# Access to Advocacy Policy

## Policy

*futures in sight* is committed to independent advocacy as an individual and systems tool to ensure the rights of people with disability are protected and enhanced.

*futures in sight* respects the rights of all people we support to have an independent advocate and actively facilitates access to advocacy support

### Scope

*futures in sight* Partners, Contractors, Volunteers and Advisory Panel member

### Legislation

* NDIS Act 2013
* Disability Services Act (National Standards for Disability Services) Determination 2013
* UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with disabilities

### Principles

Each person with a disability

* has choice, voice and control over their lives;
* the principles and articles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities are manifested in the person’s life
* has the right to access an advocate of their choosing

### Definitions

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| Advocacy | is the process of taking action to: • achieve social justice in the areas of rights, access, participation and equity; • prevent or stop abusive, discriminatory or negligent treatment; • increase and improve well-being; • increase inclusion and acceptance in the community; and • identify and put a stop to the causes of unjust and unfair treatment, situations and their many causes, so that people’s fundamental needs can be met. |
| Advocate | may be a family member or ally, or a member of an advocacy service. An advocate may be a paid or an unpaid person. An Interpreter is not an advocate. An Advocate is on the side of the person with disability and needs to be independent of *futures in sight* |

## Procedures

Generally it is the person we support or their family/ ally who may identify the need for an independent advocate in relation to *futures in sight* services or in relation to other services.

In some circumstances, such as when advocacy is needed in relation to NDIA matters, where *futures in sight* may be explicitly prohibited from providing advocacy like supports, we may suggest the need for independent advocacy to the person we support.

At *futures in sight* we

* provide opportunities to gain an understanding of the role of advocacy
* make available a list of advocacy services on our website
* assist people to access all forms of advocacy, if and when required
* respect the right of people we support to choose their own advocates
* ensure people we support have unimpeded access to their advocates
* identifies people we support who do not have personal networks and who need assistance to speak up and actively seek the involvement of advocates on their behalf
* record contact details of advocates on the file of people we support
* have an up to date directory of advocacy on file and make that directory available to people we support on request.

**Review**

This policy will be reviewed on a two-yearly basis.

However, if at any time the legislative, policy or funding environment is so altered that the policy is no longer appropriate in its current form, the policy shall be reviewed immediately and amended accordingly.

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| Signed by all Partners |  |  |  |
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