

1.5 Statement of Inclusive Practice

Organisational statement

Carrie's Place recognises that each service user, staff member, volunteer, and student brings their own unique capabilities, experiences and characteristics to the Carrie's Place community.

People within our community:

- have diverse national, racial, ethnic, religious and language origins
- live with a range of abilities and disabilities
- experience different socio-economic histories and status
- experience different gender and sexual identities

Policy

This organisation sees cultural difference as an essential part of healthy communities. As such, this organisation sees difference within our service user population and our staff, volunteers, and students, as something to embrace and celebrate.

This organisation commits to service provision that is inclusive for all women and children, and aims to sustain and enhance a culturally inclusive environment. Cultural diversity refers to the similarities and differences among diverse cultures in our society. Carrie's Place will have policy and procedure which ensures appropriate and sensitive support and responses that take into consideration cultural difference.

Objectives

To recognise our commitment to cultural diversity and to sustain and enhance a culturally inclusive environment, Carrie's Place will:

- promote a respect for cultural diversity in all programs and policies

- encourage our staff, volunteers, and students to observe the values of inclusiveness and fairness whilst maintaining high professional standards so they are able to effectively interact with and operate in culturally diverse communities
- provide adequate facilities and use client service strategies that are culturally appropriate
- develop further initiatives that promote mutual respect, harmony, cooperation and opportunities for cross-cultural exchange
- support an educational approach to the challenges that cultural diversity brings.

As a member of the NSW Women's Refuge Movement, we adhere to the following policy statement:

"The NSW Women's Refuge Movement promotes decision making processes that involve diverse groups in the community. This includes promoting the involvement of Aboriginal women, immigrant women, women with disabilities, and Lesbians in staffing and management"

Aboriginal Issues

Carrie's Place recognizes that domestic and family violence experienced by Aboriginal women and children must be understood in a cultural and historical context, acknowledging that they remain a disadvantaged group due to discriminatory (overt and covert) structures in our society. Carrie's Place recognises that aboriginal women and children are over represented as victims of domestic and family violence.

As a member of the NSW Women's Refuge Movement, Carrie's Place is a participant in discussions generated from the Walan Jineras – Koori Support Group of the Working Party.

Migrant, non-English Speaking Backgrounds Issues

Carrie's Place recognises that migrant, non-English speaking background, and refugee women and children in our society, face many additional barriers to accessing services. Language difficulties, community attitudes, fear around immigration or residency status,

fear of systems and bureaucracies, and physical and cultural isolation add to the impact of domestic violence, and may create difficulties for women to access services.

As a member of the NSW Women's Refuge Movement, Carrie's Place is a participant in discussions generated from the NESB Support Group of the Working Party.

Lesbian and bisexual Issues

Carrie's Place recognises that lesbian women can experience domestic violence, and that this violence is as dangerous and unacceptable as it is in other forms of intimate relationships. Carrie's Place recognises that lesbians and their children experience particular difficulties and barriers when trying to access services. These barriers can come from community attitudes, prejudice, and a lack of recognition that same sex domestic violence exists.

Carrie's Place recognises that women who do not identify as heterosexual, continue to experience prejudice, discrimination, and non acceptance from some individuals and some groups of people, and are often targeted for abusive behaviour because of their difference.

As a member of the NSW Women's Refuge Movement, Carrie's Place is a participant in discussions generated from the Same Sex Domestic Violence Support Group of the Working Party.

Women and Children with disabilities

Carrie's Place recognises that there are a wide range of barriers which impede women and/or children with disabilities from accessing services and has a commitment to addressing these issues.

Older Women

Carrie's Place recognises the growing number of older women who are, or are at risk of, homelessness due to domestic violence. Carrie's Place recognises that older women face unique barriers to accessing services. The factors that restrict access, include community attitudes, family attitudes, lack of knowledge of options, and financial limitations.

Procedures

- fly the Aboriginal flag in entrances within Carrie's Place premises
- recognise the Wonnarua Nation as the traditional landowners of the territory where Carrie's Place is situated, and acknowledge this in the policy and procedure manual introduction
- recognise "original custodians of the land" at the commencement of all Outreach presentations by Carrie's Place workers
- ensure all Carrie's Place forms include questions that offer clients the ability to notify their unique cultural identity
- ensure all Carrie's Place workers and volunteers receive training in "Cultural Awareness", and that this training is refreshed on a regular basis
- ensure all Carrie's Place workers and volunteers use language that is respectful and inclusive
- ensure all Carrie's Place workers are trained in use of interpreter services
- ensure interpreter services are offered to service users whenever applicable
- ensure all posters and publications on display in Carrie's Place premises offer culturally diverse images
- ensure all brochures are culturally appropriate, and where possible, stock brochures that are available in languages other than English
- ensure the need for an interpreter is identified at first point of contact with the client, and arrange for interpreter service
- arrange for translation of documents and information if needed

Networking and Interagency

Carrie's Place will endeavour to establish and maintain positive, healthy relationships with representative of culturally diverse groups within local communities. To do this Carrie's Place will:

- Participate in local networking opportunities, and attend interagency meetings
- Provide community education on domestic & family violence to diverse cultural groups within the local community
- Invite local cultural group representatives to attend team meetings to present information related to their cultural group
- Ensure that representatives of diverse cultures are involved in all consultative forums held by Carrie's Place

- Ensure that women from diverse cultures are encouraged to apply for employment opportunities within the organisation
- Ensure wherever possible, that women from diverse cultural backgrounds are members of the Carrie's Place Management Committee
- Ensure that Carrie's Place policy and procedure on inclusive practice continues to remain current and appropriate

Celebrations and events

Wherever possible, Carrie's Place will participate in, and/or publicise the following events:

- National Sorry Day
- National Reconciliation Week
- NAIDOC week
- National Child Protection Week
- Harmony Day
- International day of People with Disabilities
- IDAHO - International day against homophobia
- Senior's week
- Other internationally, nationally, and locally recognised days related to cultural diversity