



Child Rights and Services Charter Policy

Applies to: Staff members, Management Committee Members, Volunteers./Students.
Specific responsibility: Manager and Management Committee.

Version: 3
Date approved: 28 th Aug 2020
Next review date: Aug 2023

Policy context: This policy ensures that all individuals can feel confident that their Privacy Rights are upheld.	
Standards or other external requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National Disability Insurance Scheme Guidelines (Quality Indicators)2018 - National Disability Insurance Scheme (Restrictive Practices and Behaviour Support) Rules 2018
Legislation or other requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 - <i>Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998</i> - <i>Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002</i> - <i>Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988.</i>
Contractual obligations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Employment Agreements - Client Service Agreements and Schedule of Supports - NDIS Service Registered Service Provider obligations - DoE (Sector Capacity Building project contract) Funding Terms and Conditions (Funding Agreement)

POLICY STATEMENT

Early Connections- Manning and Great Lakes is committed to developing an organisational culture that supports the legal and human rights of clients and ensures they are able to exercise those rights as outlined in relevant legislation including the:

- Age Discrimination Act 2004
- Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984

Early Connections- Manning and Great Lakes. understands and supports the principles of fairness and human rights in all aspects of service delivery. It will ensure that services are provided in an environment free from discrimination, financial, sexual, physical and emotional abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Early Connections- Manning and Great Lakes. will

- provide easily understood and accessible information to all clients at service commencement about what the organisation does, how clients can contact the organisation, clients rights, the service standards clients can expect and opportunities to provide feedback or make a complaint.
- ensure clients have access to a fair and transparent system for making complaints and for reporting any breach of their rights.
- support clients to exercise choice and participate in service delivery and direction
- involve clients in the development of policies and procedures that impact on their service.

Early Connections- Manning and Great Lakes. client service charter outlines these rights and responsibilities in a way that is accessible and easily understood by clients.

The Charter

- The Early Connections- Manning and Great Lakes. is a service available to families in the Manning and Great Lakes regions who have a child with a disability or a significant delay in their development. Historically the age of children receiving services has been birth to school age but the scope has been extended to 12 years of age. The program provides both Special Education and Therapy Services, Assessments and also coordination of a detailed individualised Service Plan. The program offers a family-centred service that aims to meet the individual needs of each child and family. **The Program was historically funded by Community Services, Ageing, Disability and Home Care (until mid 2017), after which service payments come directly through clients National Disability Insurance Scheme's packages. Families can alternatively access supports through Medicare Care Plans, Private Health Insurance or self-funded, where capacity allows.**

Program Details and Services

- Service Users have control and choice about the services provided to them, within the provisions of our service delivery. On enrolment/intake these options are outlined and possible service delivery discussed. Options are sometimes limited by funding and staffing capacity. The services available include:
 - Educational programs and support
 - Key Worker / coordination supports
 - A transdisciplinary / team around the child approach
 - Therapy support including – Speech Pathology, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy and Psychology.
 - Supports in the child's natural setting eg home
 - Supports in settings other than the home eg Child Care Centre and School support
 - Inclusion supports in community settings eg supermarket, park
 - Assessments, Assistive Technology applications and evidence-based reports and strategy summaries
 - referral support
 - Advocacy
 - Transition to next setting support.
 - Individualised Service Plans
 - Access to Resource Library
 - Parent/Caregiver Training Workshops
 - Small groups eg social group, Lego group, Worry Woos group

- Community Playgroup – both centres during school terms.

Centre locations and Contact Details

Manning Centre:

33 Florence St,

Taree 2430

Phone: 02 65527333

Email: admin@earlyconnection-mgl.org.au

Website: www.earlyconnections.org.au

Great Lakes Centre:

5 Capel St,

Tuncurry 2428

Phone: 02 65527333

In line with our Referral Policy, clients can self-refer or can be referred from a number of community agencies. Referral information is contained on our website and sent to stakeholders on request and at the beginning of each year.

Our Standards

- The Early Connections- Manning and Great Lakes adheres to the National Disability Insurance Scheme Guidelines (Quality Indicators) 2018 and the National Disability Insurance Scheme (Restrictive Practices and Behaviour Support) Rules 2018. It aims to provide a high standard of service by incorporating the practices as set out in the National Guidelines for Best Practice in Early Intervention.
- Early Connections- Manning and Great Lakes. is committed to identifying and implementing current best practice. Professional development is budgeted for and prioritised to assist with this implementation. All staff employed have relevant qualifications as required by licensing and regulatory bodies. Staff undergo formal appraisals annually to identify areas for improvement and to set professional goals for themselves.

All staff read, sign and agree to comply with the Australasian Disability Professionals Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct, the National Disability Insurance Scheme Guidelines (Quality Indicators) 2018 and the National Disability Insurance Scheme (Restrictive Practices and Behaviour Support) Rules 2018 and the Board of Management also undergo training in the principles of Human Rights.

Networking and collaboration with other Early Intervention Programs and related community agencies are also standard practice.

All staff have both full Police Criminal Record Checks and Working with Children Checks on employment.

All staff working with children have First Aid Training certificates.

Client Rights and Responsibilities

Early Connections- Manning and Great Lakes has clear statements and policies on the rights of clients. These cover all aspects including Rights, Access to Information, Privacy and Confidentiality, use of Personal Information and Safety.

Feedback and Participation

Early Connections- Manning and Great Lakes welcomes feedback from and participation by all stakeholders and interested members of the community. This can be in the form of:

- Informal requests/suggestions given to staff or placed in the Suggestion Box
- Formal complaints through our Managing Complaints Policy.
- Completion of our Client/Stakeholders Surveys
- Contributing to new policies being developed or those under review.

- Serving on the program’s Management Committee that is elected each year at the AGM.
- Participation in Service Plan meetings

We Welcome Feedback and Complaints

Early Connections- Manning and Great Lakes has a complaints procedure in place that outlines the steps that will be taken to deal with a complaint (see Managing Complaints Policy). This information is summarised in the Compliments and Complaints Brochure which is given to service users on commencement of service. This process, as stated below, is also outlined in the newsletters throughout the year and **documented on our website**.

Support for You /Advocacy

If you would like support during this process, we encourage you to use either a family member/friend or other interested person to advocate for you. Please ask us to arrange access to professional advocacy services if you need this support. We can also arrange interpreter services if necessary. Further information can be found by reading our Advocacy policy.

External complaint mechanisms

If you do not feel comfortable raising a complaint directly with us or continue to be dissatisfied after raising your concern with us, assistance is available.

Complainants should be made aware that they may wish to contact the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission Ph: 1800 035 544. From NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission “How to make a Complaint” brochure:

Where to go with a complaint

I'm not happy with NDIS funded services	➔ The NDIS Commission	➔ 1800 035 544
I'm not happy with the NDIA's actions or decisions	➔ NDIA or Commonwealth Ombudsman	➔ 1800 800 110 www.ndis.gov.au www.ombudsman.gov.au
I'm not happy with a service provided by another agency or body	➔ Your state or territory complaints body	➔ Find links on the NDIS Commission website www.ndiscommission.gov.au

Choice and Decision making

Early Connections- Manning and Great Lakes. encourages the clients to exercise choice and be involved in service/program decisions

These opportunities are listed below:

- To be actively involved in choice for service delivery for their child. (Written choices outlined)
- To identify priorities for goals and contribute information to Service Plans.
- To have choices clearly outlines verbally and in writing. Documentation of choices presented and signed by both participant representatives and service provider – Service Agreement, Schedule of Supports, Third Party Agreement and Intake Declaration.
- To contribute to policy making and reviews. (Posted on website and on notice boards).

- To consent to or refuse any service delivery.
- To nominate to be a Member of the Association or for the Board of Management and take an active role in service management and decision making.
- To make a complaint or compliment about the service.

Support in Choice and Decision Making

Service users are given an information pack on enrolment or commencement of service. This pack outlines their right to exercise choice and have their say in both service delivery and service decisions.

Information is provided on the program website www.earlyconnections.com.au and links to various publications are posted here. Facebook posts regularly update activities and information – Facebook @ Early Connections.

Similar information is included in the Early Connections- Manning and Great Lakes Information Booklet which is given to all families on intake.

Interpreter services can be arranged and made available where needed. These include both signing (Local signers) and hearing impaired (National Relay Service NRS 133677) and multicultural language interpreters. The Translating and Interpreters Service (TIS 131450) is used to assist in this process. The need for this service has been very limited in the Manning/Great Lakes region because of the demographics of the area. EC-MGL accepts the costs associated with these services.

This charter is accessible to clients and stakeholders and can be located in both centres. Further service information is available on our website and all information brochures are included in the Information Pack that is given to families on enrolment.

DOCUMENTATION

Documents related to this policy	
Related policies	
Forms, record keeping or other organisational document	

Reviewing and approving this policy		
Frequency	Person responsible	Approval
Annually	Manager	Management Committee

Policy review and version tracking			
Review	Date Approved	Approved by	Next Review Due
1	17 th Feb 2017	Management Committee	Feb 2018
2	18 th Apr 2019	Management Committee	Apr 2020
3	26 th Aug 2020	Management Committee	Aug 2023

The Management Committee
Aug 2020

Signed: 

Name: Michelle Richardson

Date: 26-Aug-2020