to another provider, Early Connections – Coffs Coast team members will be available to the client family to answer any questions about future support options and provide recommendations if needed.
2. When clients are transitioning due to age and their transition to school, clients will be provided with the necessary information regarding agencies / professionals that may be able to provide suitable services to them in the future.
3. All clients are provided with the necessary information and explanation in appropriate communication formats in relation to their transition from the service.
4. Client transition strategies and planning will be documented in the client's individual Echidna file.
5. The client transition process for programs is clear and the organisation adopts fair and non-discriminatory processes when a client chooses to, or is required to leave the service.
6. Early Connections-Coffs Coast will: -
    - Always ensure that clients are kept informed of their rights to choose services and that at no time are they obligated to stay with Early Connections –Coffs Coast and are free to transition at any time of their choosing.
    - Ensure that staff explain to all clients at the time of the development of their service plan how and when the process of transition and exit will occur.
    - Ensure that the issue of transition and exit is discussed in Service Plan Meetings.
    - Ensure that transition and exit is timely, seamless and offers flexible and reliable support linked to other services.
    - Support clients to transition to other services or cease services as needed.
    - Ensure staff have the necessary skills and experience to assist clients and their families through the exit process.
7. Clear documentation of the client transition/exit with dates and relevant information will be kept in the clients file. The child's classification in the Echidna system will on this date be changed

from Client to exited. All recommendations regarding the exit process and transition to other agencies will be documented in the client's individual file.

8. As a client nears transition from the service team members will ensure discussions are held with the client family about options for transitions to another provider.
9. Customised assistance to clients who experience cultural or language barriers will be provided.
10 Using accredited interpreters where required.
11. Encourage the client's family to have an advocate with them at meetings that discuss the exit process.
12. Provision of written material about the exit process and transition to recommended services.
13. Assist the client's family to contact organisations that can meet the client's needs in the future.
14. All team members involved in client transition processes will be provided with on-going support and professional development to assist them to undertake their duties effectively.
15. Appropriate alternative service providers, agencies and professionals may be consulted regarding current client needs and supports available. Client consent will be sought prior to involving any other professionals in the exit process.
16. Prior to a client transition the client's family will be contacted and a final review conducted to ensure all appropriate formal and informal supports are in place. The client's family will be given the opportunity to give any feedback to the organisation.
17. The client family will be offered the opportunity to engage in a handover process to the new provider, including joint sessions with the new provider, meetings and the provision of a handover report.
18. Providing the client family with information on how to re-enter Early Connections-Coffs Coast if &/or when required and appropriate.
19. In determining the most appropriate support options with the client the organisation will consider –
    - Cultural and language requirements.
    - Existing family and carer support.
    - Whether the person is of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Island background.
    - The age of the client.
    - Current risks to client.
    - Current needs of the client.

Strategies to minimise risks for Client Families –

- On the completion of signing the Service Agreement the family are provided with an appointment to meet with their Key Worker and participate in an RBI. This is done prior to the family leaving the Centre, thus reducing the possibility of an appointment not being booked.
- The Program also uses an intake checklist – *Family Engagement Checklist* -with all the steps required to ensure a timely and efficient transition to accessing supports from the Program.
- On completion of the RBI the *Team around the Child* meet to discuss and co-ordinate an appropriate approach to supports for that child and family based on the outcomes of the RBI
- The Service Plan is reviewed with the family every 6 – 9 months or on request by the family.
- Discussion with families a good 6 – 12 months prior to the time the child will need to transition to a new provider (that is their 7th birthday). This gives families time to independently look for a new provider and to discuss options with their Key Worker

- Key Worker to provide the family with possible options in regards to a new provider and to support the family to make contact if needed.
- Offer to provide joint sessions with the new provider to assist in developing relationships with the new provider and to hand over knowledge on the child's skills and development. If this is not possible, provide a handover report for the new provider.
- Any conflict of interest when referring to a new provider will be clearly explained to the family on referral. E.g. Where referral to an EC-CC team member (who also offers supports as a private provider) is made the family are informed of other alternatives and it is clearly identified that that worker would be acting independently of EC-CC.
- Where the child and family are leaving the Program for other reasons than the child has turned 7 families are provided with information on how they can re-enter the Program if &/or when required and appropriate.

DOCUMENTATION

Documents related to this policy	
Related policies	- Advocacy Policy - Complaints Handling Policy - Professional Development & Training Policy - Access to Confidential Information Policy
Forms, record keeping or other organisational documents	- Service Plan - Service Report template - Family Engagement Checklist

Reviewing and approving this policy		
Frequency	**Person responsible**	**Approval**
1 Years	Management Team	Management Committee

Policy review and version tracking			
Review	**Date Approved**	**Approved by**	**Next Review Due**
1	22.06.2020	Management Team – Management Committee	June 2021
2			
3			

The Management Committee

Signed: 

Name: Ian Braine - President

Date: 22.06.2020