



# Conflict of Interest

## Information for Participants

A Guide to help you understand conflicts of interest

This information is available for you in a range of formats :

- Larger Version
- Simplified Terms
- Verbal Explanation
- Other versions you may need to help you understand

On Request.

The purpose of this information is to set out how Ablecare manages conflicts of interest in an open and transparent manner.

### **What is a conflict of interest ?**

A situation where a person can derive a real or perceived benefit from actions or decisions made in their official capacity, where their decision is affected by relationships. These relationships can be because of family, friends or other positions they hold (for example, sitting on Boards).

It applies to all staff and meets relevant legislation, regulations and Standards as set out in Schedule 1, Legislative References.

Our aim is to ensure that all possible, perceived and actual conflicts of interest are proactively managed and documented, including through development and maintenance of organisational policies.

## **Specialised Support Coordination**

### **OUR AIM**

Each participant receives transparent, factual advice about their support options which promotes choice and control.

### **YOUR AWARENESS**

You are aware that Ablecare provides a range of services and because we are the same organisation with different divisions we have an interest in service provision.

If you choose Specialised Support Coordination and do not choose Ablecare for any other service type it will not impact on the Specialised Support Coordination services that we provide to you. We will provide referrals to other providers as required.

If a staff member who has a conflict of interest is involved with your service such as family members, related organisations etc They will avoid involving themselves in matters that conflict with their duties to Ablecare and to you as the client they support.

Where a conflict is unavoidable, staff must declare it to the Director as soon as practicable after they become aware of it. This includes actual, potential and perceived conflicts of interest. If you are aware of a conflict of interest, you can also assist us by letting us know.

Staff who are uncertain about whether a conflict of interest exists should seek advice from the Management Committee before proceeding.

Once a conflict of interest has been declared, the Management Committee must decide what action to take to manage and or monitor it. Conflicts of Interest must be recorded and monitored in Ablecare's *Risk Register*.

Staff must not accept any money, gifts, benefits or commissions that could interfere with their ability or willingness to act in clients' best interests. Nor must they take advantage of their position to directly or indirectly gain a personal benefit or a benefit for another person or body.

Our staff must declare all potential, perceived and real conflicts of interest that could impact how they deliver supports, to all relevant clients or prospective clients. This includes conflicts of interest relating to financial, business or personal matters, as well as any financial or business interests that Ablecare has with other organisations.

When providing supports to clients, staff must not influence or direct clients' or their supporters' decision-making, or limit their access to information, choice and control. Advice and information provided about support options (in and outside Ablecare) must be accurate, transparent and objective. All clients must be treated equally and not given preferential treatment above others.

Ablecare provides information about conflicts of interest to clients, their families and carers in a variety of ways. This includes through website, social media channels, advertising, signage, handbooks and brochures. Written information can be explained verbally by staff. Ablecare staff can also help clients access interpreters or advocates where required.

Ablecare endeavors to provide information in formats that accommodate current and anticipated participant needs. This includes taking into account participants' cultural background, disability and specific communication needs.

## **Support Coordination**

Information provided to support your/ the clients' decision making may include: quotes, cost breakdowns for different support options; other people's feedback about supports they've received and the risks and benefits of different supports.

### **Delivery of additional supports**

Ablecare includes and monitors the conflict of interest related to delivering Support Coordination along with other NDIS supports in its *Risk Register*.

You will be advised of this conflict of interest, as part of their intake and assessment. Example : You are aware that Ablecare provides a range of services that you can consider, along with other services. The end choice is yours and it will not impact on your support coordination service.

We can discuss strategies to address the conflict and your coordinator can explain these to you. If you choose to use another provider because of any conflict, Ablecare staff must respect your decision.

## **Our Strategies to Manage Conflicts of Interest:**

- A. We maintain a clear separation of responsibilities between divisions and staff in the areas:
  - a. Support Coordination Services
  - b. Specialist Disability Accommodation Services
  - c. Supported Independent Living Services
  - d. Community Access and Participation Services
  - e. Allied Health, Early Childhood and Behaviour Support Services
  - f. Plan Management Services
  
- B. Support coordinators will provide you with the option of several providers for each type of support that you need. We will never just recommend Ablecare.
- C. If there is only one option of provider that we suggest we will document the rationale for this and review it annually.
- D. We will keep records of any issues that arise with supports provided to you including the actions we take and how the issue was resolved.
- E. We will continually work with you and other areas of Ablecare to understand how well supports are meeting your needs and adjusting services and support delivery before issues arise. This can include surveys, phone discussions or care review processes,
- F. We will explain the differences between Support Coordination and other supports that you are funded for such as Specialised Disability Coordination, including the requirement that supports provided be reasonable and necessary.

- G. We advise you that any choice you make about providers of other supports will not impact on your provision of services :
- a. Support Coordination
  - b. Specialised Disability Accommodation.

## **Your Right to Change:**

You have the right to change support coordinators and can do this by advising your current staff of your decision and asking them to facilitate a change. You can also use the feedback and complaints processes to advise of any problems or requests you have.

## **Specialised Disability Accommodation and Supported Independent Living**

You as a client have choice of the service providers who provide support to you. Regardless of which service provider/s you choose, your housing rights, including security of tenure, must be upheld where you have an SDA contract. Your SDA contract will outline the choice, roles and responsibilities of a SILS provider which can be negotiated.

Where Ablecare delivers supported independent living services in properties that it owns or has interests in, staff will disclose this conflict of interest to clients, as part of their intake and assessment.

**Ablecare does not currently OWN any of the SDA properties that it provides services in.**

Ablecare does have a market rental agreement with landlords for partial rental such as the overnight oversight assistance room and to cover any rental vacancies to ensure that ongoing tenants have sustainable housing.