

## Position Statement

### Sexuality and Disability

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*People with a disability must be acknowledged as sexual beings, and have access to information and resources to make informed choices about their sexuality and sexual and reproductive health.*

The term "people with a disability" includes people with a physical disability; intellectual disability; disability caused by a psychiatric illness or trauma induced brain damage. It is acknowledged that each individual may require a different approach, particularly in the delivery of sexuality education and health services.

Sexual Health Quarters (SHQ) actively promotes the right of people with disabilities to access effective sexuality education programs, resources, information and clinical services that meet their sexual and reproductive health needs. SHQ believes this will enhance the lives of people with a disability by promoting healthy and safe relationships, and decreasing vulnerability to sexual abuse and exploitation.

It is essential that people with a disability be supported to make choices and decisions that offer the least restrictive alternative to their health and lifestyle, and that their best interests are promoted.

SHQ supports and adopts the following principles as outlined in the Western Australian Government's Disability Services Act (1993), and works to ensure that all its services are developed and managed accordingly:

- People with disabilities are individuals who have the inherent right to respect for their human worth and dignity
- People with disabilities, whatever the origin, nature, type or degree of disability, have the same basic human rights as other members of society and should be enabled to exercise those basic human rights
- People with disabilities have the same rights as other members of society to:
  - Realise their individual capacities for physical, social, emotional, intellectual and spiritual development
  - Services which will support their attaining a reasonable quality of life in a way that also recognises the role of the family unit
  - participate in, direct and implement the decisions which affect their lives
  - receive services in a manner which results in the least restriction of rights and opportunities
  - pursuit of any grievance in relation to services
  - People with disabilities who reside in country areas have a right, as far as is reasonable to expect, to have access to similar services provided to these with disabilities who reside in the metropolitan area

SHQ supports the Western Australian Carers Charter which states:

1. Carers must be treated with respect and dignity.
2. The role of carers must be recognised by including carers in the assessment, planning, delivery and review of services that impact on them and the role of carers.
3. The views and needs of carers must be taken into account along with the views, needs and best interests of people receiving care when decisions are made that impact on carers and the role of carers.
4. Complaints made by carers in relation to services that impact on them and the role of carers must be given due attention and consideration.

