

Policy Title: Client Access

Clinical Governance Domain: Consumer Participation

Author/Reviewer: Diversity Working Group

Approved by: Quality and Safety Committee



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BACKGROUND

Brophy Family and Youth Services recognises that people regardless of gender, sex, culture, sexual orientation, age, language, level of ability and lifestyle choices have the right to access and equity.

Access relates to ensuring services are planned, managed, delivered and promoted in such a way that all people are able to find the services and use them to meet their particular needs.

Equity recognises that people are different in their needs, interests, values and opportunities. By simply treating people the same inequalities are perpetuated. The goal of equity is greater equality overall by taking account of the reality of difference.

SCOPE

This Policy applies to all staff, volunteers and clients of Brophy Family and Youth Services and its community members and co-located service partners.

PRINCIPLES

Brophy Family and Youth Services actively values and promotes diversity in community and affirms its commitment to working towards achieving an open, harmonious and inclusive society where all community - regardless of gender, age, race, sex, sexual orientation, religion, ability, cultural or language background are able to participate in the political, social, cultural and economic life of community and enjoy equitable access to services.

We do so by working collaboratively with everyone in the community, valuing their skills and strengths whilst actively supporting their individual needs. Brophy Family and Youth Services recognise that community members should not experience barriers to accessing services because of difficulties accessing information (i.e. through language barriers or hearing impairment) or because the service does not address the diverse needs of the community.

Brophy Family and Youth Services recognise all paid staff, volunteers, clients and community partners have the right to work and/or receive quality and appropriate services free from discrimination. The organisation takes a rights based approach to how its services are developed and delivered and aims to reflect and embed this in all aspects of its service system and service delivery.

POLICY

Brophy Family and Youth Services acknowledges that the organisation works within a dominant culture and seeks to continually reflect, review and develop its practice to ensure the needs and interests of all diverse populations within its community are met.

Brophy Family and Youth services will:

Maintain an ongoing Diversity Working Group, comprised of people from all levels within the organisation to develop, implement, monitor and review the Agency's response to diversity.

Brophy Family and Youth Services will also support diverse needs through:

- Provision of information in languages other than English.
- Ongoing development, implementation and review of the Diversity Plan.
- Encouraging staff, volunteers (where appropriate), clients and carers across diverse groups to be involved in all aspects of service delivery and development.
- Utilising a variety of options (written, verbal, interpreter, advocacy) to ensure service users fully understand:
 - Their rights and responsibilities
 - Steps to accessing an advocate
 - Agency service standards in relation to privacy and confidentiality
- Ensuring paid staff and volunteers have appropriate training in relation to diversity.
- Participating in and/or developing networks of service providers and key stakeholders in the community to advise and refer clients of diverse groups.
- Recognising and celebrating diversity
- Actively promoting ourselves as an inclusive and equal opportunity organization

This policy encompasses the three following requirements:

1. Clients who are not able to communicate through written or spoken English have access to information in their preferred language.
2. Language services are provided by suitably qualified people via the Translator Service.
3. Family members and persons under 18 years of age will not be used as interpreters.

Brophy Family and Youth Services will consider access and equity issues when:

- Developing and reviewing policies and procedures;
- Physical environment;
- Modes of service delivery
- Strategic planning

- Quality improvement

Staff are encouraged to recognise and address their own value judgments and prejudices through ongoing professional supervision, in order to provide a responsive service aligning with Brophy values.

RELATED INTERNAL DOCUMENTS

Client Access Procedure

[Community Profile Resource](#)

[Service Access Model](#)

[Consumer Participation Policy](#)

EXTERNAL REFERENCES

[Multicultural Victoria Act 2011](#)

[Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#)

[Equal Opportunity Act 2010](#)

[Racial Vilification Act Victoria 2001](#)

[Victorian Charter of Human Rights 2006](#)

[Gay & Lesbian Health Victoria Rainbow Tick Standards](#)