

Eligibility Policy

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1. Aim

The aim of this policy is to outline the eligibility criteria that clients must meet in order to access Helping Minds services. Helping Minds is not a crisis service and is not equipped to provide emergency services. Helping Minds is committed to providing high quality care which aligns with our contractual requirements, policies and procedures.

2. Risk

The risk of non-compliance with this policy is Helping Minds services and resources are allocated to clients who do not meet the eligibility criteria. This may result in client complaints where expectations for service needs are not met. In the instance where we accept referrals outside of scope, this can lead to further deterioration of the client, where more acute support services should be present. Criteria is often stipulated by our funding bodies and lack of adherence could lead to contractual breach and potential loss of funding. Funding criteria is also subject to change, and as such, would require a revision of this policy.

Helping Minds reserves the right at all times to accept or decline services. In the instance where services are not allocated, we will endeavour to provide warm referral pathways to a suitable service provider where consent has been provided.

3. Definitions

Client: The term 'client' is inclusive of consumers, carers, students and participants.

Person:

- Has not yet engaged with Helping Minds in any way.
- A returning client wishing to re-engage with Helping Minds services.
- Is engaging in a new service they have not yet taken part in that has different eligibility criteria.

Team member: The term 'team member' is inclusive of students on placement, volunteers, and includes team members that are permanent, full-time, part-time, contractor or casual.

4. Principles

4.1.1. To access Helping Minds services, the client must meet the following criteria:

- Reside in Western Australia.
- Meet eligibility criteria for services.
- Be an Australian permanent resident or citizen (NDIS only)

- 4.1.2. Each service within Helping Minds has its own eligibility criteria which is subject to change in line with contractual requirements. Please refer to Schedule 1 for current criteria. These criteria must be strictly adhered to.

5. Prioritisation of Clients

- 5.1.1. Helping Minds understands that certain clients have different levels of need for service at different times and reserves the right to prioritise clients. Helping Minds is not a crisis service and does not have the resources to provide acute mental health support. In the case where client deterioration occurs, the client is no longer eligible, or the service is no longer offered, we will work with the person to provide a warm referral to appropriate support services.
- 5.1.2. Prioritisation of clients will depend on the service. See below for guidance:

5.2. Family and Carer Support and Statewide Mental Health Carer Advocacy

- Carers living in catchment areas with limited to no services;
- Carers whose loved one has recently been hospitalised, or experienced suicide ideation and/or self-harm;
- The person they are caring for has complex needs – for example, there is more than one issue/diagnosis present;
- The carer is caring for more than 1 person living with mental health challenges;
- Are homeless or at risk of homelessness;
- Are from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background; and
- Are from a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse background.

5.3. Family Mental Health Support Service

- Young people who have recently disengaged from school;
- Young people who have a parent living with mental health challenges;
- Are homeless or at risk of homelessness;
- Are from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background; and
- Are from a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse background.

5.4. Individualised Services

- Have a longstanding mental illness resulting in impairment;
- Their impairment/s results in substantially reduced functional capacity to undertake, or psychosocial functioning in undertaking, one or more of the following activities: communication, social interaction, learning, mobility, self-care, self-management;

- The impairment/s affect the person's capacity for social or economic participation;
- Are from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background; and
- Are from a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse background.

5.5. Ineligible Referrals

- 5.5.1. All referrals are for consideration only until the appropriate Intake and Assessment process is completed to determine eligibility. Each person will be assessed on a case-by-case basis by a trained team member, who will advise on service acceptance based on the person meeting eligibility criteria. Eligibility may be advised by the team member at the time of assessment.
- 5.5.2. All referrals are appropriately assessed against the eligibility policy and relevant risk assessments. Referrals where eligibility is unclear or identified as being a potential risk, the team member will submit client information to the case review team to discuss and consider at the next case review meeting.
- 5.5.3. If a referral has being deemed ineligible at case review, it is the responsibility of the team member or the delegate who completed the assessment to advise the client within 5 business days and ensure that relevant alerts and notes are up to date on the client's Zen profile. If a decision is unable to be reached at Case Review, this is then escalated to the Service Delivery Executive for review.
- 5.5.4. Where a referral has been deemed ineligible due to high risk to a team member or others, this should be escalated to the relevant service delivery Executive should still be notified to ensure that the appropriate action has been undertaken.
- 5.5.5. Helping Minds reserves the right to decline a referral if a disclosure of criminal history is deemed high risk to Helping Minds team members or clients. Disclosures should be taken to Case Review for review in the first instance.
- 5.5.6. Helping Minds may request a medical safety plan after a medical history disclosure. Where a medical safety plan cannot be provided, services may be declined to ensure safety for the person disclosing, other clients and Helping Minds team members.
- 5.5.7. People who contact the service with suicide ideation should be supported utilising Helping Minds escalation pathways. A risk assessment, Safety Plan and crisis numbers should be provided. These clients are ineligible for Child, Youth and Family Service programs.

Common ineligible referrals	Self-Referral	External Referral
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Needs are too acute for Helping Minds service, including suicide ideation in the last 3 months without treatment. Needs do not align with the intent of Helping Minds services. Seeking psychological counselling or therapy for managing their own mental health issues, including diagnosed mental health challenges. Lives outside of funded geographical areas. Nearing end of life or caring for someone nearing end of life and requires specialised support which may be more suitability provided by a relevant palliative care organisation. Person is already engaged in other counselling services. Significant medical condition has been determined via case review or Executive to be too high risk, particularly if accessing an overnight retreat without appropriate management plan in place. Substantive criminal history or pending charges or current proceedings through court has been determined via case review or Executive to be too high risk to team members or other attendees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In circumstances where a person who has self-referred is deemed ineligible, the team member is responsible for assisting the person to identify appropriate services. With the consent of the person, the team member can complete a warm referral on their behalf to the appropriate service. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a referral is deemed ineligible for Helping Minds services, the team member will notify the referrer with a rationale for the decision, and a note is to be entered into the database detailing this rationale.

6. Helping Minds Services Eligibility Criteria

Service	Eligibility Criteria
Carer Support Services: Potential client must be supporting a friend or family member who has a mental health issue.	
Family and Carer Support, Mental Health Carer Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must reside in Western Australia. • Aged 7+ • Has not self-harmed requiring medical treatment or experienced suicidal ideation within the last 3 months. • Referral reasons are for carer related stressors. • Where relevant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Parent/Guardian participates in Intake and Assessment process. ○ Young person gives consent to engage in the program. ○ Parent/Guardian signed consent unless client meets eligibility to be assessed as a Mature Minor.
MHC Carer Respite	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client must reside in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Perth Metro ○ Be a mental health carer, over the age of 18 years of age.
Mental Health Support Services	
Family Mental Health Support Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aged between 0 – 18 for general advocacy support. • Client must be aged 7+ to receive counselling services • Client should have a residential address in the following catchment areas.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Perth Metro: City of Swan ○ Regional: Midwest (Geraldton), Kimberley (Broome,), Gascoyne (Carnarvon) • Has not self-harmed requiring medical treatment or experienced suicidal ideation within the past 3 months. • The issues the young person is experiencing is early intervention • Young person does not have a diagnosed mental illness. • Young person cannot be under the care of the state. • Parent/Guardian must be willing to refer and support the young person through this program, and participate in the Intake, Assessment and Consent process. • Young person consents to participating in the service.
Health Promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client/s should have a residential address in Western Australia • Client completes Helping Minds registration and consent process.
National Psychosocial Support Measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client has a severe mental illness requiring psychosocial supports. • Client must reside in the PHN South Metro. • Clients who are not more appropriately supported through the NDIS (i.e. who have received an 'Access Not Met' Decision from the NDIA, or do not meet age or residency requirements).
NDIS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must have an existing NDIS Plan. • Ages 7 – 65 when first entering NDIS. • Client has a permanent and significant mental health issue which impacts daily functioning. • Must be an Australia citizen, hold a permanent visa or protected special category visa. • Live in Australia where the NDIS is available.

7. Compliance and Evaluation

7.1.1. Adherence to this policy and its guidelines will be monitored at a number of levels:

- Referrals which potentially do not meet eligibility criteria are taken to the Helping Minds Case Review Meeting, These include:
 - Mature Minor requests.
 - People with complex issues, which may require more acute support services.
 - People experiencing suicide ideation and or self-harm.
 - For Youth Services, Parent/Guardian who wish to proceed without the second Parent/Guardians consent.
 - Medical or Criminal History Disclosure
- In circumstances where a decision cannot be met, overall approval for acceptance of referrals sits with the Service Delivery Executive.
- In the instance where a person does not meet the eligibility criteria, the team member must contact the person to support warm referral processes into the most appropriate service.
- When contracts with funding bodies are awarded/renewed or updated, the above eligibility criteria may need to be updated accordingly and service delivery team members notified.
- All team members are responsible for ensuring they are adhering to the Eligibility Policy.
- All team members are responsible for ensuring accurate client records are kept and stored, and the data collected is true and correct in relation to the population for which the funding is required to be used for.
- Team members can provide feedback on areas that sit outside of scope for additional funding opportunities to the relevant Service Delivery Executive.
- In situations where client deterioration presents during service, team members should follow internal escalation pathways. For non-urgent queries, team members are encouraged to discuss potential ineligible referrals through Case Review meetings.
- All team members are responsible for ensuring people who do get accepted to service are aware in some circumstances service may need to be re-directed if their needs change.

8. References and Related Documents

Documents	
1.	Helping Minds Child, Youth and Family Services Procedure Manual Individualised Services Procedure Manual Informed Consent Policy and Procedure Code of Conduct Assessing and Working with Mature Minors Procedure Client End of Life Procedure
2.	Legislation Federal Register of Legislation - National Disability Insurance Scheme (Becoming a Participant) Rules 2016
3.	Other References National Psychosocial Support Measure
4.	Applicable Standards National Standards for Mental Health Services 2010 National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards 2017 (V2.0)

9. Document History

Version	Date	Author	Summary of changes
1	24/10/2019	Claire Timmel	Initial Endorsement.
1.1	10/03/2020	Executive Child Youth and Family Services	Updates for better applicability and guidelines for assessment and suitability of clients
1.2	25/05/2020	Executive People and Culture	Updates to incorporate client end of life
1.3	02/08/2022	Executive Child Youth and Family Services	Updates for change in service provision, and clearer guidelines for In-eligible referrals.
1.4	27/09/2024	Executive Child Youth and Family Services	Updates for change in service provision, and clearer guidelines for In-eligible referrals.
1.5	06/11/2024	Executive Child Youth and Family Services	Updates to funding and risk scenarios for review via case review process