



Darling Downs THERAPY SERVICES

Client Handbook

Welcome to Darling Downs Therapy Services.

This handbook is designed to give our clients a general overview of our business, what to expect from our service and some of our key policies and procedures.

If you need access to this information in a different format or language please let us know. If you have any questions about our service please don't hesitate to ask one of our team.

You can contact our reception on (07) 4602 3851 (Monday to Friday, 9am – 1pm)

You can contact our director, Tim Connolly on 0431 238 915

Or email us at: admin@darlingdownstherapyservices.com.au

We look forward to working with you!

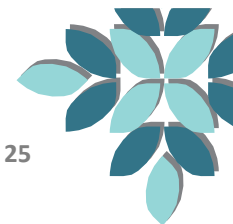
Version 8: 19/09/2024

Workplace: Darling Downs Therapy Services Pty Ltd	Document Title: Client Handbook	Approval: Tim Connolly (Director)
Issue Date: 19/09/2024	Revision Date: 19/09/2025	



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About Darling Downs Therapy Services

Darling Downs Therapy Services (DDTS) provides Occupational Therapy services, Psychology Services, Support Coordination, Developmental Education and Positive Behaviour Support services primarily to individuals living in the Toowoomba area and surrounds. We are a small local business with staff and contractors local to the region. We started operating in August 2017 as we saw a need for our services following the commencement of the NDIS in the Darling Downs region.

Our Vision:

Our vision is to provide high quality services to empower our clients and their support networks (family, friends, carers) to reach the goals the clients want to achieve in their day to day life.

We aim to meet this Vision by:

- listening to, and working with, our clients and their support networks
- providing support that puts the client at the centre of what we do
- being creative to find a solution that works
- keeping in touch with our clients and following up with what we've promised to do

Service Delivery Model

At DDTS our clinical services are provided under the guiding principles of:

- evidence-based approach including:
 - o the best available research and literature
 - o our experience
 - o the values, goals and knowledge of the client, their family and support network
 - o the context of the service we provide

[source: Evidence-Based Medicine. How to Practice and Teach EBM, 2nd ed. David L. Sackett, Sharon E. Straus, W. Scott Richardson, William Rosenberg, and R. Brian Haynes. Edinburgh: Churchill Livingstone, 2000]
- person-centred practice: putting the person and their goals and choices at the centre of our support
- strengths-based approach: using the person's skills, interests, abilities, and the resources around them as a key focus of our interventions
- principles of positive behaviour support
- reflective practice: ensuring an environment that encourages reflecting on practice to encourage ongoing learning and development to provide best outcomes for our clients

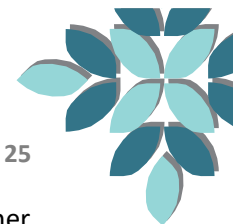
Upholding your Rights

In all our interactions with our clients and their nominated support people we acknowledge and uphold the principles within the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/345108/easy-read-un-convention.pdf

We aim to do this by:

- providing information and communicating with you in the way that you prefer
- treating you in a non-discriminatory manner with proper regard for your rights and dignity. We don't tolerate discrimination, victimisation or harassment based on a person's race, colour, religion, disability, national origin, citizenship, age, sex, sexual orientation or any other classification protected by law
- providing a service that is respectful of the person's individual culture, values and beliefs
- we encourage you to make your own choices and we work with the goals you have outlined in your NDIS plan
- we respect your dignity of risk, supported you to have a central role in making informed decisions about safeguards in your life



- working with any advocates or people you nominate to be involved in your interactions with us. Further information on advocacy can be accessed through local service – The Advocacy and Support Centre (TASC): details on their website: <http://www.tascnational.org.au/> or phone: 1300 008 272
- we follow the NDIS code of conduct as well as all relevant legislation to ensure we are working to a high standard for you
- having safe, non-discriminatory processes for you to provide feedback to us (both positive feedback and complaints)
- keeping up to date with the latest knowledge and best practice in the areas of work we do
- tailoring the support we provide to your individual needs (e.g. having visits at a venue that you prefer, making resources in the format you prefer etc.)

Our Services

Positive Behaviour Support focuses on:

- working with the client to develop a range of proactive strategies and strategies for the client and others to use when a behaviour is about to occur or is occurring – with the aim of preventing the challenging behaviour from happening or reducing the impact of behaviour to ensure the client's safety and the safety of others. The overall aim is to improve quality of life, community participation and ability to engage in the activities they want to in their day-to-day life. Support may include assessment of the situation (reviewing available information, looking at behavioural recordings, talking with the client and those providing support, formal assessment, observations of day to day-to-day life etc.); development of a positive behaviour support plan; support around putting the plan into action (including training carers and others) and reviewing the plan.

Psychology Services aim to:

- support the client to develop skills and improve their overall well-being. We assist by helping the client learn how to cope with life stressors, manage difficult feelings such as anxiety, depression and anger and to develop skills in problem solving and social interaction.

Developmental Education services aim to:

- foster the skills, independence and quality of life of individuals with developmental and/or acquired disabilities. Developmental Educators have a practical approach and work holistically across the life span to address issues which may affect the function, independence and social inclusion of individuals with disability, their families and carers;
- Developmental Educators implement and develop methodologies that enable the application of effective strategies to support the individual developmental learning goals. They also work closely with families and caregivers, and other allied health professionals who may be involved in the support of an individual.

Occupational Therapy Services focus on:

- assisting clients to learn and/or improve a range of skills to support them to participate in their chosen daily activities (e.g. dressing skills, learning to cook, learning to catch a bus, household skills, employment support, money skills, self-care skills, self-regulation etc.);
- adapting tasks that the client wants to do to help them achieve greater independence (e.g. providing adaptive equipment, changing the steps in a task, providing a visual guide to prompt them);
- adapting the environment to help clients achieve a desired goal (e.g. physical changes to the environment such as changing the lighting or seating, changing the sensory environment such as reducing noise to assist with focusing on the task etc.).

At DDTS our Support Coordination services are provided in line with person centred practice and the definition of support coordination as set down by the NDIS. The Support Coordinator will work with clients and/or their representatives to:

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- assist clients to connect with service providers, explore mainstream options for service provision and maximise their potential to live an ordinary life. Support Coordination aims to assist people to get the most out of their NDIS Plan and the funding available.
- To focus on strengthening a client's ability to design and build their supports and to link their supports across a complex service delivery environment
- To work together with the client to understand their funding, identify their expectations from the services they receive and design their supports accordingly
- To build the capacity of clients to have choice and control in their lives.

Our Clients – who do we provide support to?

Based on the skills and expertise of our current team we specialise in providing services to older teenagers and adults. Our primary areas of expertise are intellectual disability and autism-related diagnoses, and dual diagnosis (i.e. mental health and intellectual disability, or dementia and intellectual disability). We would consider working with clients with other support needs if we determined that our skills and experience were transferable to the client and situation presenting. Otherwise, we may suggest other services and supports that would better meet the person's need and also encourage them to seek further assistance from their support coordinator (if appointed). We primarily work with clients funded under the National Disability Insurance Scheme. As demand and capacity allow, our services focus on supporting clients within the Darling Downs, primarily Toowoomba and surrounding areas.

Our Team

Organisational chart:



At DDTS we seek to engage employees and contractors that are committed to working with clients with a disability, have an approach that fits with our vision, have experience working with people with a disability and/or people with complex needs and bring a range skills and experiences to the overall team.

Find out more about our team members and their experience on our website: www.darlingdownstherapyservices.com.au

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Our Services within the NDIS context

DDTS primarily work with clients funded through the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

What is the NDIS?: <https://www.ndis.gov.au/understanding/what-ndis>

DDTS are registered to provide the following supports to participants of the NDIS:

- Therapeutic Supports: this relates to our Occupational Therapy, Developmental Education and Psychology services
- Improved Relationships: this refers to the provision of positive behaviour support services under the line items of: specialist behaviour intervention and behaviour management plan including training
- Support Coordination: this refers to provision of support coordination services as set down in the NDIS Price Guide.

DDTS maintain NDIS registration and the requirements of registration on behalf of its employees and contractors. Employees and contractors are responsible for undertaking any tasks and requirements requested by DDTS in order for DDTS to meet its obligations as an NDIS provider.

The details of the services we provide to a client are contained in individual service agreements and are negotiated with the client (or their representative) based on:

- funding allocated to the participant by the NDIS
- referral request and outcomes sought by the participant
- helping the participant to meet their NDIS goals
- the services we are able to provide based on our availability, capacity and skills

DDTS does not manage participant's money or property, nor do we give financial advice or information other than what would be reasonably required under the participant's plan.

NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission

The NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission is an independent agency established to improve the quality and safety of NDIS supports and services. They regulate NDIS providers, provide national consistency, promote safety and quality, resolve problems and identify areas for improvement. source: www.ndiscommission.gov.au

As a provider of services to NDIS participants DDTS, our employees and contractors are aware of and adhere to requirements of the Commission contained within the following documents:

- Code of Conduct
- NDIS practice standards
- Positive Behaviour Support and Capability Framework

NDIS Code of Conduct [source: <https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/providers/ndis-code-conduct>]

The Code of Conduct requires workers and providers who deliver NDIS supports to:

- act with respect for individual rights to freedom of expression, self-determination, and decision-making in accordance with relevant laws and conventions
- respect the privacy of people with disability
- provide supports and services in a safe and competent manner with care and skill
- act with integrity, honesty, and transparency
- promptly take steps to raise and act on concerns about matters that might have an impact on the quality and safety of supports provided to people with disability
- take all reasonable steps to prevent and respond to all forms of violence, exploitation, neglect, and abuse of people with disability
- take all reasonable steps to prevent and respond to sexual misconduct.

All DDTS employees and contractors are familiar with the code of conduct which is found via the following link:

<https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/about/legislation-rules-policies>

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All DDTS employees and contractors also complete the training module: 'Worker Orientation Module: Quality, Safety and You': <https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/workers/worker-training-modules-and-resources/worker-orientation-module>

NDIS practice standards

As an NDIS provider DDTS are committed to meeting the NDIS practice standards which, along with the NDIS code of conduct, set the benchmark for service delivery under the NDIS.

DDTS are required to meet the standards of:

- the core module and module 2 which cover:
 - o Rights and Responsibilities
 - o Person – centred supports
 - o Individual values and beliefs
 - o Privacy and Dignity
 - o Independence and informed choice
 - o Violence, Abuse, Neglect, Exploitation and Discrimination
 - o Governance and Operational Management
 - o Risk Management
 - o Quality Management
 - o Information Management
 - o Feedback and Complaints Management
 - o Incident Management
 - o Human Resource Management
 - o Continuity of Supports
- and modules relating to the provision of specialist behaviour support

All DDTS staff familiarise themselves with the practice standards and participate in all activities required by DDTS to meet these standards including an independent audit process.

Privacy and Confidentiality

DDTS need to gather information about our clients in order to provide a quality service. This information may be considered private and/or confidential. *Privacy* relates to any information that includes data which identifies or could reasonably identify a client; *Confidentiality* refers to the protection of all sensitive information shared with DDTS by or about a client, not just information that is identifiable. Client information is managed in accordance with our Privacy and Information Management Policy and Procedure, which is included in this handbook.

Consent is obtained via DDTS Consent Form at commencement of service, and again with each new service agreement. The Consent Form is available in standard and easy-read format, and can be otherwise translated (Auslan or other language) so as to meet the language, mode of communication and terms that the client is most likely to understand.

Positive Behaviour Support and Capability Framework

DDTS, as a provider of positive behaviour support under the NDIS, is committed to the delivery of high-quality behaviour support services that aim to improve our clients' quality of life, while reducing occurrence of behaviours of concern and the need for use of restrictive practices (RP) in accordance with the National Disability Insurance Scheme Act (2013) and the requirements of the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission (NDIS-QSC).

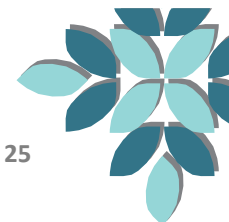
All DDTS Behaviour Support Practitioners have completed the necessary NDIS Commission suitability assessment to become suitable behaviour support practitioners. DDTS behaviour support services work within:

- the NDIS Positive Behaviour Support – Capability Framework
- the National Disability Insurance Scheme (Restrictive Practices and Behaviour Support) Rules 2018: <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2018L00632>
- Queensland legislative requirements for positive behaviour support and restrictive practices which apply:

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- https://www.dcssds.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0018/6264/authorising-restrictive-practices.pdf
- <https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/providers/understanding-behaviour-support-and-restrictive-practices-providers#paragraph-id-963>
- <https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/providers/understanding-behaviour-support-and-restrictive-practices-providers/reporting-use>
- <https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-2006-012>

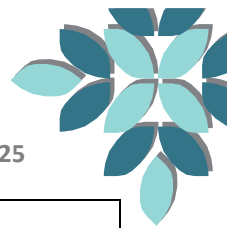


Service Delivery Outline

The following table outlines key points in our interactions with you and the general steps you can anticipate when working with us. This process may however differ slightly depending on your individual situation and support needs.

DDTS= Darling Downs Therapy Services DDTS Team= employees, director, contractors Clinician= person working with client

Phase	Steps	Person responsible
Initial Enquiry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial enquiry received by phone / email / website etc. Enquiry forwarded to Admin Officer (AO) if not received by AO directly Initial details taken using enquiry form as a guide If situation fits with DDTS skills and client target groups forward basic details to DDTS Team for consideration of capacity to provide service/s requested DDTS Team consider skills & capacity for referral & provide feedback including likely timeframe for starting. Where multiple clinicians have capacity, discussion will occur via as to which clinician is the best 'fit' for the referral to provide best option/s to referrer Advise referrer of outcome of initial enquiry Log details of enquiry on client spreadsheet 	Any Team member DDTS Team member Admin Officer Admin Officer DDTS Team Admin Officer Admin Officer
Referral accepted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Send referral form to referrer for completion (if applicable) Once referral form is returned follow up on any essential details missing from form as required (e.g. NDIS plan dates, contact details, funding information) Create client in Splose and add in relevant details from referral information Complete draft service agreement in consultation with clinician/s and send to DDTS director for signature Sign and return form to Admin Officer Send service agreement and consent form (if not already completed) to client/representative and confirm anticipated starting timeframe Update spreadsheet 	Admin Officer Admin Officer Admin Officer Admin Officer (& Clinician) DDTS director Admin Officer Admin Officer
Referral processed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once service agreement and consent form are returned <ul style="list-style-type: none"> attach service agreement and consent forms to Splose send copies of signed service agreement and consent to relevant parties advise clinician that forms have been received complete service booking on NDIS portal (for NDIA managed funds) Create case in Splose If a PACE plan, check provider roles if providing Support Coordination or Behaviour Support Services update spreadsheet Create hardcopy file as needed 	Admin Officer Admin Officer
Wait list	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If support is not commencing immediately ensure estimated starting date is listed on the client spreadsheet Review waiting list on spreadsheet at monthly administration team meeting 	Admin Officer DDTS team



Service delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check referral information and complete 'home visit safety checklist' if risks identified • Book initial visit / meeting with client / representative • Advise relevant representative / support coordinator once initial visit is booked • Review terms of service agreement and any timeframes or deadlines for completion of service with client / representation • Complete Participant Support Plan document (incl. risk assessment & emergency plan) • Provide agreed service/s as per service agreement and relevant NDIS, professional and state legislative guidelines and DDTS contracts • Ensure service delivery is documented in Splose system • Contractors to send invoices as per contract procedures • Process invoices • Provide payment to contractors 	Clinician/s / Admin Officer/ DDTS director
Closure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure outcomes achieved as per service agreement where possible • Provide information to client (relevant representatives) where outcomes are not able to be reached and the reasons why (e.g. funding being ceased early) • Complete client closure checklist (including risk assessment) • Provide client with information on alternate services as needed • Complete closure checklist in Splose • Ensure documentation is up to date in Splose and in paper file where relevant • Provide report for NDIS review where required and possible within timeframes • Advise admin officer of closure and provide paper file to admin officer • Cancel service booking (where required) • Update spreadsheet • Send client feedback questionnaire (where relevant) • File closed - paper file in filing cabinet 	Clinician/s Clinician/s Clinician/s Clinician/s Clinician/s Clinician/s Clinician/s Admin Officer Admin Officer Admin Officer Admin Officer



Privacy and Information Management Policy and Procedure

Privacy and Information Management Policy and Procedure	
Date	18/04/2024
Proposed review date	18/04/2025
Location of information for clients	Website, Client Handbook

As outlined in the 'NDIS Code of Conduct – Guidance for Service Providers' document, DDTS seeks to at all times respect the privacy of people with disability. DDTS acknowledges that privacy is a human right, and our clients have a right to privacy in terms of the collection, use and disclosure of information concerning them and the services they receive.

DDTS aims to uphold the relevant requirements set out in the following legislation:

- [Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988](#)
- [Queensland Information Privacy Act 2009](#)

Based on the '[NDIS Code of Conduct – Guidance for Service Providers](#)' document, DDTS seeks to adhere to the following:

- *Individuals have the right not to have personal information disclosed to others without their informed consent. Personal information is information or an opinion about a person whose identity can be determined from that information or opinion. Examples of personal information include a person's name, address, date of birth and details about their health or disability.*
- *NDIS providers should respect and protect the privacy of everyone that receives supports and services from them or provides those supports and services.*
- *NDIS providers should also ensure that they manage health information about any people they support or about their workers in accordance with privacy laws related to the management of health information.*
- *There are certain circumstances where NDIS providers should disclose information about a person without consent from the person involved. This might include mandatory reporting requirements on child protection matters, and obligations to report incidences of violence, exploitation, neglect and abuse, and sexual misconduct to the NDIS Commission and police.*

In order to achieve these outcomes DDTS:

- Ensures all active clients have a consent form or evidence of consent completed and on their electronic file
- The consent form outlines:
 - o The purpose of the consent
 - o What information may be collected in relation to the person
 - o Why information is collected
 - o The format of information (including media [photos, video, audio])
 - o Disclosure of information where we have a legal obligation
 - o Consent declaration
 - o Time period of consent if applicable
 - o Statement that the consent may be withdrawn at any time

DDTS employees and contractors are to ensure client information is kept securely by:

- storing paper copy information in locked filing cabinets and locked filing cases
- using security protection (e.g. passwords, pin codes) on our computers, phones and other electronic devices

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- disposing of any personal information securely
- using databases that meet Australian privacy standards
- returning closed client files to DDTS administration officer to be secured in a locked filing cabinet

DDTS employees and contractors are to only record, collect and store client information where it relates to the purposes outlined in our consent form:

- administrative purposes (e.g. organising payment for services, contacting you or others to arrange appointments and meetings);
- clinical purposes (e.g. to be able to complete a thorough assessment of your situation, develop intervention strategies, monitor progress towards your goals, collaborate with others involved with your support, report outcomes to funding bodies e.g. NDIA, develop resources such as social stories or visual schedules);
- education/training purposes (e.g. train/educate staff, teachers, carers etc. who will be carrying out interventions with you);
- and legal purposes (e.g. disclosing information to relevant government departments and/or emergency services where we have a legal obligation or duty of care to do so).
- de-identified information may also be used for research purposes by DDTS.

Clients are able to make complaints about how DDTS handles their privacy and/or personal information. Details on how clients can make a complaint are located in our client service agreement document and in the policies section on our [website](#).

DDTS employees and contractors are to ensure records are kept within the timeframes outlined below:

Type of record	Minimum timeframe
Client records – for adults	7 years from the most recent record (i.e. most recent client contact)
Client records – children	Until the client reaches 25 years of age
HR – payroll, employee records	7 years from end of the financial year
Australian Taxation Office records	5 years from the end of accounting period
Accounting financial records	7 years



Prioritisation and Waitlist Management Policy and Procedure (excerpt)

Date	21/02/2023
Proposed review date	21/02/2025

DDTS= Darling Downs Therapy Services

DDTS Team includes employees, director and contractors

Clinician= person working with client in clinical capacity

Policy

Darling Downs Therapy Services aims to provide NDIS participants (who may or may not become clients of DDTS) with timely and accurate information to assist in their decision making around their individual service provision. Where an NDIS participant is offered a service through DDTS we endeavour to provide a fair and timely service delivery response whilst managing the demands of a complex caseload.

We aim to meet this vision by:

- having daily administration support to respond to enquiries
- having multiple avenues by which a potential client can contact our service (phone, email, letter, website)
- providing timely and accurate information about our services and the availability of services (e.g. estimated waiting times for service commencement)
- providing information on the DDTS website about our services and staff skills
- responding to enquiries even if we are unable to assist the participant
- maintaining a spreadsheet to track enquiries and ensure each is responded to

Prioritisation of Enquiries/Referrals

An enquiry checklist/form has been developed to assist our Administration Officer in screening initial enquiries. The aim is to provide a timely response, particularly in situations where DDTS is unable to provide a service, so that the NDIS participants supports are not delayed by waiting on a response from DDTS.

The following factors are taken into account (where relevant) when DDTS considers whether we are best placed to offer the services requested:

- funding source: DDTS are primarily set up to provide NDIS funded services
- whether we are registered through NDIS to provide the service requested
- geographic location: DDTS primarily services the Darling Downs region, however the capacity to service areas more than 45 minutes from our base (Toowoomba) would depend on:
 - availability of funding for travel
 - number of clients in that location
 - whether local services are more appropriate to access
 - clinicians' capacity and caseloads
- timeframes / deadlines for providing the service (e.g. NDIS plan end dates, PBSP due dates)
- age of person being referred: our core client group are older teenagers and adults; however, we also consider support for the 12 to 18-year age group depending on other prioritisation factors listed in this document
- service requested: DDTS provide Occupational Therapy, Psychology, Support Coordination, Developmental Education and Positive Behaviour Support services
- skills and experience required: our primary areas of expertise are intellectual disability and autism-related diagnoses, dual diagnosis (i.e. mental health and intellectual disability, or dementia and intellectual disability). We would consider other areas if we assessed that our skills and experience were transferrable to the client and situation presenting
- capacity of clinicians and best 'fit' between clinician and client. Capacity is determined on an individual clinician basis and includes the principals outlined below in the caseload management section. Best fit between clinician and client is also determined on a case by case basis and may include considerations such as

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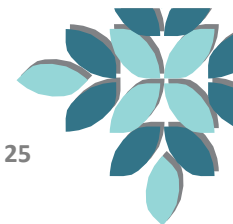


- whether the client has requested a male or female clinician for a valid reason, experiences of the clinician with similar clients/services required, clinician’s prior engagement with the client (rapport already developed) etc.
- if a DDTS service is not able to be offered, *suggestions* of other potential services will be made where appropriate to do so and/or the referrer will be encouraged to seek further options from the NDIS service provider list or to seek support from an LAC planner or support coordinator (if appointed)
- if a DDTS service is able to be offered a referral form is sent to the referrer for completion of further details to assist determining the supports required and in developing a service agreement
- if a DDTS service is able to be offered, services will generally commence on a first come first serve basis unless other factors are present such as:
 - High urgency / risk component (e.g. behavioural risk, safety risk [e.g. equipment, pressure care])
 - Service delivery is short term and can be completed quickly without significantly affecting the waiting time of clients already on the waitlist (e.g. brief assessment and report, one-off visit)

Waiting list management

- if, due to capacity, a referral has been accepted, however is not commencing immediately, the estimated starting date is to be communicated to the client/referrer/representative and this date is to be listed on the client spreadsheet
- if there are identified risks in the client situation (unrelated to the supports DDTS can provide) and a support coordinator is not in place for the person, DDTS will seek to link the person with other appropriate services
- the waiting list spreadsheet is to be reviewed at each monthly team meeting with upcoming start dates for the following month flagged with the respective clinician
- the clinician is then responsible for commencing within that timeframe or, if unable to, for communicating and re-negotiating the starting time with the client/referrer/representative
- clients are able to seek alternate services at any time whilst on the waitlist
- if a person’s support needs change whilst on the waiting list (i.e. risk in situation increases), DDTS will reprioritise the timeframe for commencement as able and/or advise of any alternate supports and services to assist the person

Please refer to the ‘Service Delivery Procedure’ for steps involved in the enquiry, referral and waitlist procedure including person/s responsible for each step/action.



Complaints / Feedback Policy and Procedure

Date	18/09/2024
Proposed review date	18/09/2025

Policy

At Darling Downs Therapy Services (DDTS) our vision is to provide high quality services to empower our clients and their support networks (family, friends, carers) to reach the goals they want to achieve in their day to day life.

We aim to meet this vision by:

- listening to, and working with, our clients and their support networks
- providing support that puts the client at the centre of what we do
- being creative to find a solution that works
- keeping in touch with our clients and following up with what we've agreed to do

DDTS encourages clients (and/or their guardians) to provide feedback, including complaints, to ensure we meet the Vision outlined above.

DDTS is committed to listening to feedback and resolving any issues raised in a fair and efficient manner. DDTS will endeavour to resolve the issue internally where possible and/or refer the complainant on to appropriate external agencies where an issue is not able to be resolved by DDTS.

Procedure

In accordance with the above policy and the National Disability Insurance Scheme (Complaints Management and Resolution) Rules 2018, DDTS employees and contractors will:

- **Listen to the complaint / feedback**
Actively listen to the feedback or issue raised. Acknowledge any distress the issue has caused and ensure the complainant is aware of the steps DDTS will take to resolve any issues.
- **Record details of the complaint / feedback**
Use the complaint / feedback form to record information. Clarify the information provided as required with the complainant. If the complainant is not the client, ensure the client is aware of the complaint and/or the complainant has authority to speak on the client's behalf.
- **Discuss options for resolving any issues**
Ask the complainant what outcome they are seeking. Discuss options for achieving the outcome. Advise if this requires discussion with DDTS director or other parties.
- **Be responsive**
Aim to resolve the complaint quickly. Keep the complainant informed of progress towards an outcome.
- **Escalate the feedback / complaint as needed**
If the complaint is not able to be fully resolved by the person taking the complaint details, advise DDTS director and request assistance. Advise complainant that this will occur. DDTS director will then follow up on the complaint. Should DDTS director be unable to assist or resolve the complaint, DDTS director (or DDTS administration officer or resource officer in director's absence) to provide details of the NDIS complaints process to the complainant
- **Follow up**
Contact the complainant to find out if they were satisfied with how their complaint was handled and the outcome. Finalise and file records of complaint / feedback. DDTS director to review any complaints / feedback annually to identify any patterns and changes required to practice
- **Be Proactive**
DDTS will also seek feedback on our service proactively by providing clients (and/or their nominated support person) with an opportunity to give feedback at key times in our engagement with them (e.g. at end of service delivery, at annual review periods). Feedback forms will be sent via online link (which can be anonymous) or forms can be sent via email or a hardcopy provided. DDTS will review any feedback returned and make any changes to service delivery as needed based on this feedback.

Training

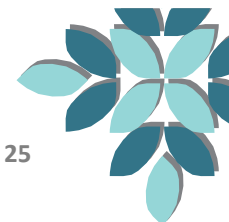
- DDTS director to ensure employees / contractors are provided with information about the complaints / feedback policy and procedure.

Resources

National Disability Insurance Scheme (Complaints Management and Resolution) Rules 2018

<https://www.legislation.gov.au/F2018L00634/latest/text>

Workplace: Darling Downs Therapy Services Pty Ltd	Document Title: Client Handbook	Approval: Tim Connolly (Director)
Issue Date: 19/09/2024	Revision Date: 19/09/2025	



Quality and Continuous Improvement Policy

Date	19/09/2024
Proposed review date	19/09/2025

Policy

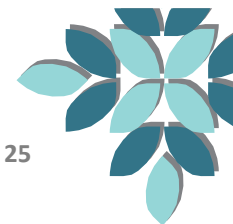
At Darling Downs Therapy Services (DDTS) our vision is to provide high quality, clinical services to empower our clients and their support networks (family, friends, carers) to reach the goals the clients want to achieve in their day to day life.

We aim to meet this Vision by:

- listening to, and working with, our clients and their support networks
- providing support that puts the client at the centre of what we do
- being creative to find a solution that works
- maintaining our clinical skills and expertise
- looking for ways to continue to improve our service delivery to meet client needs
- engaging actively in quality and continuous improvement practices
- ensuring that the review of incidents contribute to quality outcomes

Procedure

- **DDTS employees and contractors will listen to feedback from clients and their representatives**
 - actively listen to the feedback, share feedback with the team as applicable, make changes to individual services or broader service delivery processes as needed in response to client feedback
 - seek feedback on our service delivery throughout our engagement with clients (through regular informal discussion with clients and their representatives)
 - seek feedback at key points in service delivery (e.g. at end of service agreement period or the end of service delivery) via a client satisfaction survey
 - adhere to the DDTS complaints/feedback policy and procedures where this process applies
 - communicate quality improvements arising from review of incidents in a mode that is suitable for each individual client
- **DDTS employees and contractors will actively engage in professional development and supervision activities as relevant to their role including:**
 - attendance and participation at monthly team meetings
 - informal peer supervision
 - formal supervision where required (a supervision contract will be in place for formal supervision arrangements)
 - adherence to supervision and professional development requirements of external agencies (e.g. NDIS commission, AHPRA, Occupational Therapy Australia, Developmental Educators Australia Inc.) and the DDTS Clinical Team Continuing Professional Development and Supervision Policy and Procedure
- **DDTS will actively engage in relevant audit and quality improvement processes**
 - DDTS is committed to active and open engagement with all relevant parties to ensure audit requirements under the NDIS Commission are met
 - DDTS will ensure regular review of its policies and procedures
 - 'Quality' will be a standing agenda item in our administrative team meetings in order to provide regular opportunity to raise and discuss relevant issues relating to continuous improvement in our service delivery



Prevention of Abuse and Neglect Policy and Procedure

Date	22/03/2023
Proposed review date	22/03/2025

Policy

Darling Downs Therapy Services (DDTS) is committed to ensuring our clients are free from abuse and neglect and their human rights are upheld in all circumstances.

We aim to meet this commitment by:

- listening to, and working with, our clients and their support networks
- providing support that puts the client at the centre of what we do
- being committed to ongoing professional development to ensure our services are evidenced-based, best practice
- being aware of NDIS legislation, policies and procedures in relation to incident reporting, and abuse and neglect prevention
- having a client feedback system in place
- having an incident management system in place

Procedure

- DDTS ensures employees and contractors have the necessary qualifications and mandatory checks (e.g. blue card, yellow card, worker screening checks) in place
- DDTS ensures employees and contractors are registered with the required governing bodies (e.g. AHPRA, DEAI)
- DDTS maintains its NDIS registration requirements and DDTS team actively participates in quality and continuous improvement including ongoing professional development, peer and formal supervision arrangements and auditing requirements
- DDTS ensure employees and contractors are aware of, and have access to, the following information as relevant to their role:
 - National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 <https://www.ndis.gov.au/about-us/governance/legislation>
 - Queensland Disability Services Act 2006, and updated regulations <https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-2006-012>
<https://www.dsdsatsip.qld.gov.au/>
 - NDIS incident management system and reportable incidents information <https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/providers/incident-management-and-reportable-incidents#02>
 - NDIS code of conduct <https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/providers/ndis-code-conduct>
 - Human Rights Act QLD 2019: <https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/html/asmade/act-2019-005>
 - NDIS Commission behaviour support requirements <https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/providers/behaviour-support>
 - NDIS practice standards https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/sites/default/files/2022-02/ndis-practice-standards-and-quality-indicatorsfinal1_1.pdf
 - NDS zero tolerance framework <https://www.nds.org.au/zero-tolerance-framework/understanding-abuse>
 - Child protection guide <https://www.dcssds.qld.gov.au/our-work/child-safety/about-child-protection/child-protection-guide>
- Within the first month of commencement, DDTS employees and contractors will complete the New Worker Orientation Module ('Quality, Safety and You'): <https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/workers/training-course>



Client-related Incident Management Policy and Procedure (excerpt)

Incident Management Policy and Procedure	
Date	01/03/2024
Consultation process	Reviewed at team meetings: 17/2/2021, 8/3/2022, 21/2/2023, 01/03/2024
Proposed review date	01/03/2025
Location of this document	Microsoft TEAMS under 'Policies and Procedures'
Location of information for clients	Client handbook (on website)

Policy

Darling Downs Therapy Services (DDTS) is committed to an approach underpinned by the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and to ensuring its obligations under the NDIS Code of Conduct including:

- Providing supports and services in a safe and competent manner, with care and skill
- Promptly taking steps to raise and act on concerns about matters that may impact the quality and safety of supports and services provided for people with a disability
- Taking all reasonable steps to prevent and respond to all forms of violence against, and exploitation, neglect and abuse of, people with a disability
- Taking all reasonable steps to prevent and respond to sexual misconduct

A key aspect of these obligations is to ensure an incident management system is in place that prevents, identifies, responds to, manages and resolves incidents that occur in connection with providing supports and services for people with a disability and mechanisms are in place to report incidents to the relevant authority (e.g. NDIS Commission) in the timeframes required and keep required documentation.

Definitions

An **incident** is defined as:

- Acts, omissions, events or circumstances that occur in connection with providing NDIS supports or services to a person with disability and have, or could have, caused harm to the person with disability
- Acts by a person with disability that occur in connection with providing NDIS supports or services to the person with disability and which have caused serious harm, or a risk of serious harm, to another person. Harm may include physical, emotional or psychological impacts
- Reportable incidents that have or are alleged to have occurred in connection with providing NDIS supports or services to a person with disability

A **reportable incident** is defined as serious incidents or alleged incidents which result in harm to an NDIS participant and occur in connection with NDIS supports and services. Specific types include:

- The death of a person with disability.
- Serious injury of a person with disability.
- Abuse or neglect of a person with disability.
- Unlawful sexual or physical contact with, or assault of, a person with disability (excluding, in the case of unlawful physical assault, contact with, and impact on, the person that is negligible).
- Sexual misconduct committed against, or in the presence of, a person with disability, including grooming of the person for sexual activity.
- The use of a restrictive practice in relation to a person with disability, other than where the use is in accordance with an authorisation (however described) of a State or Territory in relation to the person or a behaviour support plan for the person.

Responsibilities

All employees and contractors are responsible for implementing this procedure and having awareness of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (Incident Management and Reportable Incidents) Rules 2018:

<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2018L00633>

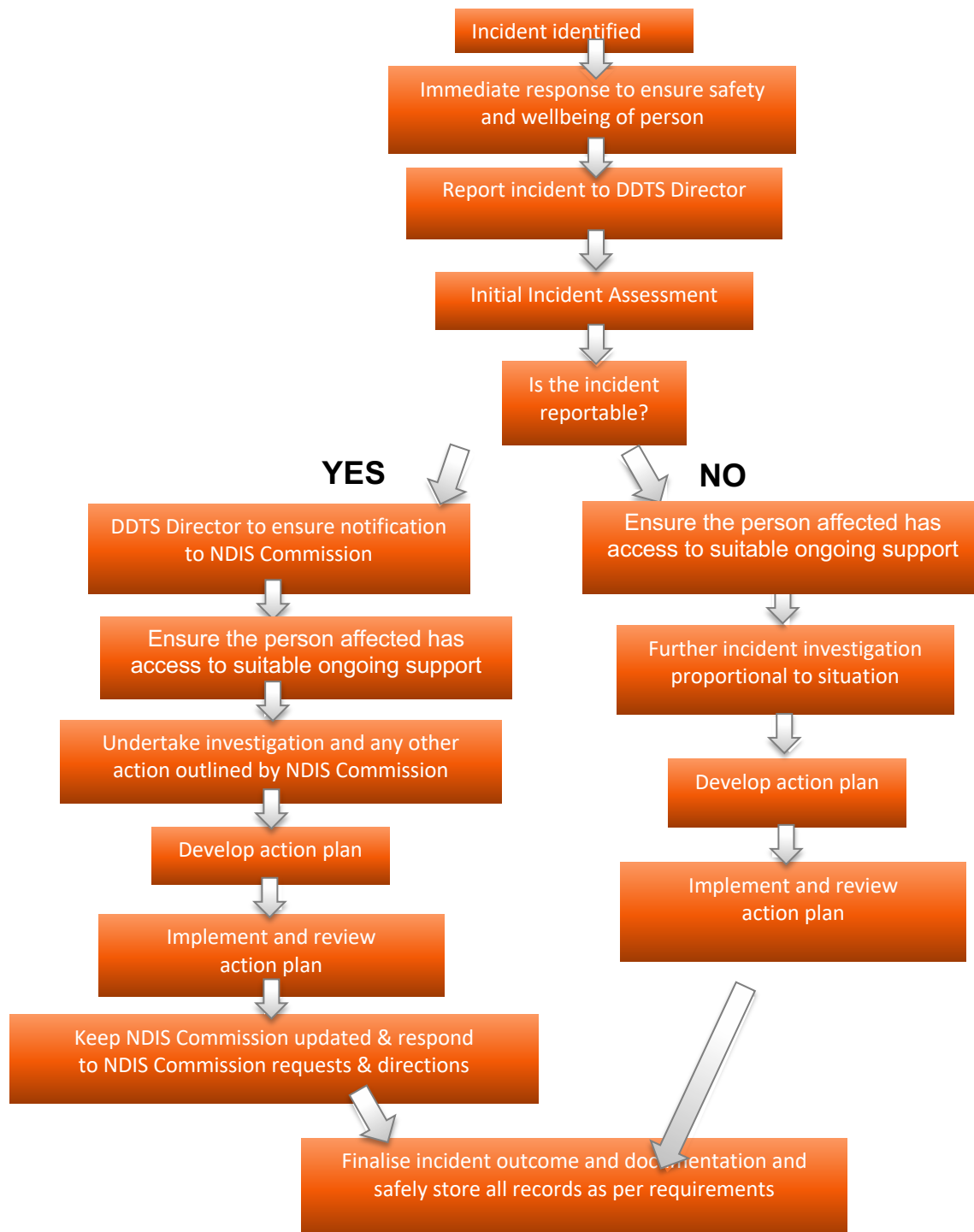
- DDTS Director will ensure DDTS employees and contractors receive training in this policy and procedure via DDTS team meetings and via induction processes (i.e. this Policy included in the DDTS Staff Handbook)

DDTS Director will ensure this policy and procedure are reviewed by the proposed review date

Workplace: Darling Downs Therapy Services Pty Ltd	Document Title: Client Handbook	Approval: Tim Connolly (Director)
Issue Date: 19/09/2024	Revision Date: 19/09/2025	



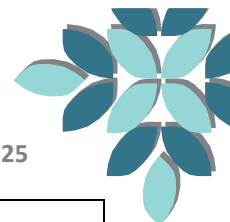
Procedure – Overview (please refer to following table for detailed procedure):



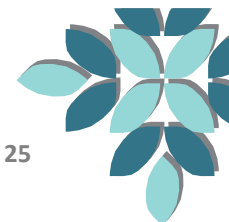


Procedure - Details

Steps	Details including responsible party/parties and any timeframes
Incident identified	DDTS employee or contractor identifies an incident. Incident may be identified by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation of incident or behavioural indicators and physical signs of incidents (see Attachment A) • Disclosure from person with a disability • Report from third party
Immediate response to ensure safety and well-being of person impacted	DDTS employee or contractor to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the impacted person is safe from harm Protect others from harm if required and if safe to do so Contact Police if there is a risk of immediate harm which requires their assistance Contact the ambulance if someone is injured, provide first aid if appropriate Preserve the scene if able to ensure appropriate investigation can occur (if relevant to the incident) Notify person's support person/ guardian/ family member Notify any of the person's service providers (as appropriate to the situation)
Reporting incident within DDTS	DDTS employee or contractor is to verbally notify DDTS director as soon as possible following the incident (once it is safe to do so) If DDTS director is not available DDTS employee or contractor is to contact relevant authorities to report incident (see contacts and timeframes below) DDTS employee or contractor completes DDTS incident form (located in Microsoft TEAMS) and submits to DDTS director as soon as possible but no later than 24 hours after the incident or being made aware of the incident
Initial assessment of incident	DDTS director to assess incident based on report details and further discussion with employee or contractor to determine course of action required (i.e. is it as reportable incident, what further immediate supports need to be put in place etc.) If not already contacted as part of the immediate response required, DDTS director to contact relevant services and/or regulatory authorities as required within the timeframes set out by that authority. Examples may include: NDIS Commission (see details in next box) Office of Public Guardian 1300 653 187 Emergency Services 000 Toowoomba Base Hospital (07) 4616 6000 Toowoomba Child Safety intake: 07 4614 8900; After Hours 1800 177 135
Reportable incidents	If an incident is a reportable incident, DDTS Director to notify the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission via NDIS Commission Portal or via phone 1300 035 544 (if unable to use/access the Portal) For reportable incidents: NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission notified within 24 hours using the 'immediate notification form'; or within 5 days for unauthorised use of a restrictive practice using the '5-day form'
Ensure impacted person has access to suitable support	DDTS Employee or contractor to keep in contact with affected person/s and offer details of relevant support services as required (in consultation with DDTS Director) e.g. advocacy support, counselling options, Lifeline, sexual assault service etc.
Investigation of incident	Proportionate to the harm caused and any risk of future harm, using a person-centred approach, and principles of procedural fairness an investigation into the incident will be undertaken by DDTS Director (or external investigator if required). The incident investigation form (located on Microsoft TEAMS) will be used as a guide for the investigation process and includes factors such as:



	<p>Why the incident occurred Whether the incident could have been prevented How well the incident was managed and resolved Risk management assessments undertaken What, if any, regulatory action or other actions need to be undertaken to prevent further similar incidents from occurring, or to minimise their impact Whether other persons or bodies need to be notified of the incident Details of the assessment and investigation process</p> <p>DDTS Director is to include the person impacted and any relevant others (e.g. guardians, decision makers) as much as they choose to be throughout the investigation process.</p> <p>Case notes are to be taken by the DDTS Director and must record: All interviews conducted as part of the investigation, including with impacted person Any decisions made during and at the conclusion of the investigation</p>
Develop action plan	<p>Based on investigation and proportional to the assessment of the incident an action plan will be developed by the DDTS Director, where it is identified that further actions are required. The Action Plan may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategies to prevent or reduce likelihood of similar incidents in future or their impact Corrective actions (e.g. amendments to policies/procedures, additional employee training or education) Environmental changes Service delivery changes Management of any ongoing risks identified Further supports for the person impacted Actions requested by the person impacted Actions requested by NDIS commission or other authorities
Implement and review action plan	<p>DDTS director will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> oversee implementation of the action plan, including record keeping regarding progress of actions keep relevant regulatory authority (e.g. NDIS Commission) updated and respond to any requests / directions keep impacted person (and any nominated support people) informed of progress
Outcome	<p>DDTS Director will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record final outcome/s of actions from action plan Record whether a copy of any reports or information has been provided to the impacted person or others Inform impacted person (and any of their nominated support people) of the outcome of the incident including information on how to progress the matter or make a complaint if they aren't satisfied with the outcome. Advise relevant regulatory authority (e.g. NDIS Commission) of outcome of incident
Documentation	<p>DDTS Director to ensure information regarding an incident is to be stored securely in DDTS documentation system. Records are to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objective details and observations of the incident (incident report) Documentation of immediate follow up Notification to external parties Copies of Commission documentation (if relevant) Incident register – outline of situation, steps taken, further actions required, responsibility, timeframes and outcomes Records are to be kept for a minimum of seven years



Emergency and Disaster Management Policy and Procedure (excerpt)

Date	01/03/2024
01/03/2025	17/01/2024

Policy

Darling Downs Therapy Services (DDTS) is committed to ensure that the risks to the health, safety and wellbeing of participants that may arise in an emergency or disaster are considered and mitigated. DDTS is committed to the continuity of supports critical to the health, safety and wellbeing of participants during an emergency or disaster.

DDTS seeks to do this by:

- Putting in place measures to ensure continuity of critical supports
- Developing measures to prepare for, and respond to, the emergency or disaster
- Making reasonable adjustments to the participants supports, and adapting to changes required in supports as quickly and effectively as possible in response to the person's needs
- Communicating options and changes to supports to participants (and their support networks where required)

Definitions (from World Health Organisation: <https://apps.who.int/disasters/repo/7656.pdf>)

A disaster is “an occurrence disrupting the normal conditions of existence and causing a level of suffering that exceeds the capacity of adjustment of the affected community”.

An emergency is a “state in which normal procedures are suspended and extra-ordinary measures are taken in order to avert a disaster”.

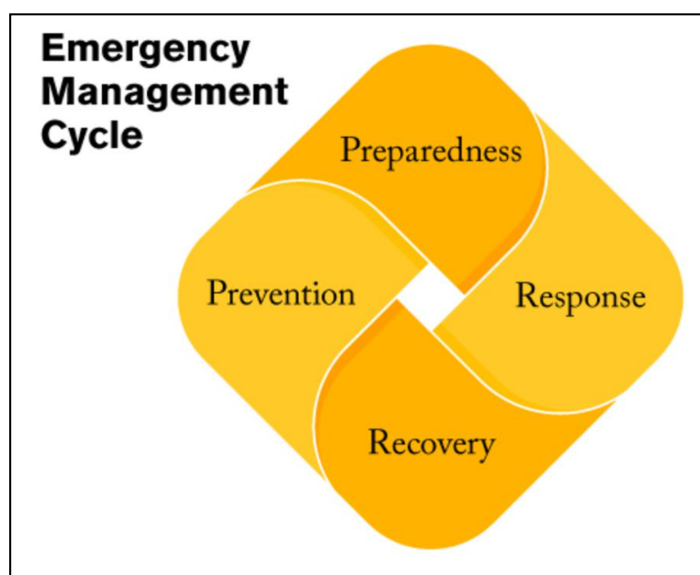
The cause may be natural (e.g. severe storm, flood, epidemic etc.) or human-made (explosion, collision, war etc.).

Procedure

DDTS follow a 4 step process of emergency and disaster management as follows, proportionate to our role within a broader service delivery context (i.e. based on whether we are the primary support for the NDIS participant or an additional support) and government context (i.e. responsibilities of Local, State and Federal government disaster response processes/teams):

1. Mitigation / Prevention
2. Preparedness
3. Response
4. Recovery

Source: <https://resilience.acoss.org.au/the-six-steps/leading-resilience/emergency-management-prevention-preparedness-response-recovery>





Procedure Details

Please note: “DDTS employee” refers to employees, Director DDTS and contractors of DDTS; “client” refers to NDIS participant; “support networks” may include a client’s family, friends, informal and formal services, medical and/or allied health team etc.

Steps	Details including responsible party / parties and any relevant timeframes
Mitigation / Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk Management procedure to be in place and enacted as appropriate to the client situation and level of DDTS involvement with client (see separate risk management procedure and tool), to reduce and/or eliminate the likelihood of an emergency/disaster at the individual level and to mitigate any impacts of a broader emergency/disaster on the individual as much as possible (ongoing) DDTS employees ensure duty of care towards clients and minimise risk by following DDTS and NDIS procedures (ongoing) DDTS employees to follow, and support clients to follow, any preventative strategies outlined by relevant agencies to prevent a disaster/emergency situation both at individual and community level. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adhering to recommended government advice (e.g. COVID-19 health directives) Ensuring DDTS employees receive any necessary training (e.g. complete infection control training via NDIS resource) Develop any specific plans required to prevent emergency/disasters (e.g. COVID-19 management plan on DDTS website) Ensure information is provided to clients as relevant to DDTS involvement and responsibility (e.g. providing information on vaccination options to clients where there is no primary service provider or support network in place) Staff and contractors are trained in infection control and where required, will assist clients and their supports to follow waste management procedures as set out in the DDTS Safety Management Manual
Preparedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All client contact details are up to date in Splose information database and accessible to relevant DDTS employees. (ongoing) Clients likely to require assistance from DDTS (i.e. where there is no primary service provider) to access immediate services (e.g. organisation of essential items such as food delivery) to be flagged in the client spreadsheet and contacted by most appropriate DDTS team member to determine supports required. (as soon as possible after emergency declared). Ensure DDTS employee contact details (work and personal ‘emergency’ contact details) are up to date in HR files and registers. (at employee commencement and reviewed annually) Include in new Service Agreements a statement relating to continuity of supports in the event of an emergency or disaster and reference to this policy for clients to access. (ongoing). DDTS employees have access to resources that will enable continuity of communication and supports with clients as needed in an emergency or disaster situation (e.g. Tele-health, Zoom, Microsoft TEAMS, phone calls etc.), where appropriate to the clients’ requirements and preferences. (ongoing) Relevant client plans are updated within stated timeframes to ensure strategies for support are as current as possible (e.g. service agreements, positive behaviour support plans etc.). (ongoing) Client clinical notes are as up to date as possible in Splose to support continuity of input to clients should a staff member be unavailable due to emergency / disaster and supports be re-allocated to another employee or service on a temporary or permanent basis. (ongoing) DDTS employees to be trained in this procedure (via induction processes and/or team meetings) and kept up to date with other relevant emergency and disaster management information e.g. latest COVID-19 updates (via team meetings: Workplace Health and Safety and NDIS updates as standard agenda items). (ongoing at monthly team meetings) DDTS employees have access to relevant information/resources relating to emergency and disaster management (via links and information below in this policy). (as needed)



Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure timely communication with clients and support networks to determine support required from DDTS including direct contact with individuals, information on DDTS social media and website. (as soon as possible after event). • Offer alternative DDTS service delivery as appropriate to situation to ensure continuity of DDTS services (e.g. video appointments, phone appointments, consultation to support networks assisting client). (as soon as possible after event). • If DDTS support is compromised due to a DDTS employee being impacted by the emergency or disaster, DDTS director and/or other nominated employee to contact the impacted DDTS employee's clients/support networks to advise and offer alternative support where available (e.g. temporary support/consultation) from alternative DDTS employee or linking to another appropriate service provider. (as soon as possible after event).
Response (cont.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer services as relevant to DDTS involvement and scope to support the client and their support networks through the emergency / disaster such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Linking in with relevant government and community disaster management agencies - Support primary service provider as required to develop resources to assist client's with understanding and communication around the situation (e.g. information story, visual resources) - Consultation around strategies already in place client's plans (e.g. PBSP strategies, communication strategies) (as soon as possible after event). • DDTS employees to follow all directions by government disaster and emergency management teams and other relevant authorities (e.g. emergency services, Health department). (in timeframes directed).
Recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to maintain communication with clients and their support networks. Follow up with clients/support networks to determine any ongoing changes to the support required from DDTS and whether referral to other services may be needed to support the client's ongoing wellbeing following the emergency/ disaster. Update client's support plans as required to include additional assistance required from DDTS or via referral to other appropriate services. (as soon as possible after event and ongoing). • Offer services as relevant to DDTS involvement and scope to support the client and their support networks following the emergency/disaster including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Linking in with relevant government and community disaster management agencies - Support to develop resources to assist client's with understanding and communication around the situation as required (e.g. information story, visual resources) - Providing or linking to counselling as relevant - Consultation around strategies already in place client's plans (e.g. PBSP, communication strategies) - Reviewing / requesting feedback from client/support networks on DDTS' response to the situation as relevant and with respect to the client's preferences for this contact. (as soon as possible after event).

Review and Testing of procedure

This policy and procedure is to be reviewed at least annually, or sooner following an emergency or disaster event to determine effectiveness of the policy and any changes required. This policy and procedure should also be reviewed in line with any new/updated directives from NDIS, or other government bodies (e.g. Health Department) that outline additional requirements in relation to managing a disaster or emergency.

Links and Resources

This policy and procedure links to the other DDTS policy, procedures and tools:

- Incident Management Policy and Procedures
- Risk Management Policy and Risk Management Tool

Resources for clients and support networks:

- https://collaborating4inclusion.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/2020-08-19-Person-Centred-Emergency-Preparedness-P-CEP-WORKBOOK_FORM_FINAL.pdf



Government resources:

- Queensland State Disaster Management Plan
- <https://www.disaster.qld.gov.au/plans>
- Australian Disaster Preparedness Framework:
<https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/emergency/files/australian-disaster-preparedness-framework.pdf>

Important Contacts:

- State Emergency Service (SES, Queensland): 132 500
- Toowoomba Regional Council emergency number: 131 872
- Emergency Services (Police, Ambulance, Fire): 000
- RACQ road conditions: 1300 130 595