

9.19	PROVIDING CLIENT ADVOCACY AND SUPPORT
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Applies to:
Specific responsibility:

Version: 1
Date approved: 11/11/2014
Next review date: Aug 21

Policy context: This policy relates to	
Standards or other external requirements	
Legislation or other requirements	
Contractual obligations	

POLICY STATEMENT

HECIS is committed to the principles of respecting and protecting the legal and human rights of individuals and their right to services.

To this end HECIS supports the right of clients to use an advocate of their choice to negotiate on their behalf. This may be in relation to assessment, reviews, complaints or any other communication between the client and this organisation. The organisation will work co-operatively with any advocate nominated by a client and treat them with respect.

HECIS Is also committed to providing clients with advocacy and appropriate support when it is requested.

PROCEDURES

Supporting advocacy

The HECIS Co-Ordinator will be responsible for ensuring:

- all staff are aware of the HECIS policy on the use of advocates
- maintain local advocacy resource/contact lists

Providing clients with information

The HECIS Co-Ordinator will ensure clients and potential advocates are informed via appropriate formats (including verbally and in writing) about their right to use an advocate and the role of an advocate when the client is:

- Assessed and re-assessed for HECIS services
- Oriented to the service or program
- Refused service

Or if:

- A staff member believes an advocate may be beneficial to the client
- They want to make a complaint about the service. HECIS will support them with their cultural and linguistic needs when making a complaint.

HECIS: Providing Client Advocacy and Support

The HECIS Co-Ordinator is required to ensure that clients are aware of their rights to use an advocate in relation to the service, including having their advocate present for all assessments, meetings and communication between themselves and the organisation.

If the client is unsure whether they may want to nominate a person as an advocate, they are to be provided with information (in an appropriate format) on various specialist advocacy organisations that may be able to assist them. If they would like to contact any of these organisations the HECIS Co-Ordinator will be able to assist them to make contact.

It is the responsibility of the HECIS Co-Ordinator at the time of first contact with the client to discuss any communication issues or requirements.

If a client has an advocate it is the HECIS Co-Ordinator's responsibility to discuss and document any specific communication issues or protocols to be used between the service and the client's advocate. The name and contact details of the advocate are to be included in the client/family's file.

Staff will not disclose any information about the client to an advocate, when the client is not present, unless the client has provided their permission to do so.

Working with advocates (when a client has nominated an advocate)

Where a client has identified or nominated an advocate the staff handling the case must:

- Record the advocates details in the client/family's file.
- Ensure the client is aware of their advocacy rights including the right to have an advocate present for all assessments, meetings and communication between themselves and the organisation
- Ensure the advocate knows they have been nominated as an advocate and agrees to this
- Ensure any identified advocate is present at assessments and meetings
- Communicate and work co-operatively with the advocate
- Communicate comprehensively with a client's advocate and involve them in the care and service planning
- Ensure that the client knows they have the right to change their advocate at any time. Any changes should be documented with written confirmation from the client/family.

If an authorised representative is acting on behalf of a client, the organisation will require proof of representative authority.

Authorised representatives include:

- Guardians
- Attorneys under enduring powers of attorney
- Agents under the Medical Treatment Act 1988
- Administrators under the Guardianship and Administration Act 1986
- A person otherwise empowered by the consumers to act or make decisions in their best interests.

Proof of representative authority will be sighted and a copy of that document placed in the clients file. Proof of authority includes Guardianship or Administration order or Enduring/ Medical Power of Attorney.

Providing advocacy and support

Where a client does not have an identified or nominated advocate and they request assistance from the organisation HECIS will endeavour to provide the appropriate support required by the client/family.

The type of individual advocacy and support that can be provided will be dependent on the organisation's capability and resources and referral to another organisation or service, supported by HECIS may be appropriate.

DOCUMENTATION

Documents related to this policy	
Related policies	9.12 Case Management
Forms, record keeping or other organisational documents	

Reviewing and approving this policy		
Frequency	Person responsible	Approval
Annually	HECIS Co-Ordinator	Management Committee

Policy review and version tracking			
Review	Date Approved	Approved by	Next Review Due
1	24.11.15	HECIS Co-Ordinator	Nov 2016
2	20.2.17	HECIS Co-ordinator	Aug 2017
3	15.8.17	HECIS CoOrdinator	Aug 2018
4	6.9.18	HECIS CoOrdinator	Aug 2019
5	17.9.19	HECIS CoOrdinator	Aug 2020
6	15.9.20	HECIS CoOrdinator	Aug 2021

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