

## Diversity and Cultural Inclusion

Connect: Inner West Community Transport Group Inc (Connect) understands and values the unique identities, cultures, abilities, diversity, beliefs and life experiences of its clients.

Connect 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 and staff; and
- Preventing harassment or discrimination of any kind.

### Record of policy development

Version	Date approved	Date for review
1	3 October 2025	2 October 2028

### Responsibilities and delegations

This policy applies to	Directors and staff
Specific responsibilities	General Manager
Policy approval	Board

### Policy context – this policy relates to:

Standards	
Legislation	Aged Care Act 2024
Contractual obligations	
Organisation policies	
Forms, record keeping, other documents	

## 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; and
- People of varying age demographics and generations.

## Procedures

Connect will strive to be a culturally competent and safe organisation for people of all cultural backgrounds, including by:

- Maintaining an awareness of the different cultures and backgrounds within the organisation, and the similarities and differences between these cultures;
- Appreciating and valuing each person's cultural diversity for the strengths they bring to the organisation;
- Ensuring everyone involved in the organisation feels that their cultural background and needs are understood and respected;
- Maintaining flexibility and adaptability to best respond to the diverse cultural needs within the organisation;
- Identifying each client's individual background, culture, diversity, beliefs and life experiences as part of assessment and planning, and use this information to deliver services that are culturally safe, trauma aware and healing informed;
- Implementing a system to recognise, prevent and respond to any form of discrimination such as violence, abuse, racism, neglect and exploitation; and
- Continuously improving its approach to inclusion and diversity.

Connect has developed a cultural diversity strategy to ensure that:

- Cultural competence and the promotion and appreciation of diversity are set out in organisational documents (e.g. vision, values, strategic plan);
- Diversity and cultural inclusion is incorporated in the organisation's orientation (for both staff and members of the Board);
- Staff, including senior staff and management, will receive training and education in cultural competency and safety, and how to incorporate these into organisational values, practices, policies and service delivery;
- It will encourage the active recruitment of staff from diverse backgrounds or staff who have previous experience in service delivery to people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds;
- Hiring practices and procedures work to mitigate any potential bias to ensure candidates are not disadvantaged by cultural perceptions;
- Information on the services and programs is available in forms which reflect the demographics of the target service areas, such as:
  - languages other than English;
  - easy read formats; and
  - disability-accessible (e.g. in audio form or with larger font sizing for visually impaired clients);
- It undertakes regular, active consultation involving people from diverse cultural and linguistic and backgrounds, to assist in identifying and prioritising needs and in planning service;
- Feedback and data collection from consumers and staff are reviewed and used in continuous quality improvement in service planning;
- Changes to local cultural and linguistic demographics are reviewed in planning for future services;
- Access, feedback and complaint 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; and
- Flexible approaches are adopted in response to clients, that recognise and meet individual cultural and linguistic needs.

Connect promises to engage with clients in a way that supports them to feel safe, welcomed, included and understood. Connect therefore ensures that its staff will:

- Demonstrate respect for cultural or religious customs and health practices;
- Reflect on their personal cultural identity and potential biases on an ongoing basis to determine any potential improvements at an individual level;
- Arrange for accredited interpreters (including sign language interpreters) in circumstances where clients are unable to communicate easily in English. Connect will endeavour to avoid using friends, family or translation applications for interpreting purposes unless absolutely necessary (e.g. an emergency);
- Conduct assessments for clients from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds or Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander communities in a manner that is culturally appropriate and respectful. This may also include involving a larger group of extended family, friends or community members identified by the client to assist in providing a culturally safe environment, or providing relevant details (e.g. health history where the client cannot provide this information themselves);
- 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, 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); and
- Ensure where possible and if appropriate, that clients have access to staff (within the organisation and external services) from similar cultural or linguistic backgrounds.

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