

**Advocacy, Support Coordination and Plan Management  
- Conflict of Interest Management Statement**

Regional Disability Advocacy Service Ltd (RDAS) is a non-government, not-for-profit registered charity that provides free and independent advocacy assistance to people with disability.

RDAS also operates a Support Coordination and Plan Management business that operates under the name of Plan & Connect. Plan & Connect is not a separate registered business, merely a trading arm of RDAS, however it is important to note that it is managed separately.

RDAS, including Plan & Connect, will always act in the best interests of clients and participants that engage with our service to ensure that their right to choice and control is maximised at all times.

Where a representative of RDAS becomes aware that a client or participant is engaging with more than one service provision at any time (advocacy/ support coordination or plan management), clients and participants will be informed of their rights and the overarching relationship of the trading entities.

RDAS acknowledges and actively works to reduce the risk of conflict of interest issues arising from the provision of Advocacy, Support Coordination and Plan Management services.

**Managing Conflicts of Interest in Advocacy Services, Plan Management and Support Coordination**

RDAS is committed to the delivery of services to people with disability that is free of actual, potential and/or perceived conflicts of interest. The organisation does not believe that a client's/ participant's independence is compromised by the delivery of non-advocacy services to our business portfolio.

RDAS will maintain its independence by:

- Refraining from the delivery of direct personal services to people with disability
- Refraining from entering into agreements or partnerships with other organisations that may prevent the organisation from advocating effectively for people with disability
- Supporting only one person involved in an advocacy issue
- Ensuring board directors act independently of the Executive Officer or other management
- Ensuring that Directors, staff and volunteers act independently of their association with other organisations, including commercial dealings that may influence their decision-making and advising of any conflicts of interests
- Being transparent to clients and participants about the various services delivered by RDAS

Where an Advocacy issue is presented to an Advocate concerning an employee or service provided by Plan & Connect, the Advocate will inform the client of the relationship that exists between both organisations and confirm that if willing to continue with the support of the RDAS Advocate, the client would be supported as if that business arm was any other external agency.

After advising clients of the above, Advocates must provide the client with the option to have their issue:

- supported by an RDAS Advocate in another office location if that is their preference; or
- supported by another advocacy organisation, in which case RDAS will provide a referral or direct contact details to client.

**Referrals between Advocacy & Plan & Connect staff**

Plan & Connect staff are encouraged to refer participants and their carers/ families to the advocacy team where issues are identified that could be best supported by RDAS Advocates.

Advocates are also permitted to refer clients to Plan & Connect but must (a) confirm the relationship they have with Plan & Connect; and (b) ensure that alternative options are provided at the same time.

As the NDIS has been built upon the premise of an individual maintaining full choice and control over those that provide services to them under their plan, clients of Advocates will be informed that they have full choice and control over who they use for support coordination, plan management and service delivery if funding for such is in their plan.

**Separation of service delivery teams**

In order to avoid risk of (or actual) conflict of interest, RDAS will where possible, maintain a separation between the staff of Advocacy, Support Coordination and Plan Management employees.

Where it is not possible to physically separate teams between offices, RDAS will ensure staff are aware of the separation of their roles.

Records relating to Advocacy clients issues or services provided to a Plan & Connect participant has sought or received will not be shared between the teams and both teams will use separate client management systems.

**Documenting and reporting**

RDAS employees are responsible for accurately documenting and reporting any actual or perceived conflicts of interest as per company policy.

Responsibilities and delegations	
This statement applies to	All employees, volunteers and board members of Regional Disability Advocacy Service Ltd
Statement context – this statement relates to:	
Standards	National Standards for Disability Services (NSDS) and NDIS Practice Standards
Related organisation policies or documents	Conflict of Interest (Service Management Manual) Code of Conduct