

PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES FOR HOME CARE WORKERS



What are professional boundaries?

Professional boundaries are the clear, ethical limits that define the relationship between a home care worker and a participant. They ensure that the relationship remains professional, respectful, and focused on the participants needs—not personal needs or emotional involvement.



Communication

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| ✓ Use professional language | ✗ Share personal contact information |
| ✓ Communicate via approved channels | ✗ Chat casually outside work hours |
| ✓ Redirect personal questions | ✗ Discuss your personal life |
| ✓ Respond only during work hours | ✗ Keep secrets from your team |



Gifts and Favours

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| ✓ Politely decline gifts & explain boundaries | ✗ Attend social events outside hours |
| ✓ Document inappropriate offers | ✗ Act as a counsellor |



Personal Relationships

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| ✓ Stay professional | ✗ Make decisions for the participants |
| ✓ Reaffirm your role | ✗ Give legal/financial advice |
| ✓ Report emotional or romantic advances | ✗ Ignore red flags |



RED FLAGS



Blurred Professional Lines - Participants thinking of staff as friends



Breaches of Confidentiality - Discussing participant information with people who don't need to know



Dependency Issues - Participant becomes reliant on one particular worker and refuses other staff



Overly attached - Only wanting to work with specific participants



Role Confusion - Acting as a counsellor, legal advisor, or family member, rather than a home care worker



CHOICE AND CONTROL

What is Choice and Control?

Choice and Control is a core principle of NDIS. It means that participants have the right to make their own decisions about their daily living activities. Specifically:

- Make decisions about their own lives
- What supports and services they receive
- Who provides those supports
- When, where, and how supports are delivered
- Set their own goals and decide how to pursue

Choice and Control means offering options and letting participants decide.

When a Participant doesn't want to Engage:

- Respect their decision to refuse
- Gently explore reason of refusal
- Always offer alternative activities
- Avoid showing frustration or disappointment
- Watch for patterns in disengagement and document

Additional Guidance

- Communicate with your team and document appropriately
- Do not make decisions for the participant
- Consider the environments impact on the participant
- Duty of Care vs Autonomy - Keep safe and respect their choices

RED FLAGS

-  Lack of knowledge regarding participant rights
-  Being task focused not person centered
-  Ignoring sudden changes in behaviour or poor engagement without reporting
-  Not being proactive about giving participants multiple choices for their daily activities