

Bethany Care Ltd

# Changing Needs & Choices / Least Restrictive Alternative Principle

Policy & Procedure 5

“The service provider demonstrates that when limiting a client’s ability to act on an individual decision or choice, the least restrictive alternative is adopted whenever practicable”

“The service demonstrates responsiveness to the changing needs aspirations and choices of clients”

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## 1. Object & Field of Application

1.1 This document details the process adopted by Bethany Care Ltd (BCL) in recognition of the need to participate as fully as possible, in decision-making, choice of activities and events in daily life in relation to the services required.

## 2. References

2.1 Queensland Disability Service Standards – Partners in Quality

## 3. Definitions

3.1 **Least** - in the lowest or smallest degree.

3.2 **Restriction** - Something that restricts; a regulation or limitation.

3.3 **Alternative** - A situation presenting such a choice.

3.4 **Decision** – The act of reaching a conclusion or making up one's mind, the passing of judgment on an issue under consideration, a conclusion or judgment reached or pronounced; a verdict.

3.5 **Choice** - The power, right, or liberty to choose; option.

## 4. Legislation

N/A

## 5. Changing Needs, Aspirations & Choices

- 5.1 It is reasonable to assume that our clients' needs, aspirations and choices will change over a period of time. As such, Bethany Care Ltd has a system in place designed to accurately identify, record and respond to these needs in a flexible manner.
- 5.2 Being aware of our clients' changing needs and aspirations as they emerge has many benefits. The information can help drive future service strategies and is a vital component of progressive personalised care plans.
- 5.3 Bethany Care is committed to provide opportunities for clients to make informed decisions and choices on a day-to-day basis according to their individual need.
- 5.4 Bethany Care aims to incorporate flexible service delivery options, wherever possible, which reflect the ever-changing needs and choices of clients.
- 5.5 Bethany Care will aim at a balance between the principles of duty of care and least restrictive alternatives that don't unduly limit the ability of clients to make decisions or take responsibility for their actions.
- 5.6 Bethany Care will facilitate access to other support required by clients in order to adequately represent their needs views, interests, choice and rights.

## 6. Identifying Changing Needs

Our clients' changing needs can be identified in a variety of ways. The following list details some common examples.

- 6.1 Verbal conversations with the client, advocate, or family – clients or their representatives may directly state a changing need, aspiration or choice. Details should be recorded on the relevant Daily Report Sheet.
- 6.2 Observation – Personal carers may observe a client especially enjoying a particular activity. Observations should be recorded on the relevant Daily Report Sheet.
- 6.3 Formal annual review – During the annual personalised plan review, the Assistant Manager (AM) will ask the client and their representatives to impart their vision and goals for the coming year.
- 6.4 Feedback forms – Distributed once a year, clients may comment on all aspects of service delivery. There is also space for other comments to be recorded.

Once the need is identified, the next step is to document the change as a file note.

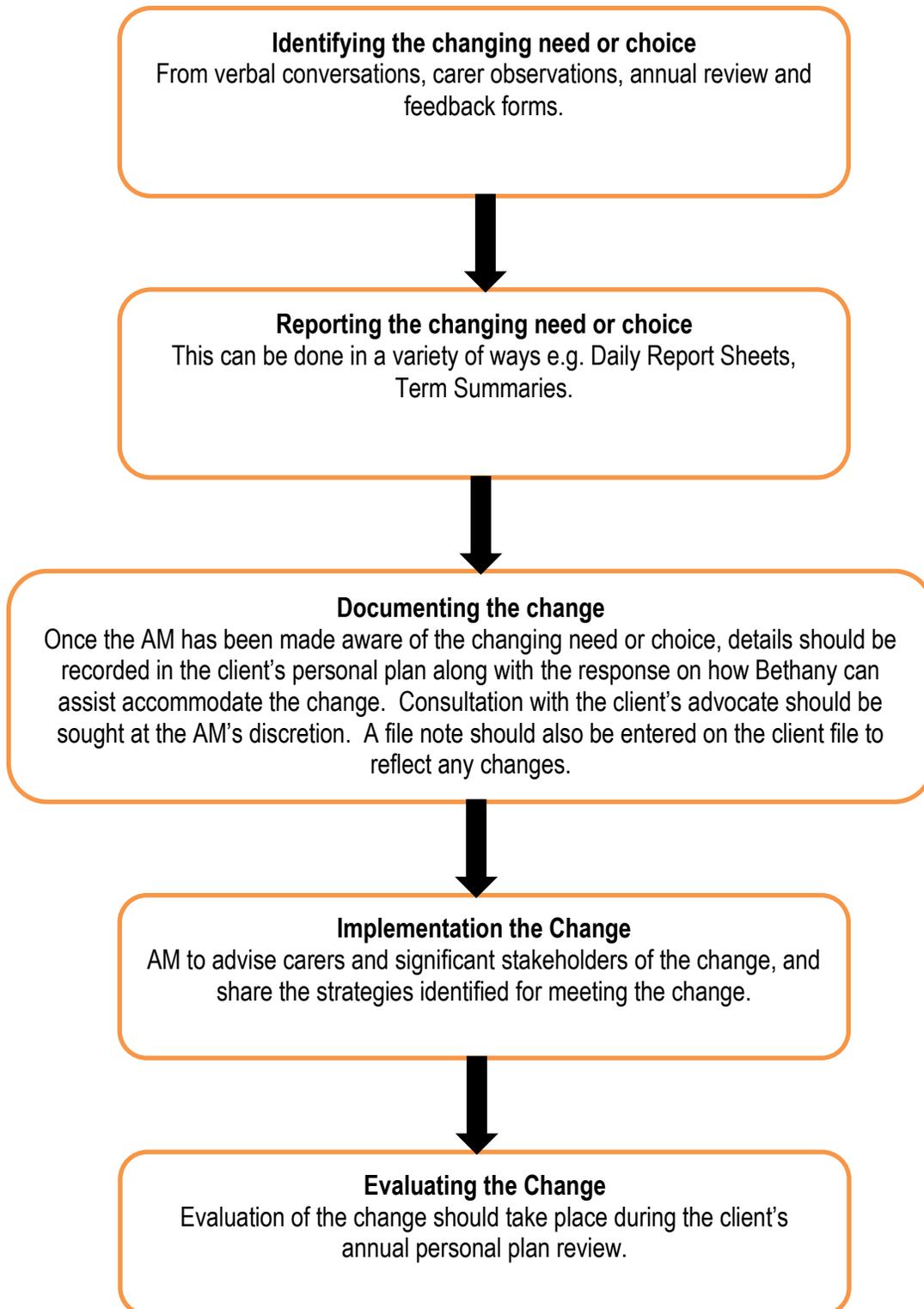
## 7. Documenting Changes – File Notes

- 7.1 Once a changing need or aspiration is identified it **MUST** be logged as a note on the client's file.
- 7.2 Bethany Care must also respond to changing needs as they arise. This should be addressed by the AM.

## 8. Bethany's Response / Resource Allocation

- 8.1 Before Bethany Care can actively respond to a client's changing need, aspiration or choice, a resource assessment must take place to establish if we can accommodate the change. For example, consideration must be given to whether Bethany Care has sufficient staff, transportation (vans) or even expertise to respond.

## 9. Changing Needs & Choices Process



## 10. Examples

- E.g. 1
- Changing Need / Aspiration - Client A (INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT) wants to learn a musical instrument (guitar).
  - Bethany Care to investigate the feasibility of guitar lessons.

- E.g. 2
- Changing Need / Aspiration - Client B (INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT) has developed a passion for swimming.
  - Bethany Care to include a visit to local swimming pool in client activity timetable

- E.g. 3
- Client C has developed a fear of dogs.
  - Bethany Care to avoid all situations where dogs are likely to be present.

## 11. The Least Restrictive Alternative

- 11.1 This principle recognises the rights of our clients to enjoy a lifestyle, which is the most supportive, and the least restrictive of their freedom. This contrasts with the more restrictive option of allowing people with an intellectual disability to become and/or remain dependent on others.
- 11.2 The least restrictive alternative stresses:
- That special intervention in a person's life should be limited to the minimal extent required by their disability.
  - That the provision of more services or supervision than is necessary discourages the developing independence of an individual.
  - The dignity of risk: neither the physical nor social environment should provide any more safeguards or social constraints than are necessary.

## 12. Dignity of Risk

- 12.1 Bethany Care collects information for the purposes of identifying the needs and expectations of its clients.
- 12.2 It helps assess the health and well being of clients, to allow the organization to be responsive to unique needs, initiate appropriate referrals, and for funding and statistical purposes.
- 12.3 Information such as the nature and relative severity of disabilities is sought to ascertain how best we can tailor our services to provide appropriate care.
- 12.4 Future vision and goals data are collected and used to appraise clients' progress while using BCL service.
- 12.5 Bethany staff have a duty of care to act in a way that does not expose clients to an unreasonable risk of harm. However, we will not shield our clients from every risk of daily living. We will take prudent (i.e. "wisely cautious") risks that will encourage a person to develop skills, confidence, judgment and self-esteem.
- 12.6 The degree of assistance given will be based on careful evaluation of a person's skills and behaviours. Bethany Care recognises that too much assistance denies a person the opportunity to test, to a reasonable degree, their skills and abilities.

### 13. Examples of the Principle in Action

The following examples illustrate the way in which the least restrictive alternative can be applied.

- 13.1 It is more restrictive to have a client dependent on another person when environmental cues could be used. For example, a pre-set alarm clock or reminder telephone calls could enable a person to get out of bed on time.
- 13.2 It is more restrictive to have a staff member or parent "control" the daily routine or finances of a client rather than seeking ways for the person to acquire freedom over aspects of their own life.
- 13.3 It is more restrictive for a staff member to carry a client's money instead of the person carrying their own wallet/purse and being assisted in using it.
- 13.4 It is more restrictive for a staff member to perform a client's banking rather than assisting the person to undertake the transaction.
- 13.5 It is more restrictive to make decisions on behalf of a client at an a-la-carte restaurant instead of taking the person to a smorgasbord where non-verbal decisions can be made.

END