



Synergy West Plan Management Participant Handbook & Charter of Rights

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The information handbook has been written to provide you with information about your rights and responsibilities as a person accessing services from Synergy West Plan Management. It is important that you receive high quality support and the information in this handbook is designed to help you help us deliver that service.

About Synergy West Plan Management

Synergy West Plan Management is an approved NDIS Service Provider that was established in 2020 to provide NDIS Plan Management services in WA.

Our company is passionate about, and committed to, delivering effective and high-quality services to meet the needs of our clients.

All services and supports provided by us are aligned with the *National Disability Insurance Act 2013*, and the National Disability Insurance Scheme (Provider Registration and Practice Standards) Rules 2018.

Eligibility criteria to access support

To be eligible to receive support from us you must be a Participant of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (hereinafter referred to as NDIS) as defined by the *National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013*.

According to the NDIS website's (www.ndis.gov.au) eligibility checklist (as of 31/12/2019), you may be eligible to become an NDIS Participant if meet certain age, residence and disability criteria, namely that:

- You are aged between 7 and 65 years of age; and
- You live in Australia and have Australian residency; and
- You usually need support from a person because of a permanent and significant disability;
- You use special equipment because of a permanent and significant disability;
- You need some supports now to reduce your future needs.

You can request to become an NDIS Participant, often referred to as making an “access request”, by contacting the National Disability Insurance Agency (hereinafter referred to as NDIA) as follows:

- Calling the NDIA on 1800 800 110;
- Emailing the National Access Team on NAT@ndis.gov.au;
- Posting an Access Request Form to GPO Box 700, Canberra, ACT, 2601;
- Dropping your Access Request Form to your nearest NDIS office

As a part of making an access request, you will need to provide the NDIA with evidence of your age, residency and disability.

For more information on how to apply to become an NDIS Participant or to contact the NDIA, please:

- Call the NDIA on 1800 800 110
- Refer to the NDIA website: www.ndis.gov.au/applying-access-ndis/how-apply
- If you require help with English, call the TIS service on 131 450
- If you have hearing or speech loss, call the TTY service on 1800 555 677
- For speak and listen service, call 1800 555 727
- For internet relay services, visit the Relay Service Webpage:
<https://www.communications.gov.au/what-we-do/phone/services-people-disability/accesshub>

Our vision

Synergy West Plan Management's vision is to help NDIS participants to understand the financial aspect of their plan and assist Participants to achieve the most out of their plan, by working flexibly to deliver supports in a way that suits them best.

We are committed to making our clients' best interests the first priority and to support them to make personal choices and decisions regarding their own lives.

We are committed to supporting our clients to live a quality life and to reach their full potential.

Our values

- Integrity
- Commitment to customers
- Exceptional customer service
- Share knowledge
- Empower people

Our services

The services/supports we offer include:

- NDIS Plan Management

Service philosophy

People with disabilities have the same basic human rights as other members of society and should be empowered to exercise their rights, including:

- The right of people with disabilities to be valued as individuals.
- The right of people with disabilities to access services on a non-discriminatory basis.
- The right of people with disabilities to dignity, courteous treatment, privacy and confidentiality.
- The right of people with disabilities to make choices that effect their own lives.
- That people with a disability, advocates, family and key stakeholders should be involved in the design and monitoring of supports we provide.
- Promoting the enhancement and maintenance of the valued social roles our clients have to increase community inclusion.
- Focusing on our clients' quality of life and maintaining the balance of duty of care (i.e. safety and wellbeing) and preservation of personal freedom.

Policies and procedures

Synergy West Plan Management has its own detailed Policy and Procedure Manual to ensure we deliver a consistently high-quality service. Our Policies and Procedures have been aligned with the *National Disability Insurance Act 2013*, and the National Disability Insurance Scheme (Provider Registration and Practice Standards) Rules 2018.

You are very welcome to a full and complete copy of all of our Policies and Procedures and if you wish to have any aspect of our Policies and Procedures explained, you are invited to contact our Managing Director, Cindy Singer.

Furthermore, if you have any ideas or suggestions on how we can improve our Policies and Procedures then we would love to hear from you.

Our team members

- Our team members are friendly, personable, reliable and committed to the welfare and rights of people with disabilities.
- Our team members receive continuous training to ensure they have the required knowledge and skills to provide you with high quality supports/services. This includes specialised training and licensing as relevant to your support needs.
- Your team are here to help you with selecting activities/services that assist you in achieving your goals and aspirations.
- Your team is also here to help you with any other issues you may have.
- You may have a family member, guardian, a friend or advocate at any meetings if you wish.

What are my rights?

YOU have the right to:

- Be treated as an individual and valued member of the community
- Be treated fairly and with courtesy
- Know what we can do to support you and what we cannot do
- Have the opportunity to ask questions without fear of negative consequences
- Have the opportunity to make complaints if you are not satisfied with our services
- Have the opportunity to provide feedback on how we can improve our services
- Be treated with courtesy by our staff and receive services without discrimination
- Be kept safe and not be exploited, abused or neglected
- Have a say in how we support you and be able to fully participate in decisions that affect your life
- Be asked for your ideas and to be listened to when you have something to say
- Privacy and confidentiality - to have your personal information kept secure and confidential and only shared outside of Synergy West Plan Management with our permission (unless required by law)
- Access all information about yourself held by Synergy West Plan Management
- Be involved in the planning of your activities
- Have a guardian or advocate of your choice, to act on your behalf and he/she will be acknowledged and treated with courtesy

You are welcome to contact us at any time to discuss your support. It is your support, so it remains **your choice**.

What are my responsibilities?

- You should act in a way that has regard for the rights of other people we support, including Synergy West Plan Management staff
- You should take responsibility for the consequences of any decisions you make
- You should advise Synergy West Plan Management as soon as possible of any changes to your support needs
- You should advise Synergy West Plan Management if you are unhappy or dissatisfied with any aspect of the service you are receiving in order for us to be able to rectify any issues
- You should play an active part in working with Synergy West Plan Management staff to provide you with the support you require
- You should notify Synergy West Plan Management of any significant changes (or planned changes) in your circumstances

Data Collection

Synergy West Plan Management collects and retains personal information (such as your name, date of birth, address and personal needs), so that we may provide you with the agreed services. This information may be disclosed between the NDIA and its partner agencies and other service providers that may be able to provide you with support services. Unless authorised or required by law, your personal information will not otherwise be disclosed to any other third party without your consent.

Obtaining Consent

Consent to collect personal information will be sought from you at the outset of service engagement, via the terms outlined in the *Service Agreement*.

Generally, consent is provided in writing, but if verbal, this is recorded in the your file.

Data Security

Staff will share the responsibility to protect the security of personal information. All staff are responsible to protect personal information from misuse, loss, unauthorised access or inappropriate disclosure. Personal information will be protected through the following ways:

- All files will be stored in a locked room
- Information will only be available to staff who need access to information
- No unattended files in work areas
- All staff will destroy personal information if the information is no longer needed for the purposes it was collected, taking into consideration any legislative requirements. Appropriate methods of destruction include: Shredding paper records or using an authorised company for secure disposal (e.g. document destruction bins)
- Each participant has the right to see any information that Synergy West Plan Management keep about them

Collection

Staff will only collect relevant personal information to:

- Provide quality services
- Carry out the functions, supports and activities on behalf of the organisation
- Identify emerging or future demand for service
- Meet our statutory, licencing, regulatory or legal requirements

Use & Disclosure

Staff will maintain confidentiality of personal information.

- Staff shall not disclose or use personal information without the consent of the individual and/or appointed guardian/administrator without the specific written consent of the customer/guardian. However, relevant information may be used or disclosed on a need to know basis in order to provide a quality service and carry out functions and activities.
- When responding to phone queries, staff must verify who they are speaking to. If there is any doubt, refer to the matter to the Managing Director.

Privacy – Photography Policy

For safety reasons, participants must not be identified in photographs. At all times the following must apply:

- The participant must give permission to have their photo taken and if applicable have their decision maker/guardian approval.
- Written consent must be obtained for each individual photo.
- Photos must not contain an identifiable background or signage (for example, company car logos, government logos, etc).
- Participants should not be excluded from beneficial social experiences associated with photographs, videos recording and other published medial such as school photographs and sports club articles, but permission must always be sought from the participant and/or their decision maker/guardian.
- Consideration should be given to what is in the participant's best interests, and to any adverse consequences that may result through the publication of a photograph (for example, safety concerns for the customer should their whereabouts become known). Consultation should occur with the customer, Management and key stakeholders before publication is allowed.
- If a staff member becomes aware of any published information that identifies a participant, inadvertently or otherwise, they must report this to the Managing Director immediately.

What if I'm not happy with the support/services provided?

People with a disability, families, support workers, carers and the general public are encouraged to give feedback about the support and services Synergy West Plan Management offers.

Your complaint/feedback provides us with information to help improve the quality of the service we are committed to providing.

All feedback and issues (written and/or verbal) raised will be managed in a positive, transparent and confidential manner within set time frames.

You have the right to complain about the service you are receiving without fear of retribution at any time.

It's OK to make a complaint and it is recommended that you involve a person of your choice that you feel comfortable with to help you.

If you are not happy with something, then we encourage you to talk to your immediate staff contact.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint, you are encouraged to talk to our Managing Director.

You will be encouraged to provide feedback to Synergy West Plan Management staff on a regular basis or at the completion of a short term service.

You are also able to make complaints about Synergy West Plan Management to the NDIS Commission.

Complaints

Synergy West Plan Management takes all complaints seriously and we are committed to promoting a positive attitude and workplace culture towards complaints, recognising that complaints and feedback about our services can provide invaluable information about how we can improve the quality of our services.

Synergy West Plan Management will manage complaints in a manner that is fair, transparent and with the focus on quickly resolving any issues raised in the complaint.

You can make a complaint about Synergy West Plan Management in the following ways:

- Discussing directly with the staff member working with you
- Discussing directly with the Managing Director
- By emailing: info@synergywest.com.au
- By completing a Feedback Form (enclosed with this Handbook) and posting it to our office (this can be done anonymously) at PO Box 5466, Albany WA 6332

At any stage, either before during or after making a complaint to Synergy West Plan Management, you are also able to complain about Synergy West Plan Management directly to the NDIS Commission, as follows:

- phoning 1800 035 544 (free call from landlines) or TTY 133 677 (interpreters can be arranged)
- using the National Relay Service and asking for 1800 035 544
- completing a complaint contact form to let the NDIS Commission on the Commission's website:
<https://forms.business.gov.au/smartforms/servlet/SmartForm.html?formCode=PRD00-OCF>

For more information about our Complaints Management Policy and Complaints Management System, please discuss with the Managing Director.

Abuse and neglect

Synergy West Plan Management does not tolerate any violence, abuse, neglect or exploitation of people with a disability.

Abuse includes any of the below actions or behaviours by a person/s who has either an informal, formal or implied bond or trust for service provision to another person (e.g. staff member, volunteer, community member, family etc.).

Types of Abuse & Neglect include:

- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Psychological or Emotional Abuse
- Financial Abuse
- Chemical Abuse
- Abuse through denial of access to legal remedies
- Physical neglect
- Passive neglect
- Wilful deprivation
- Emotional neglect
- Crimes of Omission

Abuse can make you feel afraid and upset and there is help if you feel you are being abused

Exploitation means taking advantage of the vulnerability of a person with a disability in order to use them, or their resources, for another person's profit or advantage.

Our staff are required to report to the Management of Synergy West Plan Management if they witness or receive any allegation of violence, abuse, neglect or exploitation of our clients. These incidents will be treated very seriously and investigated thoroughly by Management of Synergy West Plan Management so that appropriate action can be taken to ensure the safety of our clients.

If you are experiencing or if you know of anyone experiencing any form of violence, abuse, neglect or exploitation, you are encouraged to take the following actions:

- Advise your nearest staff member
- Contact the Managing Director of Synergy West Plan Management
- Contact the NDIS Commission
- Contact the National Disability Abuse and Neglect HOTLINE (either yourself or with someone you trust) for free help about abuse on **1800 880 052**. The HOTLINE is open Monday to Friday, 9am – 7pm Australian Eastern Standard Time. You can also email the hotline on: hotline@workfocus.com
- Call Police Link on **13 14 44**
- If someone is hurting you and you need help quickly, call the police on, **000**

Right to privacy, autonomy and expression

All participants have the right to privacy, autonomy, intimacy and sexual expression. Whilst always first ensuring the safety of our clients:

- Staff will knock and ask permission to enter before entering a participant's property.
- Staff will provide participants with private space to carry out their personal activities.

Synergy West contact information

Cindy Singer

Managing Director

0434 88 33 52

csinger@synergywest.com.au

Helpful phone numbers

Police / Fire / Ambulance **000**

National Disability Abuse and Neglect HOTLINE **1800 880 052**

Disability Discrimination **1300 130 670**

Anti-Discrimination **1300 130 670**

National Disability Insurance Agency **1800 800 110**

NDIS Commission **1800 035 54**