



GOV - Cultural Diversity Policy

POLICY

Headway Gippsland is committed to:

- ensuring a supportive workplace that respects and values diversity of customs, cultures and beliefs
- ensuring that its services are delivered in a manner that respects and values the customs, cultures and beliefs of its clients
- preventing harassment or discrimination of any kind
- we are committed to maximising access to the organisation's services for everyone within the agreed target client group and to ensuring equity of access across eligible service users

DEFINITIONS

Cultural diversity and cultural inclusion refers to creating and maintaining a workplace and culture that is respectful of all people. In particular this applies to:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- People from non-English speaking backgrounds
- People from diverse racial, religious or cultural backgrounds
- People with a disability
- Gay, Lesbian, Transgender/gender diverse, Bisexual or Intersex people

PROCEDURE

Headway Gippsland has developed a cultural diversity strategy that ensures that:

- diversity and cultural inclusion is incorporated in the organisation's orientation (for both staff and members of the (Board/Management Committee).
- active consultation involving people from diverse cultural and linguistic and backgrounds in identifying and prioritising needs and in planning service
- changes to local cultural and linguistic demographics are reviewed in planning for future services
- access policies and procedures are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure there are no barriers to people from cultural or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- harassment or discrimination are not tolerated and that appropriate internal organisation and/or legal protocols, are followed to prevent or address harassment or discrimination
- flexible approaches are adopted in response to clients that recognises and meet cultural and linguistic needs



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Headway Gippsland will ensure that its staff will:

- demonstrate respect for cultural or religious customs and health practices including beliefs and taboos
- arrange for interpreters (including sign language interpreters) in circumstances where clients are unable to communicate easily in English
- when conducting an assessment for clients from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds or Indigenous communities they should be conducted in a manner that is culturally appropriate and respectful. This may also include using accredited interpreters where required, or involvement of a larger group of extended family members identified by the client
- actively seek information from clients or where appropriate their family/carer about their customs, culture and beliefs where it may affect the provision of service. (e.g. culturally appropriate diet preferences, or religious rituals or the need for staff to be of the same gender as the client)
- attempt to meet specific requests from clients, where possible, to demonstrate respect for the client (e.g., assistance in religious practices or help with establishing social networks)
- ensure where possible and if appropriate, that clients have access to staff (within the organisation and external services) from similar cultural or linguistic backgrounds

Ensuring physical and cultural access

Headway Gippsland will ensure the following

- Its premises are close to public transport
- Its premises and facilities are physically accessible to people with limited mobility or disability
- Its opening hours provide access to the full range of service users
- Services are provided in as flexible manner as possible to meet the needs of individuals
- Clients' areas are kept clean, comfortable and welcoming
- The cultural and language needs of people within the target group/s are identified and accommodated



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ON CALL INTERPRETING AND TRANSLATORS' AGENCY

Services are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Where possible, please book all language services, including telephone interpreting, ahead of time and arrange these services within normal business hours. It is understood that this is not always possible and ONCALL is contracted to provide out-of-hours services.

If you need an immediate, urgent service, please consider whether a telephone interpreter will meet your needs.

Three types of language services are available:

- Telephone interpreting
- On-site interpreting (both spoken and sign languages)
- Video Conference Interpreting

Tips for using an interpreter

- Speak in the first person (say "How do you feel?" rather than "ask her how she feels")
- Do not have private conversations with the interpreter in the person's presence - do this before they arrive or after they leave.
- Pause often to allow the interpreter to speak
- Keep the amount to be interpreted short.
- Choose your words carefully and use an appropriate tone of voice.
- Sit facing the person.
- Be aware of your body language and use plenty of non-verbal reassurance; smiles and other gestures of encouragement.
- Speak in a natural tone of voice - it is a language problem you are dealing with, not a hearing difficulty.
- If the consultation is going to be a long one (we recommend no more than an hour), make sure you give the interpreter a few minutes break on the half-hour.
- Clearly indicate the end of the session to the interpreter.