



Professional Standards Guide

The Little Black Duck Co. Pty Ltd Professional Standards Guide

Summary

Respect and Dignity: We embrace and respect the diversity and expertise of our clients, acknowledging their unique experiences and needs.

Client-Centred and Client-Led Care: Our services are tailored to individual needs, led by the clients themselves to ensure personalised care.

Confidentiality and Privacy: We maintain strict confidentiality, ensuring privacy in handling and sharing client information.

Competence and Neuroaffirming Practice: Our staff engage in continuous professional development, focusing on neuroaffirming and evidence-informed practices to support neurological diversity. We prioritise autistic informed research.

Communication and Transparency: We offer clear, accessible communication, with detailed policies available through multiple channels.

Accountability, Integrity, and Workplace Diversity: We adhere to the highest ethical and legal standards, with a commitment to workplace diversity and inclusivity.

Collaborative and Inclusive Approach: Our approach values diverse perspectives, fostering collaboration with all stakeholders in the care process.

Safe and Inclusive Environment: We ensure a safe environment that caters to physical, neurological, and psychological well-being.

Responsiveness and Flexibility: Our adaptable services meet changing client needs, always within ethical and legal frameworks.

Advocacy, Empowerment, and Neurodiversity: We empower clients by advocating for their rights and prioritising neurodiversity and autistic communication/ thinking styles in decision-making.

Commitment to Excellence: At The Little Black Duck Co. Pty Ltd, we are dedicated to high-quality, inclusive, and empathetic services, underpinned by our commitment to neuroaffirming practice and embracing workplace diversity.

For more detailed information on our Professional Standards, please request a copy of our comprehensive policy.



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The Little Black Duck Co. Pty Ltd Professional Standards Guide

Introduction

Welcome to The Little Black Duck Co. Pty Ltd's Professional Standards Guide. This guide has been crafted to articulate the foundational principles and values that define our approach to service. It serves as a compass for our team, ensuring that every interaction and service we provide aligns with our commitment to excellence, inclusivity, and client empowerment. By establishing these standards, we aim to foster trust and understanding with our clients, ensuring transparent and consistent care. As you familiarise yourself with this guide, you will gain insight into the ethos and dedication that underpin every aspect of our work at The Little Black Duck Co. Pty Ltd.

Respect and Dignity

- **Supporting minority identities:** At The Little Black Duck Co. Pty Ltd, we understand that many autistic individuals experience the compounded challenges of intersectionality, arising from overlapping minority identities such as race, gender, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status. We recognise that these intersecting identities can significantly impact their experiences and needs.
- **Recognition of complex needs:** We are committed to addressing these complexities with sensitivity and awareness. Our services are designed to be inclusive and responsive to the diverse backgrounds and experiences of all our clients, especially those who navigate multiple layers of minority experiences along with their autism.
- **Recognition of intersectionality:** In working with all clients and their families with respect, dignity, and understanding, we pay special attention to the unique struggles and strengths that arise from intersectionality. We aim to provide a supportive environment where these diverse aspects of identity are acknowledged, respected, and integrated into our care approach.
- **Tailored service delivery:** We believe in empowering each client by valuing their unique perspective, and we tailor our services to accommodate and address the multifaceted aspects of their identity and experiences.

Client-Centred Care

- **Client led framework:** Our services are not only tailored to meet the individual needs and goals of each client but are also led by the clients themselves. We believe in empowering our clients by putting them at the forefront of their own care and decision-making process. This approach ensures that the services provided are most relevant and effective for each individual.
- **Client input:** We actively involve clients in every step of the service process, from initial assessment to the development of care plans and the delivery of services. By doing so, we ensure that their voices are heard, and their preferences and choices are respected and acted upon.
- **Client self knowledge and expertise:** Recognising the expertise of our clients in understanding their own needs, we encourage open communication and collaborative planning. This client-led



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approach helps in building a strong, trust-based relationship between our clients and our service providers.

- **Adapting and evolving support:** We are committed to adapting our methods and strategies to align with the changing needs and evolving goals of our clients, reinforcing our dedication to providing truly personalised and client-led care.

Confidentiality and Privacy

At The Little Black Duck Co. Pty Ltd, we uphold the highest standards of confidentiality and privacy regarding all client information. Our commitment is anchored in respecting the trust placed in us by our clients and is reflected in every aspect of our service delivery.

- **Information Handling and Protection:** We ensure that all client information, whether collected through consultations, assessments, or other interactions, is securely stored and protected. We employ stringent security measures to prevent unauthorized access, disclosure, alteration, or destruction of personal data.
- **Consent-Based Information Sharing:** Client information is shared only with explicit consent from the client, except in situations where disclosure is required by law. We ensure that clients are fully informed about what information is being shared, with whom, and for what purpose.
- **Legal Compliance and Ethical Standards:** Our practices comply with relevant laws and regulations, including the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) and NDIS privacy requirements. We also adhere to ethical standards in information management, ensuring that our handling of client data is lawful, fair, and transparent.
- **Client Access to Information:** Clients have the right to access their personal information held by us. We facilitate this process, allowing clients to review, correct, or update their information as needed, in accordance with legal stipulations.
- **Staff Training and Awareness:** All our staff members receive regular training on confidentiality and privacy principles. This training ensures that every team member understands the importance of protecting client information and is aware of the correct procedures for handling and sharing such data.
- **Confidentiality in Collaboration:** In cases where we collaborate with other service providers or professionals as part of a client's care, we maintain strict confidentiality protocols. Information is shared only to the extent necessary for client care and with due consideration to privacy concerns.

Through these comprehensive practices and policies, The Little Black Duck Co. Pty Ltd ensures that the confidentiality and privacy of our clients are maintained at all times, fostering a secure and trustworthy environment for all.

Competence and Continuous Improvement

- **Neuroaffirming framework:** Our staff are not only qualified and skilled in their respective roles but also deeply committed to a neuroaffirming framework in all aspects of our service delivery.

This approach ensures that we support the neurological differences of our clients with respect and understanding.

- **Ongoing professional development:** We are dedicated to ongoing professional development, constantly seeking to stay abreast of the latest ideas, research, and training in the field. This commitment enables us to incorporate cutting-edge practices and evidence-based strategies that affirm and support the neurodiversity of our clients. We actively participate in professional development opportunities that enhance our understanding of neurodiversity and intersectionality, ensuring that our services are both inclusive and reflective of the latest advancements in autism and neurodiversity support.
- **Evolving needs:** By continuously updating our knowledge and skills, we ensure the highest quality of service, aligning with the evolving needs and expectations of our clients and the broader community.

Communication and Transparency

We are committed to maintaining open, clear, and honest communication with all our clients. Our aim is to provide transparent information about our services, policies, and procedures to ensure you are fully informed at every stage of our engagement.

- **Staff Knowledge and Accessibility:** All our staff members are well-versed in our policies and procedures. They are trained not only to adhere to these standards but also to effectively communicate and explain them to clients. This ensures that any questions or concerns you may have can be addressed knowledgeably and promptly by any member of our team.
- **Availability of Information:** Our policies and service information are readily available through multiple channels for your convenience:
 - **Online:** Access our policies and service information on our website at www.thelittleblackduck.com.au
 - **Email:** For a digital copy of any of our policies or for more detailed inquiries, contact us via email at info@thelittleblackduck.com.au, and we will respond with the requested information promptly.
 - **In-Person at Our Office:** Visit our office for physical copies of our policies or to discuss any aspect of our services in person. Our staff are always ready to assist you with any questions or concerns.

We encourage our clients to reach out to us through any of these channels should they require clarification, additional information, or wish to provide feedback about our services.

Accountability and Integrity

- **Defining Integrity:** At The Little Black Duck Co. Pty Ltd, we define integrity as adherence to ethical and professional standards in all our undertakings and decisions. Integrity for us entails consistently applying an evidence-informed decision-making framework in our services. This involves basing our methodologies and approaches on the most recent and credible research,



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with a prioritisation of autistic-informed research to ensure that our practices are not only scientifically robust but also deeply resonant and respectful of the autistic experience.

- **Defining Responsibility:** Responsibility in our organisation is about taking ownership of our actions and their consequences. It involves being answerable for the quality and efficacy of the services we provide. We acknowledge the impact of our work on the lives of our clients and commit to a continuous process of learning and improvement. Being responsible means actively seeking feedback, addressing any shortcomings, and celebrating successes in our service delivery.
- **Accountability for Service Quality:** We are accountable for delivering services of the highest quality. This includes being transparent about our methods, continuously evaluating the effectiveness of our interventions, and making adjustments as necessary based on the latest evidence and client feedback.
- **Autistic-Informed Research Priority:** We prioritise autistic-informed research in our decision-making processes, ensuring that the voices and experiences of autistic individuals are central to the development and refinement of our services. This commitment to being informed by the lived experiences of autistic individuals is integral to maintaining both integrity and responsibility in our work.

Collaboration and Inclusivity

At The Little Black Duck Co. Pty Ltd, our ethos of collaboration is underpinned by a commitment to inclusivity and collective endeavour. We engage in collaborative practices that honour the contributions of all involved, valuing a diversity of perspectives and expertise.

- **Defining Our Collaborative Approach:** Our collaboration is characterised by open communication, shared decision-making, and mutual respect. We endeavour to foster an environment where team members, external providers, family members, and stakeholders feel acknowledged and valued. This inclusive ethos ensures a variety of viewpoints are considered, leading to more comprehensive and efficacious outcomes for our clients.
- **Engagement with External Providers and Families:** We actively collaborate with external providers and families, recognising that their insights and involvement are integral to delivering holistic care and support. Our collaboration goes beyond consultation; we aim to build partnerships founded on trust, shared objectives, and open dialogue.
- **Team Dynamics:** Within our team, collaboration means amalgamating our knowledge, skills, and resources to address the multifaceted needs of our clients. We nurture a team culture where each member's expertise is recognised, and interdisciplinary learning is encouraged.
- **Outcome-Oriented Collaboration:** Our primary focus is on realising the best possible outcomes for our clients. Through a collaborative and inclusive approach, we are able to develop more effective strategies, tackle challenges more creatively, and ensure that our services are bespoke to the unique needs of each client.
- **Continuous Improvement Through Collaboration:** We acknowledge that effective collaboration is an evolving process. We are committed to continually refining our collaborative



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methods, ensuring they remain effective, inclusive, and responsive to the changing needs of those we serve.

By adopting this collaborative and inclusive framework, The Little Black Duck Co. Pty Ltd ensures that our services are not only comprehensive and client-centred but also enriched by the diverse contributions of all parties involved in the care process.

Safe and Inclusive Environment

At The Little Black Duck Co. Pty Ltd, our commitment to safety extends to both clients and staff, encompassing physical, neurological, and psychological aspects to ensure a holistic approach to the wellbeing of everyone involved in our services.

- **Physical Safety:** We adhere to all relevant safety guidelines and regulations to provide a physically safe environment. This includes ensuring hazard-free facilities and equipment, accessible spaces, and robust procedures to manage physical risks for both clients and staff.
- **Neurological Safety:** Acknowledging the diverse neurological needs of our clients and staff, particularly those who are neurodiverse, we strive to create an environment that supports these needs. We provide spaces and resources that cater to different sensory preferences and communication styles, thereby fostering neurological comfort and reducing stress.
- **Psychological Safety:** Our commitment to psychological safety involves creating a trusting and respectful atmosphere where clients and staff feel valued, understood, and safe to express themselves. We prioritise mental wellbeing through open communication, support, and an environment free from fear of judgment or reprisal.
- **Inclusivity:** Inclusivity is at the heart of our approach to safety. We ensure our environment is welcoming and accommodating to people of all backgrounds, abilities, and identities. We understand that true safety encompasses meeting diverse needs with empathy and understanding, celebrating diversity, and providing equal support to both clients and staff.

Through these commitments, The Little Black Duck Co. Pty Ltd ensures not only the physical well-being but also the neurological and psychological health of our clients and staff, fostering a truly safe, supportive, and inclusive environment.

Responsiveness and Flexibility

At The Little Black Duck Co. Pty Ltd, our approach to service delivery is characterized by responsiveness and flexibility, firmly grounded within ethical and legal boundaries. We adhere to best practices and evidence-informed frameworks, ensuring our methods are not only effective but also ethically and legally sound.

- **Adherence to Best Practice and Evidence-Informed Frameworks:** Our practices are continually updated in line with the latest research and evidence in our field. This ensures our services align with the most current understanding and methodologies in client care, all while adhering to established ethical standards and legal requirements.
- **Client-Centric Responsiveness:** We actively listen to the needs and feedback of our clients, adapting our services to meet their changing needs and circumstances. This adaptation is always



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conducted within the confines of ethical and legal considerations, ensuring the utmost care and responsibility in our responsiveness.

- **Collaborative and Inclusive Approach:** Our service flexibility involves a collaborative and inclusive approach, working hand in hand with clients, their families, and other stakeholders. We ensure that this collaboration respects diverse perspectives and experiences, and integrates them into our care plans, while always maintaining ethical and legal integrity.
- **Dynamic Adaptation to Change:** We recognise the fluid nature of needs and situations, and our services are designed to be adaptable, accommodating these changes within ethical and legal parameters. Our agile and open approach ensures that our clients receive relevant and supportive care at all times, within a framework that safeguards their rights and wellbeing.

By maintaining this responsive and flexible approach, guided by best practices, collaborative inclusivity, and a strong commitment to ethical and legal standards, The Little Black Duck Co. Pty Ltd ensures effective and responsible service delivery to our clients.

Advocacy and Empowerment

At The Little Black Duck Co. Pty Ltd, our commitment to advocacy and empowerment is demonstrated through a range of dedicated practices:

- **Active Advocacy for Client Rights:** We actively represent the rights and interests of our clients in all interactions, ensuring their needs and preferences are heard and respected by other service providers, healthcare professionals, and relevant authorities.
- **Tailored Information and Education:** We provide information and education in formats and languages that meet the unique communication needs of each client. This involves adapting our communication methods to ensure clients fully understand their care options, what is being asked of them, and are thus able to make informed decisions. Whether it's through visual aids, simplified language, or alternative communication tools, we ensure information is accessible and comprehensible.
- **Encouraging Active Participation:** Our clients are encouraged to actively participate in their care and support planning. We value their input and adapt our services based on their feedback, respecting their autonomy and choices at every step.
- **Building Skills and Confidence:** We assist our clients in developing the skills and confidence needed for self-advocacy and independent decision-making. This includes supporting them in understanding and navigating various systems and services and in setting and pursuing personal goals.
- **Collaborative Goal Setting:** Collaboratively setting goals with our clients ensures that our support aligns with their aspirations, empowering them to pursue these goals with our guidance and support.
- **Creating a Supportive Environment:** We are committed to creating an environment where clients feel comfortable and empowered to express their needs and preferences. Our team is trained to adapt communication styles to suit each client, fostering an atmosphere of empathy, respect, and empowerment.



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Through these practices, The Little Black Duck Co. Pty Ltd strives to advocate for our clients and empower them, ensuring they have the support, skills, and understanding necessary to actively participate in their care and support.

Commitment to Neuroaffirming Practices

- **Focus on autistic neurology:** At The Little Black Duck Co. Pty Ltd, we are dedicated to employing the best available neuroaffirming evidence and practices in our work with autistic individuals. We understand the unique neurology of autistic brains and are committed to approaches that affirm and support these differences.
- **Keeping abreast of autistic led research:** Our services and interventions are grounded in current, research-based understanding and knowledge about autism. We strive to continuously update our practices based on the latest neuroscientific findings and developments in the field.
- **Nurturing the strengths and abilities:** We focus on nurturing the strengths and abilities of autistic individuals, tailoring our services to support their neurodiversity in a respectful and affirming manner.
- **Training in neuroaffirming methodologies and approaches:** Our team is trained in neuroaffirming methodologies and approaches, ensuring that our services not only meet the needs of autistic clients but also promote their wellbeing and personal growth in a supportive and understanding environment.

Neurological Diversity and Workplace Inclusivity

- **Embracing workplace diversity:** At The Little Black Duck Co. Pty Ltd, we recognise and value the neurological diversity of our staff members. We understand that embracing this diversity not only enriches our team but also enhances the quality of service we provide to our clients.
- **Respectful work environment:** We are committed to creating a work environment that is respectful and accommodating of the different neurological experiences and needs of our staff. This includes acknowledging and supporting those with neurodiverse conditions such as autism, ADHD, dyslexia, and others.
- **Safe and healthy work environment:** We strive to provide a safe and healthy work environment that acknowledges and adapts to the varying sensory, communication, and social interaction preferences of our neurodiverse staff. This may include flexible working arrangements, tailored communication strategies, and modifications to the work environment as needed.
- **Regular training and awareness:** Regular training and awareness programs are conducted to ensure all staff members understand and appreciate neurological diversity. This training helps foster a culture of inclusivity and mutual respect within our team.
- **Adaptive policies and practices:** We actively listen to and seek feedback from our staff regarding their needs and preferences, ensuring that our workplace policies and practices effectively support their well-being and professional growth.



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- **Individualised support and solutions:** Recognising that each individual's experience is unique, we approach workplace accommodations and support on a case-by-case basis, ensuring personalised and effective solutions are provided.

Conclusion

This Professional Standards Policy is central to our ethos at The Little Black Duck Co. Pty Ltd and is integral to the provision of high-quality, ethical, and compassionate care and support services.

The Little Black Duck Co. Pty Ltd's Professional Standards Guide is more than just a set of guidelines; it is a reflection of our unwavering commitment to excellence in service. Each standard outlined here is integral to the way we operate and interact with our clients and each other. By upholding these standards, we ensure a consistent, empathetic, and effective service that respects and celebrates the diversity and individuality of all those we serve. Thank you for entrusting us with your care, and we look forward to upholding these standards in our work with you.