

SERVICE ACCESS

POLICY

Riverlink Interchange Incorporated (Riverlink) is committed to maximising access to the organisation's services for everyone within the agreed target client groups, and to ensuring equity of access across eligible service users. Riverlink will work within its available resources while endeavouring to optimise access for people to services and activities.

Riverlink will:

- 1) identify and address barriers to access for people in the target groups.
- 2) use service planning to maximise accessibility for people in the target groups, ensuring that all services, activities, facilities and premises are designed to maximise physical and cultural accessibility for service users
- 3) use proactive information strategies for potential service user groups to increase knowledge of and understanding about the organisation and the services offered
- 4) regularly review how accessible services are and use this information to improve access wherever possible.

PROCEDURES

Identifying barriers to access

Riverlink provides service to:

- 1) HACC and DSP clients: These clients with a disability aged 0-64 who meet the following residential and other criteria:
 - a) Residential Criteria: Care recipients must live at home with the Carer; and
 - i) For Northern Sydney Services: Live in the Ryde / Hunters Hill / Lower North Shore Area
 - ii) For Cumberland-Prospect Services: Live in the LGA's of Auburn, Parramatta, Holroyd, Baulkham Hills and Blacktown (Cumberland-Prospect side)
 - b) Other Criteria

- i) need respite support to continue to care for their family member with a disability in their own home
 - ii) can provide documentation from a medical specialist stating the disability or diagnosis and
 - iii) whose family member with a disability has a stable health status and is not receiving palliative care and
 - iv) in the opinion of the Executive Officer, has support needs which are able to be met by the service.
- 2) Clients who receive individual funding packages: The clients are people with disabilities and who wish to access Riverlink services. There is no residential criteria for this group however but meet the following requirements:
- a) can provide documentation from a medical specialist stating the disability or diagnosis and
 - b) whose family member with a disability has a stable health status and is not receiving palliative care and

In order to identify barriers to access, the organisation will:

- 1) compare the profile of service users with local population data and past service records on an regular basis to identify and groups who are underrepresented
- 2) review relevant literature and practice experience
- 3) consult with service users and/or their advocates, other agencies and staff
- 4) seek advice from relevant community groups or members
- 5) in the case of people exiting the criminal justice system, actively seek connections with the community to support the participant to develop their interests and activities in ways that consider the rights and welfare of the broader community

Service Coordinators will be responsible for coordinating this process and reviewing the research outcomes as part of the annual planning process.

Ensuring physical and cultural access

Riverlink will ensure the following:

- 1) Its premises is accessible to public transport.
- 2) Its premises and facilities are physically accessible to people with limited mobility or disability where required.
- 3) Its opening hours provide access to the full range of service users.

- 4) Services are provided in as flexible manner as possible to meet the needs of individuals.
- 5) It maintains effective communication systems for service users to contact the organisation.
- 6) Client areas are kept clean, comfortable and welcoming.
- 7) The cultural and language needs of people within the target group/s are identified and accommodated.
- 8) Interpreters or bilingual staff are available for any person requiring this assistance.

Also see Cultural & Linguistic Diversity policy (Ref:2.27)

Promotion of service

The EO and Administration Officer will be responsible for developing and reviewing a service promotion and information strategy (Ref 2.03 Promotion of Services).

Riverlink will produce information about its services and activities in a range of formats suitable for the full range of people who may need to access them.

This will include policies, flyers and social stories.

General information about the organisation and its services and activities will be made available on the Riverlink website as well as in the Consumer Handbook (Ref 2.04 Consumer Information).

Data will be kept on requests for services to monitor the relevance of current services, identify any trends in changing needs and ensure that there is no discrimination against any particular group. (Protection of Human Rights & Freedom from Abuse (Ref:2.23)).

Riverlink publicity material will be designed and chosen to promote equity of access.

Related Policies:

2.03 Promotion of Services

2.04 Consumer Information

2.06 Referral

2.08 Service & Activities Fees

2.09 Prioritising Requests for Assistance

2.10 Waiting List

2.11 Individual Need

2.23 Protection of Human Rights & Freedom from Abuse

2.27 Cultural & Linguistic Diversity policy

Relevant Standards:

NSW Disability Service Standards:

Standard 5; Service Access

National Standards for Disability Services 2013:

Standard 5; Service Access

Children's Standards in Action:

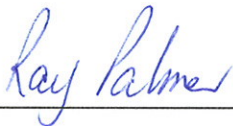
Standard 1; Service Access

Legislation:

Disability (Access to Premises) Standards 2010 (Commonwealth)

Disability Services Act 1993 (NSW)

Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Commonwealth)



Ray Palmer

Executive Officer

Date

