



Community Therapy
NDIS Participant Handbook
and Charter

About Community Therapy

Community Therapy is a provider of mobile Allied Health services to older adults and people living with disabilities across the Central Coast and Hunter New England Health Districts. Community Therapy is focused on clinical excellence and strives to empower their participants and create meaningful change in their lives.

Mission

To support, enable and empower our clients to live an enriched and meaningful life.

Vision

To be recognised by the aged care and disability communities as the experts in providing outstanding allied health services.

Values

Care

We care for people. We take time to understand and respond to the needs and desires of our clients.

Expertise

We are a highly skilled team. We support the development of our clinicians to embrace the changing environment to provide best practice care for our clients.

Integrity

We are honest, transparent and ethically motivated. We value and respect the individuality of our clients, partners and team. We treat our community the way we would like to be treated.

Innovation

We have a strong desire to lead. We work together with our clients and customers to engage in innovative projects enriching the lives of those we care for.

Community

We are a team. We partner with our clients, healthcare associates and industry to nurture a community that achieves the optimal health and wellness outcomes.

Contact Details

You will be provided with the direct contact details of your clinician however you can also contact our office via the following methods:

Phone 1300 031 935	Email admin@communitytherapy.com.au
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Our Services

We provide Allied Health services under the “Therapeutic Supports” NDIS registration groups. For more information about our services please call us on 1300 031 935, visit www.communitytherapy.com.au or speak to a member of our staff.

Our office contact hours are 9.00am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday.

Service Quality

To deliver its services as an NDIS Registered Provider, Community Therapy must comply with the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Framework. This means we must:

- comply with the NDIS Act 2013 (Cth);
- comply with the NDIS Terms of Business for Registered Providers and any Conditions of NDIS Registration; and
- obtain and maintain accreditation against the NDIS Practice Standards.

The NDIS Practice Standards are quality standards that govern how Registered NDIS providers must deliver services. The Standards that relate to Community Therapy are:

Schedule 1 - Core Module

1. Rights of participants and responsibilities of providers
2. Provider governance and operational management (8 criteria)
3. Provision of supports
4. Support provision environment

As set out in this handbook, Community Therapy is committed to delivering services in compliance with these standards and in continuously improving its service delivery. We operate in accordance with comprehensive policies and procedures, which are reviewed regularly and incorporate participant and other stakeholder feedback.

Your Rights

Community Therapy respects and fully commits to upholding the rights of all people, including those with disabilities. Community Therapy is also committed to ensuring you are aware of your rights and responsibilities and are supported to exercise them.

In supporting you to exercise your rights, we must comply with the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 and NDIS Practice Standards - Rights and Responsibilities.

Community Therapy's Consumer Charter

You have the Right to access supports that:

- promote, uphold and respect your legal and human rights;
- respect your culture, diversity, values and beliefs;
- respect and protect your dignity and right to privacy; and
- are free from violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation or discrimination.

You also have the right to exercise informed choice and control regarding the supports we provide.

It is our responsibility to:

- tell you about and uphold your rights;
- provide supports in a way that promotes, upholds and respects your rights to freedom of expression, self-determination and decision-making;
- support you to make informed choices, exercise control and maximise your independence in relation to the supports we provide;
- respect your autonomy, including your right to intimacy and sexual expression;
- provide you sufficient time to consider and review your support options and seek advice if required, at any stage of our service delivery;
- support you to access an advocate (including an independent advocate) of your choosing;
- support you to engage with your family, friends and chosen community in the ways you want to;
- treat you with fairly, with courtesy, dignity and respect and without discrimination;
- give you information about our services and associated costs, as well as other support options, within and outside Community Therapy;
- involve you in decisions about your supports, as well as our programs and policies;
- provide services that consider and respect your lifestyle, cultural, linguistic and religious background and preferences;
- protect your personal information and only use it for the right reasons;
- support you to provide us with feedback on our service, including complaints;
- promptly address enquiries and complaints about the supports you are receiving;
- support you to connect with other services, including advocates, interpreters and translators, if needed;
- support you to have a person to speak on your behalf for any purpose; and
- provide safe and appropriate services that are culturally relevant and support your needs and goals.

As a participant we ask that you:

- provide us with information that will help us to best support you;
- tell us if things change or you cannot keep an appointment or commitment;
- act respectfully and safely towards other people using the service, and towards our staff;
- provide us with feedback about our service and how we can improve;
- promptly pay the agreed fees associated with your services; and
- tell us as early as possible if our services are not required.

Diversity and Participation

All aspects of Community Therapy's service delivery promote participants' active participation and inclusion in the community. We support participants to develop and maintain their independence, problem solving, social and self-care skills, as appropriate to their age, developmental stage, cultural background, or other needs and goals.

Ways we do this include:

- delivering services in a way that respects individuals' personal, gender, sexual, cultural, religious, or spiritual identity;
- employing and developing a diverse and culturally competent workforce;
- working collaboratively with disability-specific, mainstream, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) services to support holistic service delivery; and
- using a strengths-based approach to identify individual consumer needs and life goals, particularly in relation to recognising the importance of family, extended family, kinship, cultural, spiritual, language and community ties.

Community Participation and Inclusion

Community Therapy is committed to working with you to dismantle barriers, change attitudes and promote social change to create opportunities for your full inclusion and participation in your community. We encourage you to speak to a staff member if you have any specific needs or goals that we cannot meet and will assist you to find an organisation that can if you wish.

Freedom from Harm, Abuse and Neglect

When taking part in our services, you have the right to be free from harm and any form of abuse or neglect. Community Therapy treats any allegation of abuse, assault or neglect very seriously. Allegations may be subject to both mandatory reporting and police involvement. If you have any concerns or are aware of a situation where abuse or neglect may be occurring, please notify a Community Therapy staff member.

Community Therapy employs skilled staff who respect the rights of people with disability, are aware of current policies and legislation pertaining to abuse, neglect and unexplained absences and will support people and their families, guardians and advocates to access complaint mechanisms and raise any concerns they have about our services. All staff undergo comprehensive criminal history screening and other mandatory checks prior to employment.

Interpreting and Translation

The delivery of safe, high-quality services relies on effective communication. Where required, interpreters and translators will be made available at no cost to support your interactions with us.

Advocacy

Community Therapy fully supports your right to have an independent advocate support you in your interactions with us. If you'd like help finding an independent advocate, speak to one of our staff.

Alternatively, the following organisations can assist you:

National Disability Advocacy Program (NDAP)

Use the Disability Advocacy Finder at [National Disability Advocacy Program \(NDAP\)](#)

Disability Advocacy New South Wales

Website: <https://www.da.org.au/>

Phone: (02) 4927 0111 or 1300 365 085

Email: da@da.org.au

The Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association of NSW (MDAA)

Phone: (02) 9891 6400 or (Tollfree) 1800 629 072 or TTY (02) 9687 6325

Email: mdaa@mdaa.org.au

Accessing Community Therapy's Services

We aim to provide accessible services to you that are safe, engaging and responsive to your support and communication needs.

To be eligible to receive Community Therapy's services under the NDIS a person must already be a NDIS participant.

We will advise you if we are not suitable to provide the supports that you require.

If we are suitable to provide you with supports, we will work with you and your supporters to assess your needs and develop and agree upon a Service Agreement. You will be advised of our current wait times at the point of referral acceptance.

Where required, we will provide you with information and support to access a person of your choice, such as an advocate, to assist you.

Wait List Processes

When a participant's referral is accepted by Community Therapy, they are informed of the estimated waitlist time, and the referrer is provided with an opportunity to request the participant be prioritised according to clinical need.

This request is reviewed and responded to by the Clinical Support Teams and escalated to the Leadership Team where required. If successful they will be updated with a new estimated wait time. If unsuccessful the Clinical Support Team will discuss the reasons with the referrer and check if they would like to remain on our waitlist.

Appeal

Any person refused services has the right to appeal. Appeals should be directed in writing to Community Therapy's Managing Director via leadership@communitytherapy.com.au

Leaving Community Therapy's Services

All participants have the right to exit Community Therapy's services at any time and a decision to do so will not prejudice future access to the service. Our standard cancellation policy will apply to requests to cease services.

We can provide assistance and resources to support people exiting or changing services. This includes the identification of, referral to and support accessing alternative services.

If you wish to end your service provision, please speak to a Community Therapy staff member.

Service Termination

Community Therapy may terminate a participant's services when:

- they are unwilling over a period of time to work towards agreed goals;
- other people using the service, staff or the person themselves are at risk of harm;
- financial requirements are not being met;
- severe incompatibility with other participants using the service is displayed; or
- dramatic health changes require significantly increased levels of care or a service model not provided by Community Therapy.

Any person whose services are terminated has the right to appeal. Appeals should be directed in writing to Community Therapy's Managing Director via leadership@communitytherapy.com.au

Fees and Charges

We will discuss prices with you before providing services and include all fees in a Service Agreement. The Service Agreement contains detailed information about the services we will provide you and when fees must be paid. This must be agreed to by you before services can commence.

Community Therapy will provide you with regular invoices and statements to assist you to manage payment for our services if required. If you have difficulty paying your fees for any reason, we encourage you to discuss this with a staff member so that mutually acceptable payment arrangements can be put in place.

Work Health and Safety

Community Therapy is committed to providing services in a safe and healthy environment. Work Health and Safety (WH&S) is the responsibility of all Community Therapy stakeholders – including staff, volunteers, participants, families, carers and visitors. We ask that you report any hazards or risks you become aware of and act in a way that protects yours and others' health and safety when participating in our services.

Where services are provided by Community Therapy in your home, we expect that you, or the owner of the premises, will take responsibility for your safety and the safety of our staff working there. As far as practicable, please ensure that the premise is safe for our staff and meets all relevant building regulations or legislation. If you cannot perform or arrange for appropriate safety checks, this service can be included in your care plan or arranged with another service with our support.

Incident Management

Community Therapy maintains an incident management system to ensure your safety and the safety of our team. Any incidents are logged on our incident form by our team members and followed up by our Clinical Support Team and escalated to the Leadership Team where required.

If you wish to notify us of an incident, you can liaise with our clinician or you can contact us on 1300 031 935 or email us at admin@communitytherapy.com.au.

As a registered NDIS provider, we are legally required to report specific serious incidents to the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission in line with NDIS mandated reporting timelines. The six categories of reportable incidents are:

1. **Death** of a person with disability.
2. **Serious injury** of a person with disability (e.g., injuries requiring hospitalisation or emergency treatment).
3. **Abuse or neglect** of a person with disability (including physical, emotional, or financial abuse).
4. **Unlawful sexual or physical contact** with, or assault of, a person with disability.
5. **Sexual misconduct** (including grooming) against, or in the presence of, a person with disability.
6. **Unauthorised use of a restrictive practice** (the use of a restraint that is not in a registered Behavior Support Plan or not authorized by the State/Territory).

Community Therapy Privacy Statement

Community Therapy is committed to providing quality services and respecting your rights. Your right to privacy and confidentiality will be recognised, respected, and protected in all aspects of your contact with us. This statement outlines our ongoing obligations to you in respect to how we manage your Personal Information.

Community Therapy complies with the requirements of the Privacy Principles in the *Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 (NSW)*, *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW)* and, where applicable, the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*.

What is Personal Information and why do we collect it?

Personal Information is information or an opinion that identifies an individual. Examples of Personal Information we collect include: names, addresses, email addresses and phone numbers]. Personal Information includes Health Information, which is information about the physical or mental health or disability of an individual.

We collect your Personal Information in many ways including interviews, correspondence, by telephone, by email, via our website, from other publicly available sources and from third parties.

Community Therapy will only request and retain Personal Information that is necessary to:

- assess your eligibility for a service;
- provide a safe and responsive service;
- monitor the services provided; and
- fulfil contractual requirements to provide non-identifying data and statistical information to a funding body.

When we collect Personal Information, we will explain to you why we are collecting the information and how we plan to use it.

Communicable Diseases & Infection Control

Community Therapy is committed to the health and safety of our participants and staff. In accordance with the Public Health Act, we recognise that certain communicable diseases (including but not limited to HIV, Hepatitis, and respiratory viruses) require specific management to exercise our professional duty of care.

* Disclosure: Information regarding a participant's status for a communicable disease may be disclosed to staff directly involved in providing treatment, care, or counseling to ensure safe service delivery.

* Privacy: This information is handled in a secure manner in accordance with our privacy policy and procedure.

* Safety Protocols: We may implement infection control precautions or request to reschedule appointments if there is a known risk of transmission of an acute illness.

Disclosure of Personal Information

Your Personal Information will only be disclosed:

- to prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to the life or health of you or another person;
- to outside agencies with your or your representative's permission;
- with written consent from a person with lawful authority; or
- when required by law, or to fulfil legislative obligations such as mandatory reporting.

Security and Destruction of Personal Information

Your Personal and Health Information is stored in a manner that reasonably protects it from misuse and loss and from unauthorized access, modification or disclosure.

We will retain and dispose of your Personal and Health Information in accordance with the State Records Authority of New South Wales' *Functional Retention and Disposal Authority: FA306*.

Access to your Personal Information

You may access the Personal or Health Information we hold about you, including to update or correct it, subject to certain exceptions. If you wish to access your Personal or Health Information, please speak to a staff member.

In order to protect your Personal or Health Information we may require identification from you before releasing the requested information.

You have the right to:

- request access to personal information we hold about you;
- access this information; and
- make corrections if you consider the information is not accurate, complete or up to date.

However, access may be denied in part or in total where:

- the request is frivolous or vexatious;
- providing access would have an unreasonable impact on the privacy of other individuals;
- providing access would be likely to prejudice an investigation of possible unlawful activity;
- providing access would pose a serious and imminent threat to the life or health of any individual; and
- denying access is required or authorised by or under law.

We aim to address all requests to access or correct information within 2 working days. We will not charge any fee for your access request but may charge an administrative fee for providing a copy of your information.

Consent to storage and sharing of your Personal Information

At any time you may change your preferences in what personal information we store and who we share it with by calling us on 1300 031 935 or emailing us at admin@communitytherapy.com.au.

Maintaining the Quality of your Personal Information

It is important to us that your information is up to date. We will take all reasonable steps to make sure that your Personal Information is accurate and complete. If you find that the information we have is not up to date or is inaccurate, please advise us as soon as practicable so we can update our records and ensure we can continue to provide quality services to you.

Policy Updates

Community Therapy' *Privacy and Confidentiality* and *Records and Information Management* Policies and Procedures will be formally reviewed at least annually. Formal reviews will consider participant , staff and other stakeholder feedback.

Feedback, Compliments and Complaints

Compliments, complaints and other feedback provide us with valuable information about your satisfaction with our services. Feedback is taken seriously by Community Therapy and is seen as an opportunity for improvement.

We encourage feedback and comments on the services we provide, both positive and negative. Whether a compliment or complaint, your feedback will be treated with confidentiality and sensitivity.

Feedback, compliments and complaints can be lodged:

- directly with a staff member, either verbally or by providing a completed Feedback, Compliments and Complaints Form on our website;
- by email to: admin@communitytherapy.com.au; or
- by phone on: 1300 031 935.

Please note you are able to provide feedback, compliments or complaints anonymously via our Feedback, Compliments and Complaints Form on our website at www.communitytherapy.com.au/contact.

Feedback and Continuous Improvement

In addition to the above, Community Therapy is continually seeking feedback on how we can improve the services we provide. This includes through satisfaction surveys, requests for feedback by staff after you interact with us and involving you in our service delivery planning and review processes. Please feel free to provide any suggestions or ideas you have to a staff member.

Complaints

We encourage anyone with a complaint to speak directly to a Community Therapy staff member in the first instance, who will attempt to resolve the issue immediately. If the matter cannot be resolved promptly, it will be escalated to Community Therapy's Clinical Support Team and the Leadership Team where required.

You can use Community Therapy's Feedback, Compliments and Complaints Form to formally lodge your grievance and a staff member can assist you to do this if you wish.

Please note you are able to provide feedback, compliments or complaints anonymously via our Feedback, Compliments and Complaints Form on our website at www.communitytherapy.com.au/contact.

Your complaint will be formally acknowledged within two working days and a staff member will keep you updated regarding its resolution. Community Therapy aims to respond to all complaints and grievances as quickly as possible, and within 28 days from acknowledgement.

If a complaint or grievance cannot be responded to in full within 28 days of acknowledgement, you will be provided with an update, which will include when a full response can be expected.

If you feel a complaint has not been sufficiently or appropriately addressed, you can seek further support from Community Therapy's Leadership Team, or alternatively through any of the following agencies:

NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission

At any time, people can make a complaint about NDIS service providers or the support they provide to the NDIS Commission.

Complaints to the NDIS Commission can be lodged:

- online at www.ndiscommission.gov.au; and
- by phone on: 1800 035 544

NSW Fair Trading

NDIS participants purchasing products and services also have rights and protections under the Australian Consumer Law (ACL), including provisions on customer guarantees and unfair contract terms. Fair Trading NSW provides information and advice and, in some cases, dispute resolution services for customer disputes under the ACL.

Complaints to NSW Fair Trading can be lodged:

- online at www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/help-centre/online-tools/make-a-complaint;
and
- by phone on: 13 32 20

National Disability Insurance Agency

Complaints about the NDIA should be directed to the Agency itself or the Commonwealth Ombudsman.

Complaints to the NDIA can be lodged:

- by phone on 1800 800 110; and
- by email to feedback@ndis.gov.au.

Complaints to the Commonwealth Ombudsman about the NDIA can be lodged:

- by phone on 1300 362 072
- online at www.ombudsman.gov.au.