



## **Cultural Safety and Diversity Policy**

**Approved by the St Vincent de Paul Society NSW on 10 October, 2014**

### **Version Control**

Contact names	Role / position	Version number	Date	Review date
Joanna Fanos	Policy Coordinator	1	10/10/2014	10/10/2015
Joanna Fanos	Policy Coordinator	2	06/04/2016	06/04/2019

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## Policy Statement

The Society provides services and programs which represent the diversity of client communities. The Society welcomes all people in need regardless of:

- Race
- Culture
- Country of birth
- Religious or spiritual belief
- Caring responsibility
- Sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex status
- Marital status
- Family composition
- Pregnancy
- Age
- Health status
- Disability
- Residency status

## Scope

This Cultural Safety and Diversity Policy applies to all NSW Support Services staff, volunteers and members. It also applies to Central Councils implementing the Client-Centred Service Delivery Model.

## Purpose

This Cultural Safety and Diversity Policy in combination with the Client-Centred Service Delivery Policy and Trauma Informed Care Policy provide the overall framework to respond to the needs of the Society's diverse clients.

## Definitions

<b>Concept</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
<b><i>Diversity</i></b>	The concept of diversity recognises that each person has different characteristics and experiences which make them unique. Diversity encompasses lifestyle, cultural and other differences between people. Clients of the Society receive a personalised service where diversity is taken into account in service delivery.
<b><i>Cultural safety</i></b>	Cultural safety is a way of working which enables diversity in human service environments. It encourages those involved in delivering services to understand their own values and attitudes in order to recognise and avoid stereotypical barriers. Cultural safety recognises that there are other ways of doing things beyond those practiced by people delivering services to clients. Services that are culturally safe do not deny clients recognition of their identity and instead move to incorporate their world views, beliefs and values.
<b><i>Inclusive practices</i></b>	Inclusive practices help to provide culturally safe services to clients of the Society by ensuring that clients are engaged in ways that suit their individual needs. Inclusive practices recognise the right of all people to access services and acknowledge that some

	people will require information, support or working relationships that are different to what other people require to promote participation. Inclusive practices may involve making adjustments to the service environment for client benefit.
<b>Equal opportunity</b>	Equal opportunity encompasses the belief that all people deserve to be safeguarded from bias and disadvantage. It includes a range of practices which promote the equal or similar treatment of all people.
<b>Discrimination</b>	Discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another person in the same or similar circumstances because they are different. Discrimination can take the form of exclusion, harassment, inappropriate comments, slander or rumours. Discrimination can be direct or indirect.

## Policy Framework

### *Service Delivery*

#### **Equal Opportunity to Access Services**

Consistent with anti-discrimination legislation, all people will be given equal opportunity to access services on the basis of need. Please see the Related Legislation section of this policy for a list of applicable laws.

In instances where a person in need does not meet the eligibility criteria, or where there are no spaces available in a relevant Society service or program, all efforts will be made to offer a referral to an alternative service that can meet their identified needs.

Please see the [Client Access and Eligibility Policy](#) and [Client Referral Policy](#) for further information.

#### **Culturally Safe Services**

Each client's diversity will influence the way in which Society supports are delivered. Wherever possible services and programs will:

- Incorporate the client's concept of family, unique life goals, sense of community and customs;
- Be consistent with the client's disclosed values and beliefs, and
- Aim to strengthen the client's informal support network.

Service delivery practices should be modified where practices are identified that do not support and promote diversity.

Please see the [Client Assessment and Case Planning Policy](#) and the [Client Review Policy](#) for further information.

#### **Inclusive Practices**

Inclusive practices should be used wherever required to overcome barriers to working with clients of diverse backgrounds and promote their participation.

Inclusive practices include but are not limited to the provision of interpreters, providing information in languages other than English and using communication aids.

Wherever possible, the Society will collaborate with diverse community networks and services to deliver individualised services to a client where the client has consented to that involvement.

### **Partnerships with Services Representing Diverse Interests**

Partnerships with other services in the community which reflect client diversity should be developed so that each client is able to participate in their chosen community and receive culturally safe support.

Staff, members and volunteers are encouraged to initiate working relationships with other services and networks to enhance the support provided to diverse clients. This will ensure that appropriate referral pathways are available where required.

Please refer to the [Partnerships Strategy Policy](#).

### **Confidentiality**

Information provided by clients will remain confidential, except where a client or their guardian has consented to release this information, or disclosure is required under law to uphold the Society's duty of care.

Where information relating to client diversity is collected for reporting activities, clients will be informed of the purpose of collecting the data and of protections that will be applied to the data to maintain client confidentiality.

### **Discrimination**

Discrimination against clients on the basis of their diversity is contrary to the values of the Society.

Complaint mechanisms are available to all clients who wish to submit a concern relating to discrimination.

Please see the [Complaint Handling Policy and Procedure](#) and [Code of Conduct for Members, Volunteers and Employees](#).

## ***Service and Policy Development***

### **Service Development**

When developing services, diversity is a key consideration which assists in ensuring services are responsive to difference and do not apply a one-size-fits-all approach to clients.

Whenever a service is reviewed, all proposals will be assessed for their impact on cultural safety and diversity. This assessment will inform any further response to the proposals.

Wherever feasible, consultation with clients, networks and services will be used to capture feedback for service development and review to ensure services are culturally safe and inclusive.

### **Policy Development**

All future policies, procedures and guidelines will be developed to maintain consistency with this policy.

Where existing policies are updated, reviews will incorporate the requirements of this policy.

### **Capacity Development**

Staff, members and volunteers will be provided with ongoing training to support them to effectively respond to diversity.

Managers should provide supervision to complement training initiatives so that cultural safety can be applied to local service environments and service users.

Please see the [Stronger Together Policy](#).

### **Related Policies**

Society policies relating to this policy include:

#### **State Support Office**

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- [Child Protection Policy](#)
- [Code of Conduct for Members, Volunteers and Employees](#)
- [Complaint Handling Policy and Procedure](#)
- [Critical Incident Policy and Procedures](#)
- [Privacy and Confidentiality Policy](#)
- [Risk Management Framework](#)
- [Risk Management Policy](#)
- [Stronger Together Policy](#)
- [Work Health and Safety Policy Statement](#)
- [WHS Procedures](#)

#### **Support Services**

- [Client Access and Eligibility Policy](#)
- [Client Assessment and Case Planning Policy](#)
- [Client-Centred Service Delivery Policy](#)
- [Client Charter Policy](#)
- [Client Incident Management Policy and Procedure](#)
- [Client Transition and Exit Policy](#)
- [Client Referral Policy](#)
- [Client Review Policy](#)
- [Medication Policy](#)
- [Partnerships Strategy Policy](#)
- [Possession of Substances Policy](#)

- [Quality Management Policy](#)
- [Reportable Incidents in Disability Supported Group Accommodation Policy](#)
- [Trauma Informed Care Policy](#)

## **Related Legislation**

Legislation relating to this policy includes:

- *Age Discrimination Act 2004* (Cth)
- *Aged Care Act 1997* (Cth)
- *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977* (NSW)
- *Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986* (Cth)
- *Community Welfare Act 1987* (NSW)
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth)
- *Disability Inclusion Act 2014* (NSW)
- *Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002* (NSW)
- *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth)
- *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth)
- *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* (NSW)
- *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* (Cth)
- *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* (Cth)
- *Work, Health and Safety Act 2011* (NSW)

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

These policy requirements will be followed by all people included within the scope of this policy.

## **Effectiveness and Review**

This policy is scheduled for three yearly review, or as frequently as required to align with legislative or practice changes.

## **Further Advice or Assistance**

Please speak with your Manager if you have any questions regarding this policy. You may also contact the Support Services Policy Coordinator to provide feedback on this policy.

Approval and Amendment History	Details
Original Approval Authority	SVdP Society CEO, 10/10/2014
Version 2. Minor amendments, no change to intention or scope.	06/04/2016.  <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Add reference to programs (and services).</li> <li>2. Include reference to Partnership Policy, page 5.</li> <li>3. Update of related policies and legislation section.</li> <li>4. Change from yearly review to three yearly.</li> </ol>