

SERVICE ACCESS AND EXIT POLICY AND PROCEDURE



Policy Statement

This policy and procedure set out the approach to assessment, planning and review in respect to clients support plans, once a person has been offered and accepted Pathways SouthWest services.

Scope

This policy applies to all clients accessing or exiting Pathways SouthWest services. This policy is owned by the Management Team.

Definitions

Definitions

- **Carer:** Under the Carers Recognition Act 2004 a carer is a person who (without being paid) provides ongoing care or assistance to another person who has a disability, a chronic illness or a mental illness, or who is frail
- **Consumer:** For the purposes of this policy and procedure consumers are Pathways Southwest clients and carers.
- **Client:** Clients are people with a lived or living experience of mental health challenges and receiving a service from Pathways SouthWest.
- **Dignity of risk:** Autonomy and self-determination used by a person when making decisions, including the choice to take some risks in life.
- **Human rights** are often defined in different ways. The Australian Human Rights Commission defines human rights as:
 1. The recognition and respect of people's dignity
 2. A set of moral and legal guidelines that promote and protect a recognition of our values, our identity and ability to ensure an adequate standard of living
 3. The basic standards by which we can identify and measure inequality and fairness
 4. Those rights are associated with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- **Informed consent:** Voluntary agreement and willing acceptance of a proposition and following action where the person making the decision has appropriate information and capacity to make the decision free of fear or influence

Date deployed:
Revalidate:
Approved by CEO
Signature

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April 2029

Owner:
Author:

Management Team
Coordinator Quality and Service Improvement

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- **MHC:** Mental Health Commission. The Western Australian Mental Health Commission is the government body responsible for planning and purchasing mental health, alcohol and other drug services in Western Australia.
- **Supporters:** For the purposes of this policy the term Supporters refers to the clients' guardians, sponsors, advocates and helpers.
- **SMS:** Service Management System (SMS) is a comprehensive and innovative management software provided via SaaS and is developed explicitly for agencies delivering community care. Owned by Alchemy Technology who are a Software Development and Support company.

Principles

1. Planning Requirements

Should a person request assistance with support planning that is beyond the scope of this policy, the person should be directed to another service provider. A referral and support to connect the person to the relevant agency will be provided within a service benchmark of 5 working days.

2. Overview

Staff involved in assessment, planning and review activities must have the relevant skills (or the capacity to acquire skills) in order to provide:

- Active engagement and early intervention strategies, including with families; – strength-based planning, assessment and review of plans/goals
- Holistic and collaborative approaches to service delivery and recovery
- And capacity building of families and carers.

All documentation relating to assessment, planning and review will be maintained in Service Management System (SMS) client files. During all assessments, planning and reviewing activities, staff will discuss client rights and responsibilities with them. They will confirm client understanding verbally, using an interpreter or advocate where required.

Where required, clients will be provided with information and support to access a person of their choice, such as an advocate, to assist them to access the service.

In accordance with the Pathways SouthWest's Rights and Responsibilities, respect for and protection of clients' privacy and confidentiality will be reinforced on an ongoing basis. If necessary and with the clients or their supporter/s consent, other parties such as the referrer and or other service providers who deliver existing or complementary services to clients will be included in assessment, planning and review activities.

Staff will consider the clients' wishes in regard to accepting or rejecting support options.

3. Assessment and Planning

Following the interview intake and assessment, where a client is offered services and accepts, staff will work with them and their supporters to assess their needs.

The Pathways SouthWest Referral form provides implied consent to contact those parties listed on the referral form. A completed Pathways SouthWest Consent to Share Information form will cover the clients' preferred links to family, friendships and other support networks.

The client and their supporters' age, ability, gender, sexual identity, culture, religion or spirituality and any barriers to community participation will be identified and documented and strategies discussed that could be put in place to help them overcome them arranged.

Staff will complete a Home Risk Assessment with the client (and their carer/support person) prior to the delivery of services in their home. All staff working with clients must be aware of the contents of individual plans and any identified risk and safety issues for the people they provide support to.

4. Review

At all times the client is encouraged to be actively involved and participate in the monitoring and review of their assessment and planning and will be provided with access to support during these processes.

Reviews will include:

- Case conferences/case management meetings with other stakeholders occurring prior to the review with the client (and their support person where applicable) – considering their age, ability, gender, sexual identity, culture, religion and spirituality.
- Assessing changes to the client's needs (including health, wellbeing and safety needs), goals and longer-term aspirations.
- The level of progress towards addressing their needs and achieving their goals.
- Assessing whether the client has been given opportunities to participate in a range of community-based activities of their choice (where applicable and appropriate) – recognition and celebration of their progress.
- Any barriers to community participation and strategies to help the client overcome them.
- Whether a change to the support provided is necessary.
- Recovery planning and Recovery Star or Carer Star

5. Transition Process

The aim of the process in which Pathways SouthWest assists or facilitates the client transitioning to another service provider sets out to minimise the impact of change that is occurring for the client and to create a support schedule that meets the client's goals, needs and requirements in a person centred way.

The Recovery Worker or Manager Client Services will coordinate the transition of support and services meeting with the person and/or relevant stakeholders including the family/carer to develop a transition pathway.

Pathway SouthWest will implement person-centred processes to ensure the new organization or service develops an understanding of the person's strengths, likes and dislikes.

The transition pathway should clearly identify the timeframe for the induction and transition and any review schedules that have been agreed upon and who is responsible to manage steps included in the transition process.

The transition places the client and/or their family/carer and other members of the support network at the centre.

6. Exit and Ret-entry to Pathways SouthWest

Pathways SouthWest acknowledges that exiting a client can be a daunting, stressful and anxious process for clients using our service as well as their family members and carers.

Pathways SouthWest will ensure that an exit occurs in a professional, planned and collaborative manner. Exit planning is an integral part of the exit process and is conducted in close consultation with the client, and where appropriate the family, carer and any other important people from the person's support network.

As appropriate to their circumstances, the client will be provided with information about referral processes or supported introduction to other service providers, community agencies or organisations, which can offer support and services they require after they have exited. This will all be documented into their SMS Client Notes.

Pathways SouthWest will actively encourage and support a client to exit its service if a least restrictive alternative or one that is likely to enable positive outcomes and inclusive opportunities is identified and preferred by the client.

Prior to exiting Pathways SouthWest the clients are provided with guidance and support to:

- Investigate other options or models of support that Pathways SouthWest provides.
- Explore the consequences of their decision to exit the service.
- Consider re-entry to Pathways SouthWest in the future should their needs or circumstances change.

The client, subject to consent, their family or carer/s and other stakeholders are involved in developing the exit plan. The exit plan is made available to the client and with the person's informed consent (where possible), any other stakeholders.

The client reserves the right to re-access Pathways SouthWest service after formally exiting the service. A new referral/intake assessment needs to be undertaken if the client requests re-access at some point in the future.

Key Contacts

Questions about how to implement this procedure should be directed to Pathways SouthWest CEO on ceo@pathwayssouthwest.org.au or phone 97911257

Related Policies and Other Documents:

- Business Continuity and Risk Planning Scenario
- Continuous Improvement Policy and Procedure
- Compliance Policy and Procedure
- Data Breach and Response Policy and Procedure
- Client Charter for Community Managed Housing and Homelessness Services

- Governance Policy and Procedure
- Incident Management Policy and Procedure and all related reporting forms.
- National Safety and Quality Mental Health Standards for Community Managed Organisations
- National Regulatory Community Housing Standards
- National Regulatory Code for the National Regulatory System of Community Housing 2022
- Pathways SouthWest Strategic Plan.
- Risk Management Policy and Procedure and Risk Register
- Staff Code of Conduct Policy and Procedure
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- Western Australian Community Housing Regulatory Framework.

Relevant Legislation

- Anti-Discrimination Act 1991
- Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986
- Australians Charities and Not for Profits Commission Act 2012
- Building Regulations 2012
- Environmental Regulations Amendment (Work Health and Safety) Regulations 2022
- Freedom of Information Act 1982
- GST and non-commercial rules – benchmark market rent values (Australian Tax Office)
<https://www.ato.gov.au/law/view/document?DocID=GII/GSTIICC2/NAT/ATO/00001> (accessed 18/06/2025)
- Housing Assistance Act 1996 (COM)
- Human Rights Act 2019
- Mental Health Act (WA) 2014
- Privacy Act 1988
- Public Sector Ethics Act 1994
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975
- Racial Hatred Act 1995
- State Housing Acts (WA 1980)
- Quality of Care Principles 2014
- Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012
- Work Health and Safety Act 2020
- Work Health and Safety (General) Regulations 2022
- Workers' Compensation and Injury Management Act 1981 (WA)
- Workers' Compensation and Injury Management Regulations 1982 (WA)