



AA1	Accessible and Affordable Services	Service Access Policy and Procedures
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What this policy aims to do	<p>This policy is to ensure that all persons wishing to access MASS services are treated fairly and equitably while also enabling those with autism to access services and supports that are right for them.</p> <p>The policy provides direction to staff to promote consistency in the process of accessing services.</p>
Who this policy applies to	<p>All service users and their families who access our services.</p> <p>All staff responsible for service access</p>
Who is responsible for carrying out this policy	<p>MASS staff responsible for receiving and assessing service referrals</p>
What words used in this policy mean	<p>‘Autism Spectrum Disorder’ (ASD, Autism) is a general term for a group of complex disorders of brain development, characterized in varying degrees by difficulties in social interaction, verbal and nonverbal communication and repetitive behaviours.</p> <p>The Act means the Disability Act 2006</p> <p>Access is the process through which a client enters into a service agreement with MASS</p> <p>Schedule of Support sets out the services that the client wishes to access from MASS and how they will pay for the services</p> <p>Service Agreement A Service Agreement sets out the responsibilities of the provider and the participant in agreeing to service. This includes cancellations, feedback, complaints and communication.</p>

Legislation this policy is based on	<p>Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)</p> <p>Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)</p> <p>Disability Services Act 1986 (Cth)</p> <p>Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cth)</p> <p>National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 (Cth)</p> <p>National Disability Insurance Scheme Amendment (Quality and Safeguards Commission and other measures) Bill 2017 (Cth)</p> <p>National Disability Services Standards 2014 (Cth)</p> <p>National Standards for Disability Services 2014 (Cth)</p> <p>Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)</p> <p>Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)</p> <p>Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)</p> <p>Disability Act 2006 (VIC) Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (VIC)</p> <p>Human Services Standards Victoria 2012 (VIC)</p> <p>NDIS Practice Standards for Disability Services</p> <p>Victorian Human Services Standards</p>
Other relevant policies	<p>HS7 Privacy and Information Sharing</p> <p>A6 Cultural Diversity</p> <p>HS13 Duty of Care</p> <p>A7 Service User Exit</p>

Version	Date	Author/Editor	Approved by	Notes
1.0	26/08/2016	Peter Lane		
1.1	31/5/2018	D Stephenson		Update format
1.2	24/2/2019	KGrant /S Binzer		Reword
1.3	19/5/2020	K Grant	S Reeves	Update to NDIS standards

Service Access Policy

MASS provides a range of services for individuals and families living with an autism spectrum disorder. MASS services and supports recognise that people with a disability have the same right as other members of the community to participate actively in the decisions that affect their lives and be provided the information and support necessary to enable this to occur.

The following principles underpin MASS services:

- To provide a service that is **fair, transparent, and non-discriminatory**.
- Promote **dignity** and **respect for privacy** for all clients accessing MASS services.
- To be **person centred, flexible and responsive** to the individual needs and goals of people with autism.
- Maximise the **choice, participation, inclusion, and independence** of people with autism.
- Acknowledge the important role **families** have in supporting people with autism.
- Preserve and promote **healthy relationships** amongst families.
- Respect **cultural diversity, values, and beliefs**.
- Provide information that is **clear, concise, and transparent** so potential service users can make an informed choice on services.
- To **communicate** in a mode that best suits the individual.
- Have regard for any potentially increased disadvantage which may be experienced by persons with a disability because of their gender, language, cultural or indigenous background, or location.

MASS ensures that all clients wishing to access any of its services are treated in a manner that is fair, transparent, and non-discriminatory including in relation to gender, age, race, culture, religion, sexual preference and disability which is consistent with human rights and legislative framework.

MASS will ensure that:

1. Where a person with autism or a person on their behalf has made a request for MASS services, information is gathered to determine:
 - the appropriateness of MASS to provide support
 - the needs of the person and the types of supports required
 - if a person is considered a priority for access
 - If a person has made a request on behalf of a person with autism, then MASS will ensure, where appropriate, that the person with autism agrees to the request
 - health, wellbeing, safety, and security for all service users
2. Entry criteria to all MASS services, supports and educational facilities will be:
 - Transparent and freely available online and in print.
 - Will include specific eligibility criteria and associated costs.
 - Service descriptions will be clearly outlined to help users make an informed choice.

3. The information is communicated to each participant using the language, mode of communication and terms the participant is most likely to understand.
4. Reasonable adjustment to the support delivery environment is made and monitored to ensure it is fit for purpose and each participants health, privacy, dignity, quality of life and independence are supported.
5. Each participant is supported to understand what circumstances supports can be withdrawn.
6. MASS feedback and complaints system is accessible to all and information how to make a complaint is provided to all clients.
7. When service is refused, families will be provided with reasons that are specific to the entry criteria of the program, support, or educational facility. MASS will provide the individual or family with information about why it made that decision, the process to have the decision reviewed or appealed and contact details for other relevant services both within MASS and external agencies.
8. Services are culturally sensitive and respond appropriately to the diversity of needs of the community and those accessing services.
9. MASS will provide information on the services and supports it can provide and the terms for providing them, prior to commencement of service. These are provided in the form of a schedule of support and service agreement (NDIS).
10. The **Service Agreement and Schedule of Support** are signed by the participant prior to service
11. Each participant accesses the most appropriate supports that meet their needs, goals, and preferences.
12. If there are limited availability of spaces for the requested service, then families will be notified and placed on a wait list. The wait list will be reviewed regularly, and families contacted when places become available.
13. Where MASS services have a limited capacity, availability of service may consider:
 - a. Age of client
 - b. Availability of specific resources to deliver quality service
 - c. Assessed needs
 - d. Funding available to achieve goals
 - e. Severity of situation, including safety

Specific Program Entry Criteria

- MAPs – all Victorian clients, ages 0 – 18 years. Fees Apply (NDIS Funding available).
- Therapeutic Residential Placement 6 – 16 years. Fees Apply (NDIS Funding available)
- School Holiday Program 6 – 18 years. Fees Apply (NDIS Funding available)
- Family Camps 3 – 18 years. Fees Apply (NDIS Funding available).
- Outreach. Local to Mansfield. All ages. Fees Apply (NDIS Funding available)
- Adult Services. Limited capacity. 18 years +
- Dookie Campus Secondary School - 11 – 18 years, no significant intellectual disability. Fees Apply (No Funding available). Refer to Enrolment Policy – Education Services.
- Mansfield Campus Day Students – Up to age 18 years

Service Exit (Participant)

An individual may leave MASS for several reasons, but not limited to:

- Relocation to an area outside of service delivery
- Where the schedule of support and service agreement is no longer able to meet the persons needs or assist in achieving the persons goals
- Transfer to another service provider
- The death of a person using the service
- Exercising a participant's individual choice and control

As per MASS Service Agreement all participants are required to provide four (4) weeks' notice of intention to exit, in writing.

On exit, to support a client to transition to another provider, clients may request copies of any reports and / or behaviour support plans if not already provided. MASS will approve the incoming implementing provider access, on request, to the RIDS BSP as per RIDS requirements.

Service Exit (MASS)

- MASS reserves the right to withdraw services in situations where its duty of care to other service users, families or staff is demonstrably compromised.
- Continued non-payment of service delivery fees incurred during service.
- There has been no contact from the client over the scheduled delivery times.

Under normal circumstances, withdrawal of service by MASS would only be contemplated where there are serious risks posed by the service placement to the duty of care to other service users, staff or the community and reasonable efforts to rectify the issues have been made and shown to have failed.

If efforts to sustain the place are unsuccessful, MASS must arrange a meeting with the individual, family and/or any support people or advocates they nominate to discuss the decision. MASS should also discuss issues with relevant funding authorities.

These meetings may produce further agreed strategies to attempt to consolidate the service. If however these also are unsuccessful, MASS will write to the service user, family and advocates outlining the reasons behind the decision and advising them of their rights under MASS' policy on complaints and disputes (including providing contact details for advocacy organisations and the Disability Services Commissioner).

All participants exiting the service will be exited in a professional, planned, and collaborative manner. Where needed the participant will be supported in the referrals to other services that could offer supports or services to meet the participants needs.

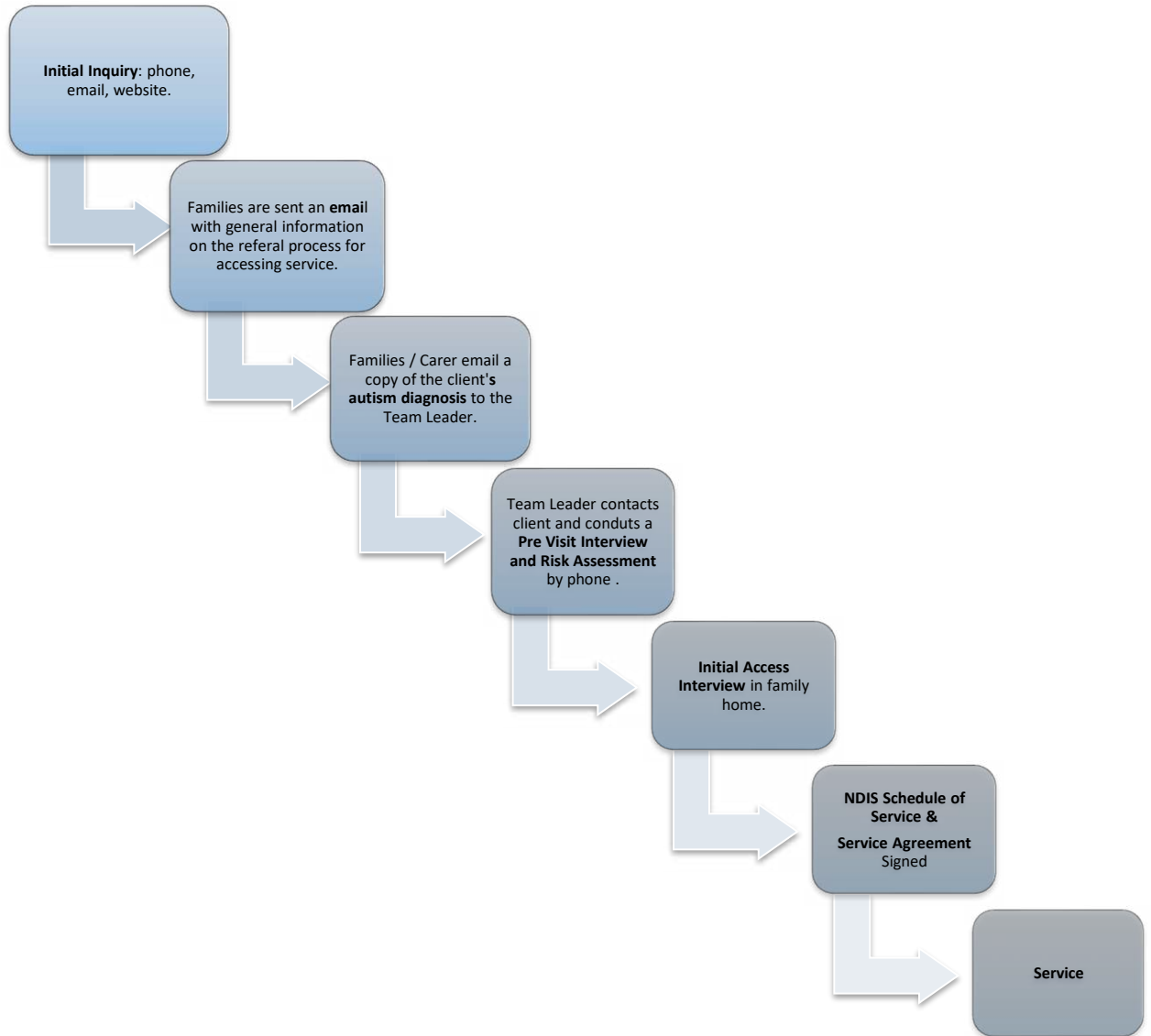
SERVICE ACCESS POLICY

- Where a service agreement has ceased, and MASS no longer delivers service. MASS will exit clients from our 'active' database in ProSIMS to 'inactive'.
- All information regarding the client will be retained, secured, and stored according to our privacy policy.

Service Access Procedures

NEW CLIENT Service Access – MAP Service, Therapeutic Placement and Respite

Figure 1 - Flow Chart of Access Process



Initial Inquiries

Initial Inquiries for **MAP Service, Therapeutic Placement and Respite service** can be made to MASS admin via:

Phone: 03 5775 2876

Email: info@autismmansfield.org.au

Website: Inquiry form: www.autismmansfield.org.au

Mail: MASS, PO BOX 715, Mansfield, Vic, 3724

Email Family/Carer

After initial contact the person making the Initial Inquiry is sent an email outlining the referral process. The email will provide general information relevant to the service enquiry, the services Team Leader contact details, and a request that clients provide the Team Leader with a copy of their autism diagnosis.

Family Provide Diagnosis

The person making the Initial Inquiry emails the Team Leader requesting service and provides the client's / young person's autism diagnosis.

Phone Pre-access Interview and Risk Assessment

Clients wanting services after initial inquiry will participate in a Pre-Access Interview and Risk Assessment by phone.

A **Schedule of Support and Service Agreement** are created and signed before conducting the Initial Access Interview (2 hours service).

Initial Access Interview

Team Leader visits the family home to conduct **The Initial Access Interview**.

The **Initial Access Interview** ensures that:

- It is **appropriate of MASS to provide support** – the Initial Access interview gathers relevant **background information and needs, supports and goals of the client**.
- The Initial Access Interview gathers appropriate information regarding **restrictive practices and reporting requirements** for the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission.
- Provides the client with an **overview** of the types of services and supports available for the client, in a **format accessible and appropriate** to the client
- If a person has made a request on behalf of a person with autism, then MASS will ensure, where appropriate, that the person with autism **agrees** to the request (adult services).
- A **risk assessment** is completed as part of the Initial Access Visit
- Clients are provided with a copy of the **privacy policy, consent to share, how to make a complaint and charter of human rights**.
- eligibility and requirements for services are met
- **Reasonable adjustments** are made to the delivery of supports ensure it is fit for purpose and each participant's health, privacy, dignity, quality of life and independence is supported
- Supports transition from another provider to MASS services

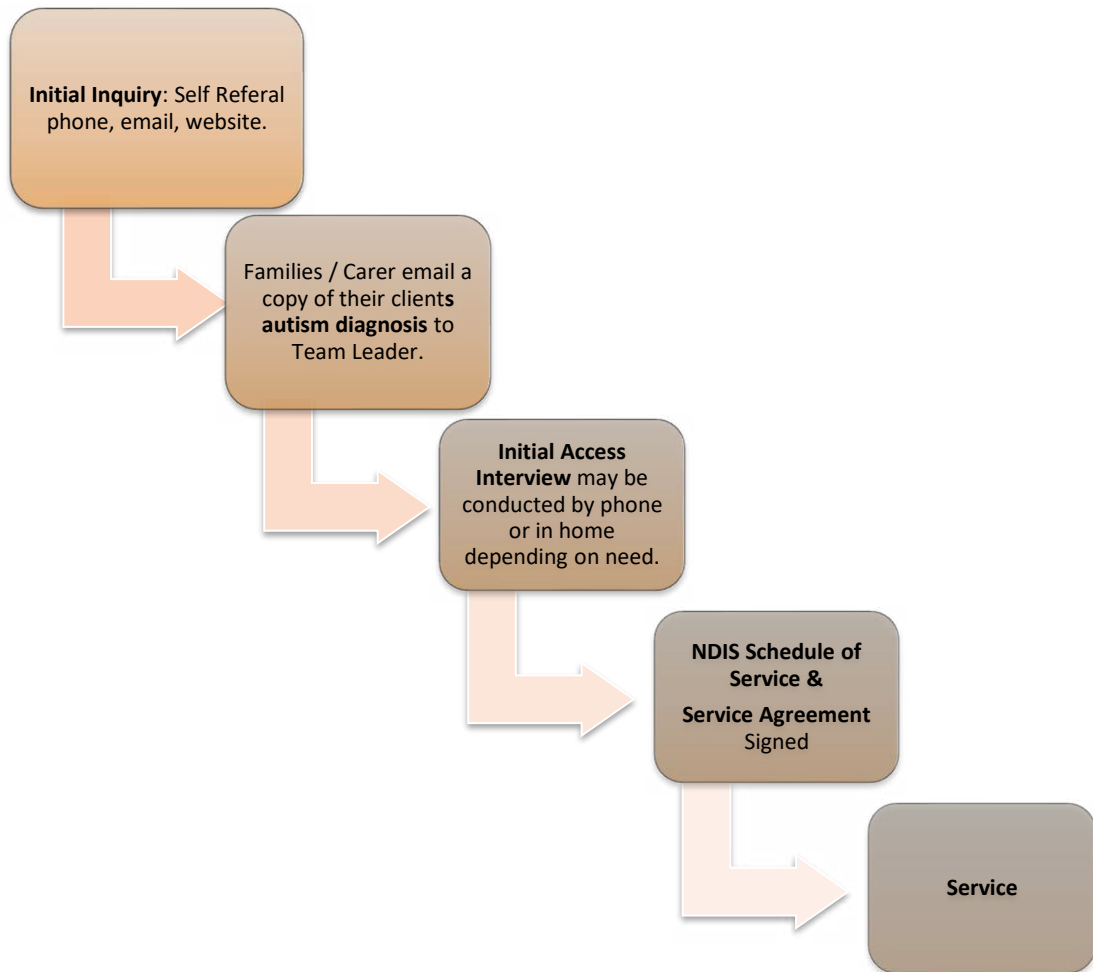
Service Agreement and Schedule of Support

The Team Leader of Access and Intake will contact the NDIS Team with a service request. The NDIS Team provide a **Service Agreement and Schedule of Support** for all NDIS clients (approx. time 2 weeks). This allows the client time to make an informed decision.

The Service Agreement and Schedule of Support is to be signed **before** a participant begins receiving the agreed service/s.

- If a person making an application requires support or **advocacy**, MASS will provide contact details for relevant services, including the Victorian Advocacy League for Individuals with Disability (1800 655 570) and the Victorian Disability Advocacy Council (03 9208 3025), and support them to make contact where possible
- MASS will **maintain a record** of all people who have been referred or applied to MASS and denied a service, summarising reasons for ineligibility

NEW CLIENT Service Access – Family Camp, Outreach



Initial Inquiries

Initial Inquiries for **Outreach** and **Family Camp** can be made to MASS admin via:

Phone: 03 5775 2876

Email: info@autismmansfield.org.au

Website: Inquiry form: www.autismmansfield.org.au

Mail: MASS, PO BOX 715, Mansfield, Vic, 3724

Request for Diagnosis

The person making the Initial Inquiry is sent an email with general details of service enquiry, the contact details for the Team Leader, and a request that clients provide the Team Leader with a copy of the participants autism diagnosis.

The person making the Initial Inquiry emails the Team Leader requesting service and provides the person's autism diagnosis.

Initial Access Interview

Clients requesting services after initial inquiry will participate in an Initial Access Interview either by phone or at place of residence. The Initial Access Interview ensures that:

- It is **appropriate of MASS to provide support** – the Initial Access interview gathers relevant **background information and needs, supports and goals of the client.**
- The Initial Access Interview gathers appropriate information regarding **restrictive practices and reporting requirements** for the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission.
- Provides the client with an **overview** of the types of services and supports available for the client, in a **format accessible and appropriate** to the client
- If a person has made a request on behalf of a person with autism, then MASS will ensure, where appropriate, that the person with autism **agrees** to the request (adult services).
- A **risk assessment** is completed as part of the Initial Access Visit
- Clients are provided with a copy of the **privacy policy, consent to share, how to make a complaint and charter of human rights.**
- eligibility and requirements for services are met
- **Reasonable adjustments** are made to the delivery of supports ensure it is fit for purpose and each participant's health, privacy, dignity, quality of life and independence is supported

NDIS Service Agreement and Schedule of Support

The Team Leader of Family Camp or Outreach will contact the NDIS Team with a **service request**. The NDIS Team provide a **Service Agreement and Schedule of Support** for all NDIS clients.

The Service Agreement and Schedule of Support need to be signed **before** a participant begins service.

- If a person making an application requires support or **advocacy**, MASS will provide contact details for relevant services, including the Victorian Advocacy League for Individuals with Disability (1800 655 570) and the Victorian Disability Advocacy Council (03 9208 3025), and support them to make contact where possible
- MASS will **maintain a record** of all people who have been referred or applied to MASS and denied a service, summarising reasons for ineligibility
- Processes may vary slightly at the discretion of the Team Leader in accordance with client/family needs.

EXISTING CLIENTS – ALL SERVICES

All clients may be referred internally to other MASS services. MAP's may refer clients to a Therapeutic Residential Placement, Family Camp, Outreach or Respite. When this occurs the Team Leader needs to ensure the appropriate requests/approvals are completed or updated, as required.

For example: a client attending a Family Camp may then request the MAP service. The Team Leader will then need to complete the pre-visit risk assessment, home visit and determine NDIS Restrictive Practices requirements before service scheduling and delivery.

PERMANENT CARE

Out of Home Care is provided by special arrangement with DHHS Child Protection. All enquiries are handled by the Director of Services and places are limited.