

ACACIA THERAPY - NDIS PARTICIPANT HANDBOOK

About Acacia Therapy:

Acacia Therapy is a private health care provider based in Toowoomba, Queensland. Acacia Therapy provides Occupational Therapy and Speech Language Pathologist services and treatment interventions to children and adults with physical and intellectual disability.

Our clients are very much the centre of our business and service delivery model. We demonstrate and display strong values of integrity and respect for all and strongly promote an inclusive culture for clients and staff.

Our Mission: We are here to create an environment which enables our clients to Live as they want, Learn what they need and Grow into the person they choose to become.

This participant handbook has been developed to assist participants to understand how Acacia Therapy operates, its services and supports, if you have any questions or need help understanding this document, please contact Acacia Therapy.

Acacia Therapy is a NDIS registered provider. We also see private clients and provide services to a range of external service providers and government entities.

For more information about us, please visit our website at

<https://www.acaciatherapy.net/home.html>

Contact Details:

Phone	Email	Address
07 46001343	Info@acaciatherapy.net	Clinic address:
0427 820 532		Shop 2 – 2 Rob Street, Newtown, 4350
Practice Manager – Callum Edwards		Postal address: 260 Harlaxton, Toowoomba 4350

Our Services:

We provide occupational therapy support to children and adults and speech pathology support to children across the Darling Downs. We are based in Toowoomba but are able to travel to surrounding areas.

Our services include:

- OT Functional assessments and other reports on request
- Equipment prescription
- Skill development
- Assisted equipment assessment / trials and reporting
- Therapy sessions
- Functional skill development
- Capacity Development
- Minor home modifications

For more information about these services please call us on 46 001 343 or visit <https://www.acaciatherapy.net/home.html>.

Our office opening hours are Monday to Friday (8:30am to 4:30pm)

NDIS Service Quality:

To deliver our services as an NDIS Registered Provider, Acacia Therapy must comply with the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Framework. This means we must:

- comply with the *NDIS Act 2013 (Cwth)*;
- comply with the *NDIS Terms of Business for Registered Providers* and any Conditions of NDIS Registration; and
- obtain and maintain accreditation against the NDIS Practice Standards.

The NDIS Practice Standards are quality standards that govern how Registered NDIS providers must deliver services. The Standards that relate to Acacia Therapy are:

Schedule 1 - Core Module

1. Rights of [participant]s and responsibilities of providers
2. Provider governance and operational management
3. Provision of supports
4. Support provision environment

Schedule 5 - Module 3 - Early childhood supports

1. The child
2. The family
3. Inclusion
4. Collaboration
5. Capacity building
6. Evidence-informed practice
7. Outcome based approach

Acacia Therapy is committed to delivering services in compliance with these standards and in continuously improving its service delivery. We operate in accordance with comprehensive policies and procedures, which are reviewed regularly and incorporate participant and stakeholder feedback.

Your Rights:

Acacia Therapy respects and is committed to upholding the rights of all people. We are also committed to ensuring you are aware of your rights and responsibilities and are supported to exercise them.

In supporting you to exercise your rights, we must comply with the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 and NDIS Practice Standards (2018) - Rights and Responsibilities.

In supporting you to exercise your rights, we must comply with the *United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, and when supporting children, the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of the Child*, *National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013* and *NDIS Practice Standards (2018) - Rights and Responsibilities*.

You have the Right to access supports that:

- promote, uphold and respect your legal and human rights;
- respect your culture, diversity, values and beliefs;
- respect and protect your dignity and right to privacy;
- are free from violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation or discrimination; and
- allow you to exercise informed choice and control.

It is our responsibility to:

- tell you about and uphold your rights;
- provide supports in a way that promotes, upholds and respects your rights to freedom of expression, self-determination and decision-making;
- support you to make informed choices, exercise control and maximise your independence in relation to the supports we provide;
- respect your autonomy, including your right to intimacy and sexual expression;
- provide you sufficient time to consider and review your support options and seek advice if required, at any stage of our service delivery;
- support you to access an advocate (including an independent advocate) of your

choosing;

- support you to engage with your family, friends and chosen community in the ways you want to;
- treat you with fairly, with courtesy, dignity and respect and without discrimination;
- give you information about our services and associated costs, as well as other support options, within and outside of Acacia Therapy;
- involve you in decisions about your supports, as well as our programs and policies;
- provide services that consider and respect your lifestyle, cultural, linguistic and religious background and preferences;
- protect your personal information and only use it for the right reasons;
- support you to provide us with feedback on our service, including complaints;
- promptly address enquiries and complaints about the supports you are receiving;
- support you to connect with other services, including advocates, interpreters and translators, if needed;
- support you to have a person to speak on your behalf for any purpose; and
- provide safe and appropriate services that are culturally relevant and support your needs and goals.

As our participant we ask that you:

- provide us with information that will help us to best support you;
- tell us if things change or you cannot keep an appointment or commitment;
- act respectfully and safely towards other people using the service, and towards our staff;
- provide us with feedback about our service and how we can improve;
- promptly pay the agreed fees associated with your services; and
- tell us as early as possible if our services are not required.

Diversity and Participation:

All aspects of Acacia Therapy's service delivery promote participants' active participation and inclusion in the community. We support participants to develop and

maintain their independence, problem solving, social and self-care skills, as appropriate to their age, developmental stage, cultural background, or other needs and goals.

Ways we do this include:

- delivering services in a way that respects individuals' personal, gender, sexual, cultural, religious, or spiritual identity;
- employing and developing a diverse and culturally competent workforce;
- working collaboratively with disability-specific, mainstream, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse services to support holistic service delivery; and
- using a strengths-based approach to identify individual participant needs and life goals, particularly in relation to recognising the importance of family, extended family, kinship, cultural, spiritual, language and community ties.

Interpreting and Translation:

The delivery of safe, high-quality services relies on effective communication. Where required, interpreters and translators will be made available to support your interactions with us. Please discuss the fees associated with this service with a staff member.

Acacia Therapy will work with you to organise an interpreter or translator.

Advocacy:

Acacia Therapy supports your right to have an independent advocate support you in your interactions with us. If you'd like help finding an independent advocate, you can use the Disability Advocacy Finder, which is available online at <https://disabilityadvocacyfinder.dss.gov.au/disability/ndap>.

Privacy and Confidentiality:

Acacia Therapy values and respects the privacy, confidentiality and dignity of our participants and their families, as well as our staff. We collect, use, protect and release Personal Information in full compliance with relevant State and Federal privacy legislation.

Acacia Therapy will only collect information necessary for safe and effective service delivery. We will only use information for the purpose it was collected and secure it safely. When we collect your information, we will explain why we are collecting the information and how we plan to use it. We will only take photos or videos of you with your full and voluntary consent.

Information about you will only be released to other people or services with your informed consent, in an emergency, or where such disclosure is required or authorised by law.

You may access the information we hold about you, including in order to update or correct it, subject to certain exceptions. If you wish to access your information, please speak to a staff member or request in writing via info@acaciatherapy.net or in writing to the Practice Manager (Po Box 260 Harlaxton, Toowoomba)

When your information is no longer needed for the purpose for which it was obtained, we will destroy or permanently de-identify it.

You can request Acacia Therapy's Privacy Policy from any of our staff members or download at <https://www.acaciatherapy.net/home.html>. If you have any questions regarding the use and management of your personal information, please speak to a staff member.

Feedback, Compliments and Complaints:

Compliments, complaints and other feedback provide us with valuable and useful information about your satisfaction with our services. Feedback is taken seriously by Acacia Therapy and is seen as an opportunity for improvement.

We encourage feedback and comments on the services we provide, both positive and negative. Whether a compliment or complaint, your feedback will be treated with confidentiality and sensitivity.

Feedback, compliments and complaints can be lodged:

- directly with a staff member, either verbally or by completing a Feedback,

Compliments and Complaints Form;

- by email to: info@acaciatherapy.net;
- by phone on: 07 46001343
- in writing to: Po Box 260 Harlaxton, Toowoomba; or
- by placing a completed Feedback and Complaints Form in the Suggestion Box in Acacia Therapy's office.

Your complaint will be formally acknowledged within 24hrs. We aim to respond to all complaints and grievances as quickly as possible, and within twenty business days from acknowledgement.

All feedback and complaints will be used by Acacia Therapy to continuously improve our service delivery.

Feedback and Continuous Improvement:

In addition to the above, Acacia Therapy is continually seeking feedback on how we can improve the services we provide. This includes through satisfaction surveys, requests for feedback by staff after you interact with us and involving you in our service delivery planning and review processes. Please feel free to provide any suggestions or ideas you have to a staff member.

Complaints:

We encourage anyone with a complaint to speak directly to an Acacia Therapy staff member (if appropriate) in the first instance, who will attempt to resolve the issue immediately. If the matter cannot be resolved promptly or within 24 hours, it will be escalated to Acacia Therapy's Practice Manager.

You can use Acacia Therapy's Feedback and Complaints Form to formally lodge your complaint and a staff member can assist you to do this if you wish.

Your complaint will be formally acknowledged within **24hrs**. We aim to respond to all complaints and grievances as quickly as possible, and within **20 working days** from acknowledgement. If a complaint cannot be responded to in full within 28 days of acknowledgement, you will be provided with an update, which will include when a full

response can be expected.

All feedback and complaints will be used by Acacia Therapy to continuously improve our service delivery.

Escalating Complaints

If you feel a complaint has not been sufficiently or appropriately addressed, you can seek further support from Acacia Therapy's Practice Manager, or alternatively through any of the following agencies:

NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission

- Online: www.ndiscommission.gov.au
- Phone: 1800 035 544.

Australian Human Rights Commission

- Phone: 1300 656 419
- Online: humanrights.gov.au

Queensland Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services

- Email: feedback@communities.qld.gov.au
- Phone: 1800 080 464
- Online: www.communities.qld.gov.au
- Post: GPO Box 806, Brisbane QLD 4001

Queensland Ombudsman

- Phone: 1800 068 908
- Online: www.ombudsman.qld.gov.au
- Post: GPO Box 3314, Brisbane QLD 4001

NDIS participants purchasing products and services have rights and protections under the Australian Consumer Law (ACL), including provisions on customer guarantees and unfair contract terms. Fair Trading Queensland provides information and advice and, in some cases, dispute resolution services for customer disputes under the ACL. You can also contact the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) if you have concerns regarding consumer protection in relation to your finances.

Service Refusal:

Acacia Therapy may refuse to offer a person service where:

- they do not meet our eligibility requirements;
- other potential participants are assessed as a higher priority based on our Priority of Access considerations;
- we do not have the capacity to cater to additional participants; or
- we do not have the resources to cater to the specific needs of the person.
- where risk/s to staff cannot be mitigated.

Where services cannot be provided, we will assist you with referrals and support to access alternative services.

Appeal: Any person refused services has the right to appeal. Appeals should be made in writing to Acacia Therapy's Practice Manager.

Wait List Process:

Where Acacia Therapy lacks capacity to see a client in the short-term, the person may elect to be placed on our Wait List. Potential participants on our wait list will be contacted every three months to:

- advise you of your current Waiting List status;
- check whether you want to remain on the list;
- provide referrals to other service providers if required; and
- advise the estimated wait time remaining.

Acacia Therapy reserves the right to triage the wait list based on an assessment of priority and with careful alignment to staff skillset and their ability to provide the best possible service to the client.

Leaving Acacia Therapy's Services:

All participants have the right to exit Acacia Therapy's services at any time and a decision to do so will not prejudice future access to the service.

Participants exiting the service will be offered an Exit Interview. We also provide assistance and resources to support people exiting or changing services. This includes an agreed Exit Plan, as well as the identification of, referral to and support accessing alternative services.

Participants who have chosen to exit our services have the right to re-access services at a later point.

If you wish to end your service with us, please speak to an Acacia Therapy staff member or contact the business at info@acaciatherapy.net

Acacia Therapy will only lodge a Service Booking through the NDIS Portal for the number of sessions or dollar value outlined in the Service Agreement that has been developed in consultation with the client.

If a client elects to exit our service, Acacia Therapy will cancel all outstanding Service Bookings within five (5) business days from date of notification.

Service Termination:

Acacia Therapy may end a participant's services when:

- they are unwilling over a period of time to work towards agreed goals;
- other people using the service, staff or the person themselves are at risk of harm;
- financial requirements are not being met; or
- health changes require increased levels of care or access to services / supports that are not provided by Acacia Therapy.

Any person whose services are terminated have the right to appeal. Appeals should be directed in writing to Acacia Therapy's Practice Manager via email or in writing.

Fees and Charges:

We will discuss fees with you before providing services and include all fees in a Service Agreement. The Service Agreement contains detailed information about the services we will provide you and when fees must be paid. This must be agreed to by you before services can commence.

Acacia Therapy will provide you with regular invoices to assist you to manage payment for our services. If you have difficulty paying your fees for any reason, we encourage you to discuss this with us so that acceptable payment arrangements can be put in place.

Freedom from Harm, Abuse and Neglect:

When visiting our office or taking part in our services, you have the right to be free from harm and any form of abuse or neglect. Acacia Therapy treats any allegation of abuse, assault or neglect very seriously. Allegations may be subject to both mandatory reporting and police involvement. If you have any concerns or are aware of a situation where abuse or neglect may be occurring, please notify a Acacia Therapy staff member, or the Practice Manager as soon as possible. All concerns will be treated confidentially and as per Acacia Therapy's Freedom from Abuse and Neglect Policy.

Acacia Therapy employs skilled staff who respect the rights of people with disability, are aware of current policies and legislation pertaining to abuse, neglect and unexplained absences and will support people and their families, guardians and advocates to access complaint mechanisms and raise any concerns they have about our services. All staff undergo comprehensive criminal history screening and other mandatory checks prior to employment.

Work Health and Safety:

Acacia Therapy is committed to providing services in a safe and healthy environment. Work Health and Safety (WH&S) is the responsibility of all Acacia Therapy stakeholders – including staff, volunteers, participants, families, carers and visitors. We ask that you report any hazards or risks you become aware of and act in a way that protects yours and others' health and safety when visiting our office or participating in our services.

Where services are provided by Acacia Therapy in your home, we expect that you, or the owner of the premises, will take responsibility for your safety and the safety of our staff working there. Please ensure that the premises is safe for our staff and meets all relevant building regulations or legislation.

Please ensure that pets are safety secured prior to Acacia Therapy staff attending your premise.

Informed consent and Acacia Therapy:

Informed consent means you will be given understandable and clear information about your choices, so you are able to make informed decisions about the therapy you wish to engage with or receive from Acacia Therapy. (ACT Health 2019) Acacia Therapy is committed to ensuring that you are provided with information in a clear and concise manner to enable you are able to make informed decisions.

If you have any questions or unsure about anything, make sure you bring this to the attention of the Therapist, or Practice Manager.

Community Participation and Inclusion:

Acacia Therapy is committed to working with you to dismantle barriers, change attitudes and promote positive attitudes to create opportunities for your full inclusion and participation in your community. We work closely with a range of organisations to support you and encourage you to speak to a staff member if you have any specific needs or goals that could be met by another organisation.

Other services and activities you may find of interest include:

Please note: Acacia Therapy has no formal or financial interest in any of the below listed groups and these groups remain totally separate from the business of Acacia Therapy.

Groups and activity providers:

- 'junk made' all abilities craft/creativity group (0481 124 230)

- East creek neighbourhood centre (4639 2755)
- Rainbow choir – Yellowbridge (contact Disability Support team on 4639 327)

Day respites:

- Endeavor Foundation (Lifestyle and learning centre)
- Brightside on Victoria
- Holistic Care Homestead
- Clubhouse Toowoomba