



PATH Inc.

**Penrith Association for People with Disabilities,
their Carers, Families and Friends**

Information and Advocacy Service

Consumer Handbook

Welcome to PATH!

You are a valued customer.

We trust this handbook will provide you with all the information you need to know what to expect from PATH, but please do not hesitate to ask if you have any questions.

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Disability Service Standards 2014

Standard 1: Rights

PATH respects your rights. Your rights include legal and human rights, such as being treated with respect.

Standard 2: Participation and Inclusion

PATH actively encourages and supports you to participate in your community in ways that are important to you.

Standard 3: Individual Outcomes

You drive the decisions made in planning towards achieving your goals.

Standard 4: Feedback and Complaints

You will be treated fairly when you make a complaint, and you will be provided with information and support to make a complaint.

Standard 5: Service Access

PATH will provide you with information about how to access our services, and PATH works with other organisations to increase your support options.

Standard 6: Service Management

You will receive quality services delivered by staff with the right values, attitudes, goals and experience.



About PATH

PATH was established in 1981 by the parents of children with disabilities as a community-based information, support and advocacy service for people with disabilities and for the significant people in their lives—their carers, families and friends.

PATH is funded mainly by grants from the NSW Department of Family and Community Services/Ageing, Disability and Home Care. When available we also apply for grants from local government and other organisations to provide specific services and activities.

About what PATH does

- ◆ Within the Penrith, Blue Mountains, Hawkesbury and some of the Blacktown Local Government Areas (LGAs), PATH is an information, support and advocacy service to people with disability and their carers, families and friends on any concern or difficulty.
- ◆ A strong service focus is to assist children and young people to find opportunities to participate in social, sport and recreational activities.
- ◆ PATH work with other groups in the community towards better conditions for everyone with a disability.

PATH aims to:

- ◆ Promote the inclusion and meaningful participation of persons with disability in their local communities.
- ◆ Represent, lobby for and raise awareness of the rights, interests and welfare of people with disabilities.

PATH'S service principles:

- ◆ Informed decision-making
- ◆ Right of choice of the person with a disability.
- ◆ Person-centred service provision.
- ◆ Supports the ongoing relationships between people with disability and

their families and social networks.

- ◆ Responsiveness to consumer feedback to continually improve services.

Our staff

We employ two friendly staff members at our office, and appreciate the help of volunteers to assist us provide a great service to our customers.

Our Manager

- ◆ Will welcome you, answer your questions and provide you with helpful information. The Manager also keeps in touch with other community organisations to keep our information up-to-date.
- ◆ Works with other community groups towards positive changes with and for people with disabilities.

Our Inclusive Recreation Officer

- ◆ Focuses on working with children and their families to locate social, recreational and sporting opportunities.

Resources available

We have a range of resources available to assist you and your family:

Resource Library:

We have available an extensive range of resources that address a range of disabilities and issues. Our resources include books and DVDs, and sensory equipment for loan.

There is a refundable deposit for library loans.



Pathway newsletter:

Pathway is a free newsletter we publish quarterly. *Pathway* provides information on a range of disability issues; current programs, services and activities available; and stories of achievement about people with disabilities. It is distributed to over 2200 families, individuals, schools and other organisations.

If you would like to receive your own copy either by email or mailed to you



in printed form, please contact the PATH office.

Asperger's Syndrome/Autism Support:

- ◆ **The IT Club:** weekly sessions during school terms of one-to-one mentoring in IT for up to 12 children aged 10-17 years. A support group for parents/carers runs concurrently with the IT Club.
And it is FREE to participate!
- ◆ Check out the books, DVDs and sensory equipment specific to autism and Asperger's Syndrome in PATH's library.

Your Rights

As a customer of PATH, you may expect:

- ◆ **To be treated with dignity and respect.**
This includes respect for your lifestyle, cultural, linguistic and religious background and preferences.
- ◆ **Your privacy will be respected.**
Any information you give us will be kept safe, and
Any information you give PATH will be given to others only with your permission.
There are two exceptions to this :
 - * When PATH staff has reason to believe that a customer has harmed or intends to harm themselves or another person.
 - * When PATH is required by law to report to the Department of Family and Community Services that a child or young person is at 'risk of harm'.
- ◆ At any time **you may remove or change your permission** regarding release of information about you.
- ◆ **You will be given information in a way that suits you.**
- ◆ **You are in charge of decisions made .**
- ◆ **You may choose a person to speak on your behalf** for any purpose.
- ◆ You have the right to **give your feedback and to complain** about services you receive from PATH.



If you want to make a complaint about any aspect of services we provide you or the way we treat you, you will be given help to do this. If you make a complaint, there will be no recrimination against you—i.e. you will not be treated poorly as a result of your complaint.

Your Responsibilities

As a PATH customer, we ask you to:

- ◆ Respect the rights of PATH staff and volunteers, and anyone else associated with PATH including other customers.
- ◆ Help to ensure PATH is safe, healthy and free from harassment.
- ◆ Provide sufficient and accurate information to PATH staff so that PATH is able to meet your needs.
- ◆ Do your best to attend appointments made. If you are unable to keep an appointment, you will if possible advise PATH of this before the appointment.
- ◆ Return borrowed books, DVDs and equipment by the due date and in good condition.
- ◆ Provide PATH with feedback about the services you receive.

Feedback & Complaints

PATH welcomes your feedback and complaints. Your feedback **and** your complaints help us to improve our services. It helps us to know where we are working well and where we need to improve. We want to make our services more appropriate and responsive to what you need.

How to give us feedback

- ◆ Telephone or email us, or
- ◆ Call in and talk with a staff member or one of our wonderful volunteers, or
- ◆ Complete a feedback form.

You do not have to give your name unless you want to.



How to make a complaint

Important: You have the right to make a complaint but you will have to give us your name and contact details.

1. Talk to a staff member.

You can do that in person or phone, or by email or letter. Tell us why you are not happy. If you need help to make a formal complaint in writing, PATH may help you, or you may ask a friend, family member or advocate to help you. That person may also attend all your meetings with PATH while we work towards resolving your complaint.

Satisfied? The process stops.

Not satisfied? Or the complaint is about the staff member or is a serious complaint? **Go to next stage.**

2. Talk to PATH's Manager.

A PATH staff or Board member will contact you within 14 days of receiving your complaint to arrange a meeting.

Satisfied? The process stops.

Not satisfied? Or the complaint is about the Manager or is about a very serious issue? **Go to next stage.**

3. Talk to PATH's Chairperson.

Satisfied? The process stops.

Or still feel your complaint has not been resolved?

You have the right to go to next stage, outside PATH.

4. Talk to someone independent of PATH.

PATH will give you the information you need to **take your complaint to the next level**. That may be:

NSW Ombudsman Community Services Division
Level 24, 580 George Street, SYDNEY NSW 2000
Tel: 1800 451 524

Talk with us about other options and their contact details.

Contact PATH

We are located at:

**The Community Connection Building
Suite 115—1st floor (there is a lift!)
114-116 Henry Street
PENRITH NSW 2750**

**Mail: PO Box 1288
PENRITH NSW 2751**

Our usual office hours are:

MONDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

9.00am - 4.00pm

Tel: 02 4721 0866

Email: path@path.org.au

Mob: 0422 166 565

Web: www.path.org.au

All staff members and the Board may be contacted
via the above mail address.