

Document Name: AHC Group Access & Equity (CALD & ATSI) Policy	
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**Purpose and Scope:**

The purpose of this document is to ensure all employees, consumers and customers are aware of the importance Australian Home Care Services (AHC) places on our Cultural and Linguistic Diverse and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

AHC Access and Equity policy is drawn up on the model of the Federal Government's 'Charter of Public Service in a Culturally Diverse Society'. The Charter is the key document guiding the Australian Government's Access and Equity strategy. It also helps to ensure that government programs delivered by not-for-profit organisations, such as AHC, meet the needs of our culturally and linguistically diverse society and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population.

The Charter integrates a set of service delivery principles concerning cultural diversity and Indigenous Australians into the strategic planning, policy development, budget, and reporting processes of service delivery, irrespective of whether these services are provided by government agencies, community organisations or commercial enterprises.

**Policy:**

AHC recognises the special needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and those from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds and is committed to providing fair and equitable access to appropriate services. We recognise the value that diversity provides and actively incorporate these factors in the design and delivery of our services.

AHC acknowledges that its legal and moral responsibilities cover the areas of:

- Access in the provision of services offered
- Access in employment
- Access in provision of information offered
- Access to any training and development offered
- Access to events hosted

All AHC staff shall wherever feasible have adequate support and training to provide services and information accessible to all people.

AHC will ensure its programs are designed and constructed to provide equal access for all users.

In its role as an employer, AHC will ensure that all people have equal access to advertised positions, interviews, equipment, office accommodation, staff training and promotion.

AHC shall wherever feasible assess proposals for any new or substantially revised policies or programs for their direct impact on the lives of the people from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds and the Indigenous community prior to any decision to pursue such proposals. Any new or substantially revised policies or programs that impact in different ways on the lives of people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds or the Indigenous community shall wherever

feasible be developed by AHC in consultation with people from those backgrounds/communities. AHC will also have a communication strategy developed and sufficiently resourced to inform people from relevant cultural and linguistic backgrounds and the Indigenous community of these changes.

AHC shall provide resources that are publicly available and accessible on its policies and programs and where necessary communicated appropriately to people from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds and Indigenous people, and especially to those identified as having a high level of non-compliance.

AHC shall institute complaints mechanisms that enable people (regardless of cultural and linguistic backgrounds) to address issues and raise concerns about our performance.

AHC shall require that any agents, contractors or partners of AHC deliver outcomes consistent with this policy, and shall in bidding for tenders or contracts budget where appropriate for special provision for linguistic and cultural diversity and the Indigenous population.

The principles underlying the Charter, which have been taken into account in the formation of this Policy are that as a service provider, AHC will ensure:

**Access** – services will be available to everyone who is entitled to them, free of any form of discrimination on the basis of a person’s country of birth, language, culture, race or religion.

**Equity** – services will be developed and delivered on the basis of fair treatment of all those clients who are eligible to receive them.

**Communication** –all necessary strategies will be employed to inform eligible clients of the services available, their entitlements, and how they can obtain them. AHC is also committed to consulting with our clients regularly about the adequacy, design and standard of our services.

**Responsiveness** – sensitivity to the needs and requirements of clients from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, and responsiveness as far as practicable to the particular circumstances of individuals.

**Efficiency** and **Effectiveness** – focus will be placed on meeting the needs of clients from all backgrounds.

**Accountability** – a reporting mechanism will be in place which ensures we are accountable for implementing access and equity objectives for our clients.

**Related Documents:**

- AHC HACC Annual Cultural Action Plan
- AHC Contract of Employment
- AHC Employee Induction Manual
- AHC Policies and Procedures
- Commonwealth Charter of Public Services in a Culturally Diverse Society 1998
- Equal Employment Opportunity Legislation

**Revision History:**
