

Policy Reference:	16	Date adopted:	July 2023
Prepared By:	Risk and Compliance Officer		
Version:	2		
Approved By:	Chief Executive Officer		
Date of current review:	June 2023	Date for next review:	June 2026

1. Purpose

This policy establishes and acknowledges the rights of carers as defined within the Carers Recognition Act (NSW, 2010) and the National Standards for Mental Health Services (2010). The agency recognises, respects, values the importance of carers to the wellbeing, treatment, and recovery of people with mental illness and other physical and psychological illnesses.

Carers make a valuable contribution to the community and have the rights, choices, and opportunities as others in the community. Carer's unique knowledge and experience is to be acknowledged and recognised and the relationship between carers and the people they care for respected at all times.

Carers are diverse and have individual needs within and beyond their caring role that includes being:

- Supported to enjoy optimum health and wellbeing and to participate in family, social and community life, employment, and education.
- Supported to balance their caring role with other roles, such as work and education.
- Supported to facilitate their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander values, heritage, and concepts of caring.
- Acknowledged for the additional challenges faced by carers who live in rural and remote areas.
- Children and young people who are carers will be supported to reach their full potential; and
- Supported by Centacare SW NSW staff to receive timely, responsive, appropriate, and accessible support services.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Centacare South West NSW Ltd (Centacare) and its Board; and
- All employees, volunteers, contractors, work experience students and trainees carrying out work for Centacare;
- All participants of Centacare e.g., parents, caregivers, and children.
- All records, whether hard copy or electronic, containing personal information about individuals, and to interviews or discussions of a sensitive and personal nature.

3. Definitions

Term	Definition
The National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards	The National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards provide a nationally consistent statement of the level of care consumers can expect from health service organisations.
Clinical Governance	<p>“Clinical governance is the set of relationships and responsibilities established by a health service organisation between its state or territory department of health, governing body, executive, workforce, patients, consumers and other stakeholders to ensure good clinical outcomes.”</p> <p>Source: Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care https://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/our-work/clinical-governance (August 2023)</p>
Integrated Care	<p>“Clinical governance is an integrated component of corporate governance of health service organisations. It ensures that everyone – from frontline clinicians to managers and members of governing bodies, such as boards – is accountable to patients and the community for assuring the delivery of health services that are safe, effective, high quality and continuously improving.</p> <p>Each health service organisation needs to put in place strategies for clinical governance that consider its local circumstances.”</p> <p>Source: Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care https://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/standards/nsghs-standards/clinical-governance/clinical-governance-standard (August 2023)</p>
Carers and family members	<p>“Carers and family members play an important role in prevention, early recognition, assessment, and recovery relating to a patient’s health condition. They often know the patient very well and can provide detailed information about the patient’s history, routines, or symptoms, which may assist in determining treatment and ongoing support.</p> <p>Although clinical care standards do not specifically refer to carers and family members, each quality statement should be understood to mean that carers and family members are involved in clinicians’ discussions with patients about their care if the patient prefers carer involvement.”</p> <p>Source: Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care https://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/standards/clinical-care-standards/about-clinical-care-standards/principles-care (August 2023)</p>
Young person	A person up to the age of 25 years who may care for a person that may be elderly, have a chronic condition or terminal illness or live with a disability.

4. Policy Statement

Centacare SW NSW Board and staff support the involvement of carers in the development, planning, delivery, and evaluation of services. Centacare upholds the right of a carer to have their needs met and feedback considered in all parts of service delivery (NSMHS Standards, 2010).

In accordance with the NSW Carers (Recognition) Act 2010 Centacare commits to:

- That all Centacare staff, students, volunteers, contractors, and the Board understand the NSW Carers Charter.
- Implementing the principles of the Charter in policy and service delivery.
- Centacare staff and Board consult with carers on significant policy issues that impact on carers.
- Maintaining a supportive culture and human resource policy that considers and caters to the needs of Centacare staff, including for staff and Board members who are carers.

Centacare will engage with participants, carers, and the community to develop and implement programs and services that support the needs of both participants and carers.

4.1 Carers Rights and Responsibilities

Carers utilising the services in Centacare SW NSW have the right to privacy legislation and organisational policies and procedures as applicable to the service provision.

4.2 Risk Management

Centacare workers are to consider any significant risks associated to either the participant and or the carer as part of the participant intake and risk assessment. All carers are to be referred to, and assisted to access appropriate, safe supports and services to enable them to fulfil the vital role they have in the community.

4.3 Centacare's Rights and Responsibilities

The agency must take all reasonable steps to ensure that service providers and their agents have an awareness and understanding of the NSW Carers (Recognition) Act 2010 and this policy and procedure.

5. Responsibilities

5. Responsibilities

Responsibility	Role
Policy Owner	Board
Compliance, Monitoring and Review	CEO, Executive Management, Regional Managers, Team Leaders, Clinical Leads, Risk & Compliance Officer
Reporting	Executive / Regional Managers

Responsibility	Role
Records Management	Risk and Compliance Officer

6. Regulatory Compliance

6.1. Relevant Legislation/Standards

- Corporations Act 2001 (Cth)
- Mental Health Act 2007 (NSW)
- The Australian Charter of Health Care Rights
- Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 (Cth)
- Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulations 2022 (Cth)
- Charities Act 2013 (Cth)
- Australian Charities and Not-for-profits (ACNC) Governance Standards
- Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)
- Anti-discrimination Act 1977 (NSW)
- Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)
- Children’s Guardian Act 2019 (NSW)
- Children's Guardian Regulation 2022 (NSW)
- Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW)
- Children’s and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Regulation 2022 (NSW)
- Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 (NSW) Crimes Act 1900 (NSW)
- Australian Human Rights Commission, National Principles for Child Safety
- Department of Communities and Justice (NSW) NSW Office of Children’s Guardian Child Safe Standards (NSW).
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 (Cth) - clauses 84
- Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)
- Freedom of Information Act 1989 (NSW)
- Industrial Relations Act 1996 (NSW)
- Natural justice/procedural fairness - NSW Ombudsman
- Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
- Protected Disclosures Act 1994 (NSW)
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)

- Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011 No.10
- Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017
- Work Health and Safety Amendment (Penalty Notices) Regulation 2022

6.2 Other Compliance, Certification, Accreditation

- National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards (non-accredited)
- Standards National Standards for Mental Health Services 2010
- QIC Health and Community Service Standards
- NDIS Practice Standards and Quality Indicators – November 2021
- National Disability Insurance Scheme (Complaints Management and Resolution) Rules 2018
- NDIS Reportable Incidents

7. Related Documents

Document	Detail
Policy & Procedures	Governance Charter Policy
Policy & Procedures	Clinical Governance Policy
Policy & Procedures	Financial Management Policy
Policy & Procedures	Human Resources Policy
Policy & Procedures	Privacy Policy
Policy & Procedures	Feedback, Complaints, Grievances Policy
Policy & Procedures	Professionalism Policy
Policy & Procedures	Diversity and Inclusion Policy
Policy & Procedures	Participant Welfare Policy
Policy & Procedures	Service Provision
Policy & Procedures	Asset Management
Policy & Procedures	Abuse, Neglect, Exploitation, and Discrimination Policy
Policy & Procedures	Risk Management
Policy & Procedures	Risk Management – Emergency & Disaster Management
Policy & Procedures	Whistle Blower Protection Policy
Policy & Procedures	Fraud Policy
Policy & Procedures	Carers Policy
Policy & Procedures	Information Management Policy
Policy & Procedures	Code of Conduct Policy
Policy & Procedures	Child Safe Policy
Policy & Procedures	Quality Management Policy
Organisational Plans & Procedures	Centacare's Strategic Plan
Organisational Plans & Procedures	Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity Plan
Registers	Enterprise Risk Register
Registers	Delegations Register
Registers	Operational Register – Hazards, Near Misses & Incidents
Registers	Operational Register – Risk of Serious Harm (ROSH)

Document	Detail
Procedures & Forms	Operational Manual – NDIS Program
Procedures & Forms	Operational Manual – Family and Communities Program
Procedures & Forms	Operational Manual – School Wellbeing Program

8. Policy Review

8.1 Approval and Review

Policy Reference:	16	Date adopted:	July 2023
Approved By:	Board		
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8.2 Amendment History

Review Date	Approved Date	Details of Amendment
April 2020	May 2020	Minor - policy and procedure separated into two documents.
June 2023	August 2023	<p>Updates to legislation and references to Standards, QIC Health and Community Service Standards and NDIS Practice Standards and Quality Indicators.</p> <p>Alignment to the NSW Carers (Recognition) Act 2010.</p> <p>Inclusion of the Australian Charter of Health Care Rights.</p> <p>Updates to current legislation, standards and Centacare's Policy and Procedures.</p>