



## SUPPORT WORKER HANDBOOK

### Welcome

Hello! and a very warm welcome to

#### MY CARE MATCH

a new service from Autism Abilities matching clients with skilled support workers like yourself.

This document provides important information about your responsibilities as a support worker with My Care Match. It should be read in conjunction with your Independent Contract, the NDIS Code of Conduct, NDIS Practice Standards, as well as the Policies and Procedures provided on the My Care Match website.

Information contained in this document is subject to change. You will be notified of any important changes by email as they occur.

Please take the time to read through this document carefully. And if you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact us:

[contact@mycarematch.com.au](mailto:contact@mycarematch.com.au)

**0481 112 928**

We'd like to thank you for choosing My Care Match and look forward to working with you.

## Independent Contracting

Support Workers at My Care Match are independent contractors of Autism Abilities Pty Ltd. This means you must:

- Have an Australian Business Number (ABN)
- Manage your own income tax payments and superannuation – it is important to seek professional advice from a qualified accountant or tax agent
- Provide your own equipment as necessary

Being an independent contractor offers you freedom and autonomy - you can choose the clients and hours you work, you can work as little or as much as you want, you may well have other commitments including family, study and/or work in other organisations or on other platforms.

Being an independent contractor with My Care Match offers you a range of additional benefits including:

- an ever-growing network of potential clients
- the support of an experienced team with incidents, feedback or complaints
- administration – client invoices and payment claims are all done for you
- regular payments – receive payments directly to your account each week
- insurance – peace of mind knowing all your shifts are covered by our comprehensive insurance
- potential career opportunities with Autism Abilities

Working with My Care Match offers the best of both worlds – flexibility and autonomy combined with regular payments, support, opportunities and connection.

As an independent contractor, it is your responsibility to ensure that the duties you perform when working with your clients are within the scope of your abilities and the position you are undertaking. Failure to do so, could put yourself or your client at risk, and may also negate insurance policies covering your work.

**It is essential that you understand the scope and requirements of your role, including the activities you can and cannot do. If you have any questions about the scope and requirements of your role please do not hesitate to contact us.**

## How It Works

### Screening and Verification

Every support worker at My Care Match must complete thorough screening and verification checks as part of our onboarding process. Full details of the requirements can be found in the Screening and Verification Policy which can be found in the Resources section of the My Care Match website.

Checks include:

- Photo ID
- At least 2 professional reference checks
- Certification and qualification verification
- NDIS Worker Clearance Checks (if working with people with disability)
- Working With Children Checks (if working with children)
- Child Safe Training (if working with children)
- Compliance with mandatory training requirements

We will also ask you for information about yourself so we can create a Profile for you. This will be shared with any suitable potential clients who have registered with My Care Match so it's important to provide as much information as possible about your personality, interests, skills and services to help ensure the best possible match.

### Responding to Potential New Client Enquiries

We will let you know if a potential client is interested in your services. We will provide details of the person you will be supporting, their location and any specifics in relation to the job. You can choose whether to proceed or not based on this information. It is a good idea to keep a close eye on your emails to ensure you can respond promptly and don't miss out on any opportunities.

### Meet and Greet

If you receive an enquiry and choose to proceed, the next step is the meet & Greet.

Meet & Greets are short initial meetings with a potential new client. Typically (but not always) in person, these free, no obligation meets give both parties the opportunity to

discuss requirements, have a chance to get to know each other a little and see if it's a good fit. Initial meet & greets should be kept to a maximum of 30 minutes.

It is a good idea to cover the following in any meet & greet with a potential new client:

- Is the location ok? Before accepting a new client, it is important to think carefully about the location. Is it convenient for you? You cannot charge travel time to/from your shifts so make sure it is not too far for you to get there. Change can be difficult so please don't accept a shift if you know it is likely you will not be able to continue to support this person on an ongoing basis, if this is what the client is looking for.
- if you will be transporting the client, are there any limits on how far (distance) or how long (time) you are expected to travel?
- If you will be transporting the client in your vehicle, is it clean and reliable and do you have the necessary insurance in place to do this? You will need insurance cover for business purposes, and your client may ask for confirmation of this. **Autism Abilities insurance cover does NOT cover you for transporting clients in your own vehicle. It is your responsibility to ensure you have the correct insurance coverage for this.**
- Have you discussed how out of pocket expenses will be managed for example entrance tickets, coffee, food etc.? These costs cannot be charged to the client's NDIS funding. It is important to discuss and agree with clients in advance who is responsible for any out-of-pocket expenses and this should be fair and reasonable. Generally, out of pocket expenses of the support worker are the responsibility of the support worker. Ask your client if they have a Companion Card which can cover entrance fees of support people to some venues.
- Are the required times and duration of shifts ok for you?
- Do you have a good idea of the type of supports the client requires and if so, do you have the skills, training and qualifications to provide this?
- Schedule the first shift!

Further details on all the above are provided in the Additional Information section below.

Note – it is important to ensure all of the above is covered with your client before you start your first shift to ensure everyone is clear and that there are no surprises for either party.

Please remember that it is very important for clients that they can rely on their support workers to be punctual and reliable so you should only accept shifts that you know you can commit to.

## Preparing for your first Shift

It can be helpful to prepare for the first shift with a new client by giving some thought to what you know or may have learnt about them in the meet & greet. Think about their interests, their strengths, their environment – is there something you could do to prepare that would help put them at ease and feel more comfortable for their first shift? Perhaps they support a particular sport team, or like a particular colour, show or game that you could bring along with you or talk about.

Make sure you know exactly where to go for the first shift and **be on time**.

## Shift Expectations and Ground Rules

Please read the following key points and non-negotiable ground rules for shifts:

- Shifts cannot be conducted in your own home
- You cannot support a member of your own family as a paid support worker
- Minimum shift duration is 2 hours
- Be on time, prepared, well-presented and clean for every shift. Make sure you pay attention to your personal hygiene and use an antiperspirant deodorant.
- Under no circumstances should your mobile phone be used for personal reasons during a shift. Unless it is needed for the support you are providing your client, your mobile phone should not be visible at any time during a shift.
- As an independent contractor you are responsible for expenses incurred for the delivery of shifts including travel time to/from shifts and preparation time.
- Shift notes should be completed as soon as possible after each shift and emailed to [contact@mycarematch.com.au](mailto:contact@mycarematch.com.au) at the end of every week the cut off time is midnight on Sundays for all shifts completed the 7 days prior.
- If an Incident occurs during a shift this must be reported using the Incident Report form located on the website.
- If there is something you are concerned about and don't want to include it in your shift notes, for example you have witnessed or you suspect possible abuse, neglect or exploitation of your client, this should also be reported immediately using the Incident Report Form on the website (refer to the Incident Management Guide also located on the website). You can also contact us directly for support and guidance: [contact@mycarematch.com.au](mailto:contact@mycarematch.com.au) or **0481 112 928**.

## After Each Shift

You must email your shift hours, kilometres and completed shift notes as soon as practicable after each shift and not later than 11.59pm on Sundays each week for all shifts completed in the previous seven days to [contact@mycarematch.com.au](mailto:contact@mycarematch.com.au)

**Delays in submitting your hours and shift notes will result in delays in payment.**

## Tips for Shift Notes

Your shift notes are an important record - they can be used as evidence in the event of a dispute or incident. They also provide a record of how a Participant's funding is being utilised and can be used as evidence to support the need for additional funding if required.

Your shift notes should always be professional, and objective. This means being respectful, non-judgmental and accurate. Do not include your personal opinions. Be mindful of the language you are using. And keep your shift notes factual. Be aware that shift notes can be read by your Participant, their nominee or representative, support coordinator, plan manager and/or other stakeholders therefore it is important that your notes are professional and to a high standard.

## Shift Note Example:

### Social support and capacity building activities

*"I met Alex at his home, and we walked to the local café and had a hot chocolate as we talked about what Alex had done over the weekend. I then helped Alex use the PTV app on his phone to look up train times. Then we walked to the station and caught a train into town. We took a tram up to the Museum and spent the afternoon looking at the dinosaur exhibition. Alex enjoys using the travel app and is becoming more confident in planning trips with it and with using his Myki card."*

As you can see in the above example, shift notes provide a brief summary of the support provided and any activities undertaken with the client during the shift in the order they occurred.

The following prompts can be helpful, you can include:

- the Participant's overall wellbeing (physical and emotional),

- specific support tasks provided – detail the specific support provided such as personal care (showering, dressing), meal preparation. Be specific and describe the actions taken.
- activities undertaken – document activities, outings and interactions with the client, including how they participated and any notable observations during these activities (eg social interaction, hobbies, community access).
- any notable changes in behaviour or condition – record any changes in the client’s emotional state, behaviour or appearance or physical condition. Remember to use objective language and focus on observable facts rather than opinions and assumptions. Examples include changes in mood, appetite, sleep patterns, or any signs of injury or distress.
- concerns or issues that arose – note any incidents or issues that arose (incidents should be reported in accordance with the Incident Management Policy) for example, falls, bumps, or other unusual events, detailing what happened and any actions taken
- relation to goals (if applicable) – where possible link activities and progress to the client’s NDIS goals, showing how support provided contributes to achieving those goals
- communication - note any communication with other professionals, health providers or relevant parties

Remember to ensure your shift notes are factual, accurate and detailed. Be specific about what was heard, said, done or observed. Include accurate timestamps and relevant information.

**Aim to complete your shift notes promptly, ideally within the final minutes of the shift or immediately after.**

**If an incident occurs during a shift this must be recorded in an Incident Report form and submitted to Autism Abilities – refer to the Incident Management form and policy in the Resources section on the My Care Match website.**

## Submit your documents

Each week remember to email us:

- your shift records - use the Support Worker Shift Record template
- your invoice – you can use the Simple Tax Invoice provided or your own

The email address is: [contact@mycarematch.com.au](mailto:contact@mycarematch.com.au)

The deadline is midnight on Sundays for all shifts in the last 7 days (from 12.01am the previous Monday morning).

If you use your own invoice template this must include the following:

- the words '**Tax Invoice**' preferably at the top
- your business or trading name
- your contact details
- your Australian business number (ABN)
- the date you issued the invoice
- list of the services provided including the following information for each item:

<i>Date of service</i>	<i>Participant Name</i> <i>or</i> <i>Unbillable activity</i> <i>(provide brief detail eg</i> <i>Huddle meeting)</i>	<i>Duration</i> <i>(hours:mins)</i>	<i>Unit</i> <i>price (\$)</i>	<i>Total (\$)</i>
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For the purposes of GST legislation, the supply of supports to an NDIS participant which meets the following requirements is GST free:

- The NDIS participant has an NDIS plan in effect
- The supply is of reasonable and necessary supports that are specified in the statement of supports in the participant's NDIS plan
- It is a supply covered by one of the schedules in the GST-free Supply (National Disability Insurance Scheme Supports) Determination 2017 (NDIS Determination)

It is important that your invoice includes reference to this being a GST-free service.

**Delays in submitting your documents will result in payment delays.**

## Getting Paid

Every week on Monday, Autism Abilities will:

- invoice your clients (or their plan managers, the NDIS or Home Care Package provider) for all the shifts you have completed in the previous week
- pay you for the shifts you completed two weeks ago
- send you a remittance advice of the payment

For example:

- If you worked 4 hours in Week 1 and 8 hours in Week 2, you will be paid for the 4 hours from Week 1 at the end of Week 2.
- Then, at the end of Week 3, you will receive payment for the 8 hours worked in Week 2.



This rolling payment system ensures a structured and consistent schedule for processing payments. This means you will wait 2 weeks to receive your first payment and then you will be paid every week.

## My Care Match Fees & Pricing Structure

My Care Match has a simple, flat pricing structure that is designed so that support workers earn good rates, whilst offering value and affordability for clients.

My Care Match fees include:

- Access to our extensive network of clients, including NDIS participants, seniors and aged care clients.
- Matching service – linking you with potential clients that are a great fit for your skills, interests, experience and location
- Payments and Claims – we process and claim all client invoices and make payments to you each week.
- Comprehensive insurance cover for every shift
- Support from our experienced team in the event of any incidents

All shifts must be included in your Support Worker Shift Records for compliance purposes and to ensure full insurance cover.

Tables 1 and 2 overleaf provide a breakdown of the rates and fees for most support worker services current as of 1 July 2025 for your information and invoicing purposes.

All rates are within current NDIS Price Limits (as of 1 July 2025).

***The yellow columns show the support worker rate (the rate you will get paid), the hourly rate the client gets charged and the My Care Match fee are included for your information.***

**Table 1. Hourly fees and charges summary**

Access community social and recreational activities

Description	Client rate \$	Support worker rate \$	My Care Match fee \$
Access Community Social and Rec Activ - Standard - Weekday Daytime (6am – 8pm)	60.00	<b>48.00</b>	12.00
Access Community Social and Rec Activ - Standard - Weekday Evening (8pm – midnight)	70.00	<b>56.00</b>	14.00
Access Community Social and Rec Activ - Standard - Weekday Night	72.00	<b>57.60</b>	14.40
Access Community Social and Rec Activ - Standard – Saturday	83.00	<b>66.40</b>	16.60
Access Community Social and Rec Activ - Standard – Sunday	83.00	<b>66.40</b>	16.60
Access Community Social and Rec Activ - Standard – Public holiday	83.00	<b>66.40</b>	16.60

**Table 2. Hourly fees and charges summary**

Assistance with Self Care Activities

Description	Client rate \$	Support worker rate \$	My Care Match fee \$
Assistance with Self Care Activities - Standard - Weekday Daytime	60.00	<b>48.00</b>	12.00
Assistance with Self Care Activities - Standard - Weekday Evening	70.00	<b>56.00</b>	14.00
Assistance with Self Care Activities - Standard - Weekday Night	72.00	<b>57.60</b>	14.40
Assistance with Self Care Activities - Standard – Saturday	83.00	<b>66.40</b>	16.60
Assistance with Self Care Activities - Standard – Sunday	83.00	<b>66.40</b>	16.60
Assistance with Self Care Activities - Standard – Public holiday	83.00	<b>66.40</b>	16.60
Assistance with Self Care Activities - Standard – Night-time Sleepover	295.00	<b>236.00</b>	59.00

## Important Additional Information

The following section contains important information. Please read it carefully and make sure you understand all the information and requirements.

### Travel & Car Insurance

In accordance with NDIS guidelines, non-labour travel costs can be charged at the rate of \$0.99c per kilometre. This is for any travel undertaken during a shift with a client. It does not include kilometres travelled to and/or from your shift.

Additional costs incurred e.g., parking, tolls etc., may be claimable as business expenses in your annual tax return, please check with your accountant.

A reminder that if you are transporting Participants in your own vehicle, you **must** have comprehensive insurance for business use purposes.

**Any incident or damage to a vehicle will need to be covered by your car insurance. It will not be covered under Autism Abilities insurance cover.**

### Out of Pocket Expenses

It is important to discuss how you will manage any out-of-pocket expenses incurred during your shifts with the client before they happen in order to avoid any misunderstandings or disputes.

In accordance with NDIS guidelines, you are not able to claim for expenses (e.g. food purchases, entry or admission fees, gym memberships etc) using NDIS funds.

You can apply for a Companion Card which allows a person's Carer free entry into participating venues and events. The Companion Card program is administered by the State you live in.

Please discuss this with your client upfront to avoid any issues.

### Short Notice Cancellations

If you need to cancel a booked shift, please provide your client with as much notice as possible. We understand that things can happen but please only accept shifts if you have a clear intention to work with this person, it is very difficult to have an unreliable support worker, not knowing if they are going to turn up or not is stressful and disrespectful and is not acceptable.

If your client cancels a booked shift at short notice, or forgets and is not available when you turn up for a booked shift, please discuss this scenario with them and agree in advance before the first shift, the expectations around what will happen.

Under NDIS guidelines, you can charge for short notice cancellations or no shows, but please discuss this with the client and agree a timeframe for this. For example, you might agree with the client that if they have to cancel a booked shift within 24 or 48 hours you will charge for this.

## Planned Leave

Please provide your client(s) with as much notice as possible if you have any planned leave or would like to take a break from your regular shifts to give them time to seek additional supports to cover.

## Changing or adding shifts

Please also be courteous and let your client(s) know as soon as possible if you need to make a change to any upcoming shifts either by phone or text message (or their preferred means of communication).

## Minimum hours, finishing early and overtime

The minimum shift duration is 2 hours. If a shift finishes prior to that two-hour mark, you should still charge the full two hours. If a shift finishes later than planned, add the additional time when you submit your hours and shift notes at the end of your week.

## Sleepover Shifts

Sleepover shifts include active support and passive support.

### Active Support

Active support are the hours in which you are actively supporting a client during the night. For example, administering medication, assisting with personal care and toileting.

You can charge an hourly rate for support sessions where you are active with a client throughout the night, and you don't have the opportunity to sleep.

This kind of support is for clients who usually need regular and/or intense support throughout the night.

## Passive Support

Passive support are the hours in which you are not actively supporting a client during the night and can sleep at the client's house.

Passive support is generally agreed on with the understanding that you are 'on call' for light support throughout the night if needed.

Passive support is a fixed rate for the total eight-hour passive sleep session. Within those eight hours, up to two hours of active support is expected within the overnight fixed rate.

If you anticipate or end up working more than two active hours during the shift, you are able to charge an hourly rate for those active hours.

As per the NDIS Pricing Arrangements, the third hour or additional hours you are actively working may be charged at Saturday rates during weekday overnight support sessions, or at applicable rates on other days such as Sundays and Public Holidays.

Please let us know the details when you submit your shifts so we can work out the correct amounts.

## Sleepovers - general key points

According to the NDIS:

- Sleepovers can be delivered to a client on a weekday, Saturday, Sunday or Public Holiday (basically, anytime)
- The support session needs to commence before midnight and finish after midnight on that day
- The support session is a continuous session of eight hours or more
- The support worker can sleep when they are not providing support.

## Before and After Sleepover Shifts

If your client needs you to actively support them before and/or after the sleepover session, the client is charged at the usual hourly rate for these hours.

For example, if you provide support to your client before the sleepover begins, the regular day or evening rate for those hours will apply (depending on what time you are providing the support).

If you work in the morning for the client preparing breakfast and assisting with showering, for example, then the usual day rate according to whether it's a weekday, Saturday, Sunday or Public Holiday will be charged.

## Insurance

You are covered by Autism Abilities' comprehensive professional indemnity and public liability insurance to protect yourself should anything happen to your client whilst you are providing support to them.

Professional Indemnity (PI) insurance is an important form of protection. It is designed to respond to claims against losses as a result of actual or alleged negligent acts or omissions in the provision of your services.

Public Liability (PL) insurance– covers legal fees and compensation costs if a client, member of the public, or a supplier claims against you for injury or damage to their property as a result of your alleged negligent activity.

**All shifts must be submitted each week and shift notes must be provided for insurance purposes. Any shifts conducted 'off-site' are a breach of the terms of your contract and will result in immediate termination of the contract.**

## Incident Management

Autism Abilities is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all users of My Care Match services. The Incident Management Guide is a comprehensive resource for understanding and executing the incident reporting process and for reporting any concerns you may have. The guide is available in the Resources section of the My Care Match website.

All Incidents reported will be followed up by Autism Abilities staff in accordance with NDIS Quality and Safeguarding Requirements.

## Performance Management

Autism Abilities expects a very high standard of conduct and performance from all support workers within My Care Match services. In the event that the required standard is not being met or maintained, appropriate corrective actions will be taken. This may include training, additional supervision and support or in cases of serious misconduct removal from My Care Match services and termination of your Contract.

## Safety and Risk

### Home Visit Risk Assessments

Working in a client's private home involves some potential risk. Autism Abilities take the safety and wellbeing of everyone using My Care Match services seriously.

To ensure that work in clients' homes does not pose a risk to your health and safety it's important to consider potential risks as soon as possible.

### Hazard identification

A number of factors can influence safety whilst on shift in a client's home including but not limited to:

- **Emotional factors**
  - The participant's emotional presentation and current behaviour
- **Physical factors**
  - Evidence or knowledge of substance abuse
  - Access to weapons on premises
  - Manual handling activities involved
  - Equipment
  - Work environment eg temperature, confined spaces, noise, light, electricity, moving or falling objects
  - Threats of violence or aggression by the Participant or others including neighbours, family members, pets

### Safe Work Practice – General Principles

- ✓ In situations where safety is a known issue, we recommend that your first shift (and potentially all shifts) should take place in a neutral place and not at the client's private home. This place should not be in an isolated location.
- ✓ Upon arriving at the home check for unsafe situations such as uncontrolled pets, unexpected visitors, heated arguments and do not enter premises if you feel unsafe
- ✓ If the door is answered by an unfamiliar person check that the client is present and expecting your call before entering.
- ✓ Maintain a level of professionalism and do not become over-involved with an issue
- ✓ Do not give your home phone number or home address to clients

- ✓ Park your car to allow for a quick exit facing the direction of travel.
- ✓ If safety is an issue, always choose not to go into the client's home
- ✓ Avoid carrying valuables whenever possible – consider use of a lanyard with car keys and mobile phone attached or carry in a pocket.
- ✓ Immediately call Police on 000 if your safety is at risk and you cannot leave
- ✓ Always leave an address with someone stating where the shift will be and how long the shift is and check in with them after to let them know that you are safe
- ✓ Any incident must be recorded using the Incident Report Form.
- ✓ Unless absolutely necessary, do not use a client's phone.
- ✓ In the home, choose a safe place to sit. Be aware of access and egress of the premises and ensure exits are not locked.
- ✓ Know where candles or a torch is kept if the power fails, especially if you work at night.
- ✓ **Please share any concerns about safety with Autism Abilities.**

## Your Responsibilities

You agree to:

- Perform all duties in accordance with the NDIS Code of Conduct, NDIS Practice Standards, Child Safe Standards, Code of Conduct for Aged Care, Aged Care Quality Standards, and all Policies and Procedures provided on the My Care Match website and as outlined in this document.
- Provide supports in a manner consistent with all relevant laws, including the National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 and rules, the Aged Care Act 2024, and Australian Consumer Law
- Perform all duties using a person-centred, strengths based and neurodivergent affirming approach and with the utmost professionalism and care.
- Work with only one client at a time, not multiple clients (e.g. siblings). You must only provide one-to-one support during a shift.
- Undertake tasks during your shift in accordance with client instructions and guidance. Ask for clarification or further guidance if needed.
- Make sure you have a very clear understanding of the tasks, activities and duties you are being asked to perform with each client **before** you start work and obtain any essential documents required to support the person prior to commencement.
- If you are on a shift and you feel at any time that the instructions you receive from the client are unsafe, unclear or make you feel uncomfortable, discuss this



with the client, if it is appropriate to do so. If things still aren't clear and you are unable to resolve them, please contact Autism Abilities for support.

- You are responsible for managing your time, and for planning and organising your own work, within the general guidance provided by the client you support.
- You may be asked to work with limited supervision. This is appropriate as long as instructions on how to perform the task have been given in advance.
- Depending on the client's circumstances, you may be required to work with more supervision and oversight. For example, for clients who live alone, the NDIS Commission requires that additional oversight and supervision is provided by Autism Abilities. In these situations, we will discuss this with you and work with you to ensure the appropriate systems, oversight and support is in place.
- Exercise sound judgment, initiative, confidentiality, and sensitivity in the performance of your work at all times. Seek guidance from your client if required.
- Be actively present and engaged at all times during a shift with your client(s). Mobile phone use during a shift is prohibited unless it is required specifically for the benefit and support of the client.
- If you are using your personal vehicle to transport a client, you must ensure the vehicle is reliable, clean, has adequate fuel for the journey and that you have insurance for business purposes cover in place.

## Professional Boundaries

Setting clear boundaries creates effective and safe relationships between you and your client(s). It also plays a positive role in supporting your work-life balance.

Understanding and having a clear idea of your expectations of yourself and others' expectations of you is an important first step to boundaries. Some of the advantages of having good boundaries include:

- Good mental health
- Good emotional health
- Avoidance of burnout

Burnout is very common and a large contributor to suffering from burnout is taking on more tasks than you are capable of or going 'above and beyond' to meet unrealistic expectations of others.

Maintaining clear professional boundaries is important to avoid burnout. This includes keeping a balance between your work and personal life. If you think you may be

suffering or are at risk of suffering from burnout it is important to reach out for support. Reach out to your peers or a trusted friend for help, advice or a debrief or ask your GP for a referral for professional support through a mental health care plan.

## Setting boundaries with your clients:

- Provide your clients with a list of supports and crisis contacts
- Maintain business hour expectations around communication outside of shifts
- Do not accept gifts or incentives from your clients

Sometimes boundaries are clear and solid but occasionally boundaries can become unclear and even disappear. Be mindful of staying within important boundaries.

Here are some red flags that could indicate a concern with professional boundaries:

- going out of your way to spend time with a particular client or member of their family
- feeling excited about working with a particular client or member of their family
- believing you are the only person capable of helping a person you support
- meeting a client you support outside of work
- discussing topics that encourage self-disclosure and secrecy
- touching a client you support in an inappropriate or over personal or sexual manner
- sharing personal phone numbers or social media with clients
- prioritising particular clients because you 'like' them more.

## The Importance of Language

The words we use can unintentionally insult, stereotype and depersonalize a person which can lead to discrimination. Inclusive language does the opposite, by intentionally celebrating diversity and promoting respect and equality.

These guidelines will help you to think about and challenge some common ways of talking about disability. Your use of inclusive language shows your respect for the people you support as well as helping to change negative and limiting attitudes.

Use person-first language, but always respect peoples' preferences

When talking about a person's disability, many people prefer identity-first language to describe themselves e.g., "autistic"

Others however prefer the focus to be on the person first, so you're describing an individual person and not defining them by their disability e.g., "person with autism".

If you're unsure, politely ask or listen to how they describe themselves and their disability. Using someone's preferred language shows that you respect them.

## Avoid euphemisms or made-up words

Avoid using euphemisms or newly created terms to describe people with disability like 'differently abled', 'people of all abilities', 'disAbility', 'diffAbled', and 'special needs'. Whilst their usage has been intended positively, many consider it to be patronising.

## Everyday achievements aren't 'inspirational'

Describing a person with disability as 'inspirational' or 'brave' for everyday achievements like having a job, hobby or partner, implies that they shouldn't be capable of these things and is patronising.

Similarly, words that apply negative assumptions and limitations, eg, 'severely disabled', 'suffering from,' or 'confined to a wheelchair' can be offensive to people with disability who don't see themselves as victims or as different from anyone else.

## Shift the focus to accessibility

Language focus has shifted away from disability to accessibility, highlighting that it's a lack of accessibility and not a person's disability that may be an issue for them. People now refer to Accessibility Action Plans or Access and Inclusion Plans, rather than Disability Action Plans. Car parks, lifts and toilets are now described as accessible, rather than disabled or handicapped.

Remember there is no one-size-fits-all for everyone. Some people will prefer identity-first language. Using a person's preferred language shows you listen and are respectful.

## Responsibilities of the Provider

Autism Abilities agrees to:

- ensure supports are provided in a manner consistent with all relevant laws, including the National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 and rules, the Aged Care Act 2024, and Australian Consumer Law
- treat you with courtesy and respect
- communicate openly and honestly and in a timely manner with you
- listen to feedback and resolve problems quickly
- Issue regular invoices of supports delivered to clients and make prompt payment to you for your services provided through My Care Match.

## Updates to these Terms and Conditions

These Terms may be updated at any time. We will take all reasonable steps to let you know about the changes if this occurs.

If you do not agree with changes to the terms and conditions, you can choose to terminate your contract with us.

## General

We reserve the right to monitor your services for the purpose of ensuring that you are operating in accordance with the requirements outlined in this document.

**Thank you for taking the time to read this document.**

**Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions – we are here to assist you.**