

## E.01 Service Guarantee

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

Mercy Services delivers inclusive and quality services, in accordance with established standards and statutory requirements. To ensure that each Mercy Services program continues to operate at a high quality, the following policy has been developed to guide service delivery in accordance with organisational, operational and legislative requirements. Sections 3 and 4 of this Policy will be widely circulated and known as “Your Service Guarantee”.

This policy reflects a Human Rights Approach to service delivery. The starting point is a recognition of the dignity of the person and their right to choose the service they want and to have the full range of options that should be available to all citizens. The approach is also found in the NSW person centred approach to disability services and the Australian Government Consumer Directed Care approach to community aged care. This approach is also reflective of the Recovery Approach to mental health services.

The human rights approach is preferred to one where the expertise of the worker is used to decide what services should be provided and in what way they should be provided.

Where a child with a disability is the client of Mercy Services this child will be given the same rights and freedoms as all other children and the child’s best interests will be taken into account when providing services.

### 2.0 SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Mercy Services staff, clients and volunteers clearly know:

- 1) the principles upon which service design are based; and
- 2) client rights and responsibilities.

### 3.0 POLICY STATEMENT

#### *You can expect the best from Mercy Services*

Mercy Services will provide services in ways that comply with funding agreements and are consistent with Mercy Services’ Values of: Respect, Care, Service, Unity and Justice.

Mercy Services will provide you, and all clients, with services according to the following principles:

- ✓ You are treated with fairness – all clients have equality of opportunity;
- ✓ Diversity among clients and inclusivity are welcomed with services tailored to the needs/aspirations of each individual;

- ✓ Information is provided in ways that you find are clear and accurate;
- ✓ You are involved in decisions about the service you are receiving;
- ✓ You are encouraged to enjoy full participation in society;
- ✓ You may include their family, carers, friends and others in the planning and delivery of your services, as you wish, and
- ✓ Your ideas and complaints are welcomed and responded to with fairness.

#### 4.0 CHARTER OF SERVICE

##### *Your rights as a client of Mercy Services:*

- 1) you will be given as much information as you want, and need, so you can make choices about the service you will receive from us and/or any alternative or complementary services from other organisations;
- 2) you will be given enough time and assistance so you can make decisions about the service you receive from us;
- 3) you will be informed of your rights and responsibilities;
- 4) your service will continue even if you cannot pay (*however the amount of service provided is determined by the level of funds to available to pay for your service*);
- 5) your access to a service is based on your eligibility, your needs and our capacity to meet your needs (*you should always be treated fairly and in a non-discriminatory way*);
- 6) your needs will be reviewed at least once a year, and more frequently if required, to ensure our services meet your individual requirements as best we can;
- 7) your age, gender, cultural background, sexual orientation, life circumstances and aspirations will be taken into account in the planning, delivery and evaluation of your service;
- 8) you will be assisted by staff who will treat you with respect and who will use safe practices that have been proven to work;
- 9) you will be assisted to develop a Mercy Services Care Plan that outlines the services you will receive from us and any fees to be charged;
- 10) your Mercy Services Care Plan will address the full range of your needs, focus on your strength/assets, enable your preferred level of social independence and your chosen participation in social activities and community life;
- 11) you will receive services as agreed and written down in your Care Plan;
- 12) your information will be kept safe and Mercy Services will only share it with others if we have your permission (Conditions apply - see our Privacy Policy for details);

- 13) you can look at your Mercy Services file - if you request this (Conditions apply - see our Privacy Policy for details);
- 14) you can involve anyone you want to support you or to speak on your behalf (Mercy Services can assist you find to an independent advocate if needed);
- 15) your Carer and/or the people of your support network will be involved in decisions, communication and service delivery as much as you would like us to include them;
- 16) you, your Carer and/or your other support person will be invited to have a say about how Mercy Services is run;
- 17) your complaints and comments about Mercy Services will be welcomed and dealt with in a fair, effective and prompt manner;
  - a. you will not be disadvantaged or discriminated against, if you make a complaint; and
  - b. you will be informed of the outcome of investigations into your complaint.

***You can help us to help you by:***

- 1) telling us all about your needs and wants;
- 2) telling us if there are changes to your contact details or any other information you have given us;
- 3) reading any information we provide to you and asking for help if you are unsure about the information;
- 4) taking as active a role as possible in looking after yourself and in doing the things you agreed to do in your Care Plan;
- 5) telling us if any changes are required to the type of service we provide to you and to the way we provide this service;
- 6) telling us if you are not going to be at home at the time when our staff have arranged to visit you (we prefer at least 24 hours notice of a cancellation);
- 7) taking responsibility for the results of any decisions which you make about your services from us;
- 8) showing respect to our other clients and to our staff/volunteers;
- 9) respecting the rules we have for the protection and comfort of our staff/volunteers; and
- 10) letting us know, as soon as possible, if: (a) you are not happy with any part of your services, (b) you think your privacy has not been respected, and/or (c) you feel you have been treated unfairly or in a discriminatory manner.

***Please tell us your concerns about staff or activities of Mercy Services***

We welcome your ideas and concerns as these can help us to improve our services for you and for others.

1. You are encouraged to raise your issue with the staff member/volunteer concerned.
2. If you are not happy to discuss the issue with the staff member concerned or you are not satisfied with their response, or you have not had a response after 3 business days you can contact the Coordinator. At any stage you may involve an advocate or support person if you want.
3. If the you are not happy to discuss the issue with the Coordinator concerned, not satisfied with their response, or you have not had a response after 3 business days you can raise the issue with the Manager. You may involve an advocate or support person if you want.
4. If you are still not satisfied or if the issue is not resolved after 3 business days you can raise the issue with the General Manager. You may involve an advocate or support person if you want. This may involve the use of a neutral third party mediator to assist in resolving the complaint.
5. If you are not happy with the outcome or the issue is still unresolved after 3 business days you can write and appeal the decision to The Chairperson, Board of Directors, C/o 32 Union St., Tighes Hill 2297.
6. The Board of Directors may need one or two months to discuss the issue as that is as frequently as they meet.
7. If after approaching the above people the issue is still not resolved, you can take your issue to Government agencies. Mercy Services Complaints Policy lists which Government Agency is happy to hear your concern.

#### 4.1 Compliance

Compliance with this policy is being measured by compliance measures specified in Mercy Services Service Delivery Policy.

#### 4.2 Evaluation

The performance indicators for the evaluation of this policy are the evaluation measures specified in Mercy Services Service Delivery Policy.

### 5.0 REFERENCES

<b>1. Current Issues</b>	
<b>2. Australian Standards</b>	Nil
<b>3. Legislation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Aged Care Act, 1997 (Cth)</li> <li>b) Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)</li> <li>c) Ombudsman Act, 1974 (NSW)</li> <li>d) Racial Discrimination Act, 1975 (Cth)</li> <li>e) Anti-Discrimination Act, 1977 (NSW)</li> <li>f) Children and Young Person's (Care and Protection) Act, 1998 (NSW)</li> <li>g) Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act, 1998 (NSW)</li> <li>h) Commission for Children &amp; Young Peoples Act, 1998 (NSW)</li> <li>i) Disability Inclusion Act, 2014 (NSW)</li> </ul>

<b>4. Professional guidelines</b>	
<b>5. Codes of Practice</b>	a) United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities <a href="http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/other/dfat/treaties/2008/12.html">http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/other/dfat/treaties/2008/12.html</a>
<b>6. Codes of Ethics</b>	a) Australian Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics <a href="http://www.aasw.asn.au/document/item/1201">http://www.aasw.asn.au/document/item/1201</a> b) Australian Psychological Association Code of Ethics <a href="http://www.psychology.org.au/Assets/Files/Code_Ethics_2007.pdf">http://www.psychology.org.au/Assets/Files/Code_Ethics_2007.pdf</a> c) The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia. Registration Requirements <a href="http://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au/Registration-Standards.aspx">http://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au/Registration-Standards.aspx</a> d) Integrity in the Service of the Church <a href="https://www.catholic.org.au/media-centre/media-releases/cat_view/10-organisations/38-national-committee-for-professional-standards">https://www.catholic.org.au/media-centre/media-releases/cat_view/10-organisations/38-national-committee-for-professional-standards</a> e) Mercy Services Code of Conduct
<b>7. Evidence</b>	a) ADHC “Standards in Action” (2014) b) Australian Government. The Charter of Rights and Responsibilities for Home Care <a href="http://www.health.gov.au/communitycharter">http://www.health.gov.au/communitycharter</a> c) Australian Government. Home Care Packages Guidelines (2014) d) Australian Government. Commonwealth HACC Guidelines (2012-15) e) Australian Government Department of Health, Health Workforce Australia (2014). National Mental Health Core Capabilities f) Fry, C (2007). Making Values and Ethics Explicit: A New Code of Ethics for the Australian Alcohol and Other Drugs Field. Canberra: Alcohol and other Drugs Council of Australia. g) NSW Dept of Community Services (2009) <u>Brighter Futures: Service Provision Guidelines</u> Updated Sixth Edition h) NSW Health (2008) Drug and Alcohol Psychosocial Interventions Professional Practice Guidelines <a href="http://www0.health.nsw.gov.au/policies/gl/2008/pdf/GL2008_009.pdf">http://www0.health.nsw.gov.au/policies/gl/2008/pdf/GL2008_009.pdf</a> i) Australian Human Rights Commission. (2012) A Human Rights Approach For Ageing And Health: Respect And Choice: Home Based And Residential Care For Older People <a href="https://www.humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/content/age/ageing/human_rights_framework_for_ageing_and_health.pdf">https://www.humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/content/age/ageing/human_rights_framework_for_ageing_and_health.pdf</a>
<b>8. Mercy Services Values</b>	Justice, Respect, Care, Unity, Service

## 6.0 OTHER RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- A.01 Mission and Philosophy
- A.03 Code of Conduct (staff and volunteers)
- A.05 Reconciliation
- C.05 Quality Improvement
- E.02 Service Access and Equity
- E.03 Meeting Individual Needs
- E.04 Client Fees
- E.05 Client Participation, Decision Making & Advocacy
- E.06 Involvement of Families and Friends
- E.08 Complaints
- E.09 Client Records
- E.11 Coordination with other services
- E.13 Cultural Awareness
- E.17 Privacy Policy

- G.06 Safe Home Visiting Policy & Procedure
- G.23 Client Risk Management Policy & Procedure

## 7.0 RELATIONSHIP WITH STANDARDS

<b>Aged Care Accreditation Standards</b>	<b>Home Care Standards</b>	<b>Disability Standards</b>	<b>EQuIP Standards</b>
1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 3.1, 3.2, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8, 3.9, 4.1, 4.2, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6	1.4, 1.5, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.5, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.6, 5.1, 5.2, 5.6, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5, 6.7	1.1.2, 1.1.3, 1.6.1, 1.6.2, 1.6.3,

## 8.0 DOCUMENT CHANGES RECORD

<b>Dates of change</b>	<b>Section altered</b>	<b>Natures of changes made</b>
27/04/2009	Section 5 Service Delivery	First record of document
03/11/2009	Update format and content	Previous principles expanded to list of 13
22/03/2011	7.0 Relationship with Standards	Updated Community Care Common Standards and EQuIP5 Standards
29/06/2012	5.0 References	Added Current Issues, Commonwealth HACC manual
26/11/2012	All Sections	Organisation name updated
28/04/2014	a) 3.0 Policy Statement b) 4.1 Compliance and 4.2 Evaluation c) 7.0 Relationship to Standards	a) Add correct procedure b) New sections c) Replace CCC Standards with Home Care Standards. Also add Aged Care Standards
25/7/2014	a) Sections 1.0 to 5.0 b) 5.0 Reference c) 7.0 Relationship to Standards d) Appendix 1 Comparison with HCP Rights; Appendix 2 Comparison with UN Disability Rights and Appendix 3 UN Convention on the Rights of People with a Disability	a) Rewrite combining previous E.1 Principles of Service Delivery with former E.07 Client Rights and Responsibilities b) Update Codes of Practice; Nurses Code of Ethics; and Evidence c) Update with new Disability Standards d) New sections
Review due 25/07/2017		

Appendix 1. Comparison of Mercy Services Client Rights and Home Care Package Consumer Rights

	Home Care Package Consumer rights <a href="http://www.health.gov.au/communitycharter">http://www.health.gov.au/communitycharter</a>																											
	1a	1b	1c	1d	1e	1f	2a	2b	2c	2d	3a	3b	3c	3d	4a	4b	5a	5b	5c	5d	6a	6b	6c	7a	7b	7c	7d	
<b>Your rights as a client of Mercy Services:</b>																												
1) you will be given as much information as you want, and need, so you can make choices about the service you will receive from us and/or any alternative or complementary services from other organisations;	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓				✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
2) you will be given enough time and assistance so you can make decisions about the service you receive from us;	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓				✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
3) you will be informed of your rights and responsibilities at Mercy Services;	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
4) your service will continue even if you cannot pay	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
5) your access to service is based on your need and our capacity to meet your needs;	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
6) your needs will be reviewed at least once a year, and more frequently if required, to ensure our services meet your individual requirements;	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

	Home Care Package Consumer rights <a href="http://www.health.gov.au/communitycharter">http://www.health.gov.au/communitycharter</a>																											
	1a	1b	1c	1d	1e	1f	2a	2b	2c	2d	3a	3b	3c	3d	4a	4b	5a	5b	5c	5d	6a	6b	6c	7a	7b	7c	7d	
7) your age, gender, cultural background, sexual orientation, life circumstances and aspirations will be considered and accommodated in the planning, delivery and evaluation of your service;	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
8) you will be assisted by staff who will treat you with respect and who will use safe practices that have been proven to work;	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
9) you will be assisted to develop a Mercy Services Care Plan that outlines the services you will receive from us and any fees to be charged;	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
10) your Mercy Services Care Plan will address the full range of your issues and needs, focus on your strength/assets, enable your preferred level of social independence and your chosen participation in social activities and community life;	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
11) you will receive services as agreed and written down in your Care Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	



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	1a	1b	1c	1d	1e	1f	2a	2b	2c	2d	3a	3b	3c	3d	4a	4b	5a	5b	5c	5d	6a	6b	6c	7a	7b	7c	7d	
12) your information will be kept safe and Mercy Services will only share it with others if we have your permission;	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
13) you will be shown the information Mercy Services holds on you and on the assistance provided to you by Mercy Services;	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
14) you can involve anyone you want to support you or to speak on your behalf;	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
15) your Carer and/or the people of your support network will be involved in decisions, communication and service delivery as much as you would like us to include them;	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
16) you, your Carer and your other support person will be invited to have a say about how Mercy Services is run;	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
17) your complaints and comments about Mercy Services will be welcomed and dealt with in a fair, effective and prompt manner;																												
a. you will not be disadvantaged or discriminated against if you make a complaint; and	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

	Home Care Package Consumer rights <a href="http://www.health.gov.au/communitycharter">http://www.health.gov.au/communitycharter</a>																											
	1a	1b	1c	1d	1e	1f	2a	2b	2c	2d	3a	3b	3c	3d	4a	4b	5a	5b	5c	5d	6a	6b	6c	7a	7b	7c	7d	
b. you will be informed of the outcome of investigations into your complaint.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Appendix 3. Comparison of Mercy Services Client Rights and UN Convention on the Rights of People with a Disability

	Relevant Articles of the UN Convention on the Rights of People with a Disability (see Appendix 3)																													
	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30				
Your rights as a client of Mercy Services:																														
1) you will be given as much information as you want, and need, so you can make choices about the service you will receive from us and/or any alternative or complementary services from other organisations;	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
2) you will be given enough time and assistance so you can make decisions about the service you receive from us;	✓		✓	✓	✓							✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
3) you will be informed of your rights and responsibilities at Mercy Services;	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
4) your service will continue even if you cannot pay	✓				✓							✓													✓					
5) your access to service is based on your need and our capacity to meet your needs;	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
6) your needs will be reviewed at least once a year, and more frequently if required, to ensure our services meet your individual requirements;	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
7) your age, gender, cultural background, sexual orientation, life circumstances and aspirations will be considered and accommodated in the planning, delivery and evaluation of your service;	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
8) you will be assisted by staff who will treat you with respect and who will use safe practices that have been proven to work;	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
9) you will be assisted to develop a Mercy Services Care Plan that outlines the services you will receive from us and any fees to be charged;	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		

	Relevant Articles of the UN Convention on the Rights of People with a Disability (see Appendix 3)																									
	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
10) your Mercy Services Care Plan will address the full range of your issues and needs, focus on your strength/assets, enable your preferred level of social independence and your chosen participation in social activities and community life;	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
11) you will receive services as agreed and written down in your Care Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
12) your information will be kept safe and Mercy Services will only share it with others if we have your permission;	✓		✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
13) you will be shown the information Mercy Services holds on you and on the assistance provided to you by Mercy Services;	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
14) you can involve anyone you want to support you or to speak on your behalf;	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
15) your Carer and/or the people of your support network will be involved in decisions, communication and service delivery as much as you would like us to include them;	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
16) you, your Carer and your other support person will be invited to have a say about how Mercy Services is run;	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
17) your complaints and comments about Mercy Services will be welcomed and dealt with in a fair, effective and prompt manner;																										
a. you will not be disadvantaged or discriminated against if you make a complaint; and	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
b. you will be informed of the outcome of investigations into your complaint.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

### Appendix 3. United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

While the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was written for countries (States) Mercy Services aims to ensure that its services reflect the requirements of the relevant Articles of the Convention.

#### Article 5. Equality and non-discrimination

1. States Parties recognize that all persons are equal before and under the law and are entitled without any discrimination to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law.
2. States Parties shall prohibit all discrimination on the basis of disability and guarantee to persons with disabilities equal and effective legal protection against discrimination on all grounds.
3. In order to promote equality and eliminate discrimination, States Parties shall take all appropriate steps to ensure that reasonable accommodation is provided.
4. Specific measures which are necessary to accelerate or achieve de facto equality of persons with disabilities shall not be considered discrimination under the terms of the present Convention.

#### Article 6. Women with disabilities

1. States Parties recognize that women and girls with disabilities are subject to multiple discrimination, and in this regard shall take measures to ensure the full and equal enjoyment by them of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.
2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure the full development, advancement and empowerment of women, for the purpose of guaranteeing them the exercise and enjoyment of the human rights and fundamental freedoms set out in the present Convention.

#### Article 7. Children with disabilities

1. States Parties shall take all necessary measures to ensure the full enjoyment by children with disabilities of all human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis with other children.
2. In all actions concerning children with disabilities, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.
3. States Parties shall ensure that children with disabilities have the right to express their views freely on all matters affecting them, their views being given due weight in accordance with their age and maturity, on an equal basis with other children, and to be provided with disability and age-appropriate assistance to realize that right.

#### Article 8. Awareness-raising

1. States Parties undertake to adopt immediate, effective and appropriate measures:
  - (a) To raise awareness throughout society, including at the family level, regarding persons with disabilities, and to foster respect for the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities;
  - (b) To combat stereotypes, prejudices and harmful practices relating to persons with disabilities, including those based on sex and age, in all areas of life;
  - (c) To promote awareness of the capabilities and contributions of persons with disabilities.
2. Measures to this end include:
  - (a) Initiating and maintaining effective public awareness campaigns designed:
    - (i) To nurture receptiveness to the rights of persons with disabilities;
    - (ii) To promote positive perceptions and greater social awareness towards persons with disabilities;
    - (iii) To promote recognition of the skills, merits and abilities of persons with disabilities, and of their contributions to the workplace and the labour market;
  - (b) Fostering at all levels of the education system, including in all children from an early age, an attitude of respect for the rights of persons with disabilities;
  - (c) Encouraging all organs of the media to portray persons with disabilities in a manner consistent with the purpose of the present Convention;
  - (d) Promoting awareness-training programmes regarding persons with disabilities and the rights of persons with disabilities.

#### Article 9. Accessibility

1. To enable persons with disabilities to live independently and participate fully in all aspects of life, States Parties shall take appropriate measures to ensure to persons with disabilities access, on an equal basis with others, to the physical environment, to transportation, to information and communications, including information and communications technologies and systems, and to other facilities and services open or provided to the public, both in urban and in rural areas. These measures, which shall include the identification and elimination of obstacles and barriers to accessibility, shall apply to, inter alia:

- (a) Buildings, roads, transportation and other indoor and outdoor facilities, including schools, housing, medical facilities and workplaces;
  - (b) Information, communications and other services, including electronic services and emergency services.
2. States Parties shall also take appropriate measures to:
- (a) Develop, promulgate and monitor the implementation of minimum standards and guidelines for the accessibility of facilities and services open or provided to the public;
  - (b) Ensure that private entities that offer facilities and services which are open or provided to the public take into account all aspects of accessibility for persons with disabilities;
  - (c) Provide training for stakeholders on accessibility issues facing persons with disabilities;
  - (d) Provide in buildings and other facilities open to the public signage in Braille and in easy to read and understand forms;
  - (e) Provide forms of live assistance and intermediaries, including guides, readers and professional sign language interpreters, to facilitate accessibility to buildings and other facilities open to the public;
  - (f) Promote other appropriate forms of assistance and support to persons with disabilities to ensure their access to information;
  - (g) Promote access for persons with disabilities to new information and communications technologies and systems, including the Internet;
  - (h) Promote the design, development, production and distribution of accessible information and communications technologies and systems at an early stage, so that these technologies and systems become accessible at minimum cost.

#### **Article 10. Right to life**

States Parties reaffirm that every human being has the inherent right to life and shall take all necessary measures to ensure its effective enjoyment by persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others.

#### **Article 11. Situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies**

States Parties shall take, in accordance with their obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law, all necessary measures to ensure the protection and safety of persons with disabilities in situations of risk, including situations of armed conflict, humanitarian emergencies and the occurrence of natural disasters.

#### **Article 12. Equal recognition before the law**

1. States Parties reaffirm that persons with disabilities have the right to recognition everywhere as persons before the law.
2. States Parties shall recognize that persons with disabilities enjoy legal capacity on an equal basis with others in all aspects of life.
3. States Parties shall take appropriate measures to provide access by persons with disabilities to the support they may require in exercising their legal capacity.
4. States Parties shall ensure that all measures that relate to the exercise of legal capacity provide for appropriate and effective safeguards to prevent abuse in accordance with international human rights law. Such safeguards shall ensure that measures relating to the exercise of legal capacity respect the rights, will and preferences of the person, are free of conflict of interest and undue influence, are proportional and tailored to the person's circumstances, apply for the shortest time possible and are subject to regular review by a competent, independent and impartial authority or judicial body. The safeguards shall be proportional to the degree to which such measures affect the person's rights and interests.
5. Subject to the provisions of this article, States Parties shall take all appropriate and effective measures to ensure the equal right of persons with disabilities to own or inherit property, to control their own financial affairs and to have equal access to bank loans, mortgages and other forms of financial credit, and shall ensure that persons with disabilities are not arbitrarily deprived of their property.

#### **Article 13. Access to justice**

1. States Parties shall ensure effective access to justice for persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others, including through the provision of procedural and age-appropriate accommodations, in order to facilitate their effective role as direct and indirect participants, including as witnesses, in all legal proceedings, including at investigative and other preliminary stages.
2. In order to help to ensure effective access to justice for persons with disabilities, States Parties shall promote appropriate training for those working in the field of administration of justice, including police and prison staff.

#### **Article 14. Liberty and security of the person**

1. States Parties shall ensure that persons with disabilities, on an equal basis with others:
  - (a) Enjoy the right to liberty and security of person;

- (b) Are not deprived of their liberty unlawfully or arbitrarily, and that any deprivation of liberty is in conformity with the law, and that the existence of a disability shall in no case justify a deprivation of liberty.
2. States Parties shall ensure that if persons with disabilities are deprived of their liberty through any process, they are, on an equal basis with others, entitled to guarantees in accordance with international human rights law and shall be treated in compliance with the objectives and principles of this Convention, including by provision of reasonable accommodation.

#### **Article 15. Freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment**

1. No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. In particular, no one shall be subjected without his or her free consent to medical or scientific experimentation.
2. States Parties shall take all effective legislative, administrative, judicial or other measures to prevent persons with disabilities, on an equal basis with others, from being subjected to torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

#### **Article 16. Freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse**

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social, educational and other measures to protect persons with disabilities, both within and outside the home, from all forms of exploitation, violence and abuse, including their gender-based aspects.
2. States Parties shall also take all appropriate measures to prevent all forms of exploitation, violence and abuse by ensuring, inter alia, appropriate forms of gender- and age-sensitive assistance and support for persons with disabilities and their families and caregivers, including through the provision of information and education on how to avoid, recognize and report instances of exploitation, violence and abuse. States Parties shall ensure that protection services are age-, gender- and disability-sensitive.
3. In order to prevent the occurrence of all forms of exploitation, violence and abuse, States Parties shall ensure that all facilities and programmes designed to serve persons with disabilities are effectively monitored by independent authorities.
4. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to promote the physical, cognitive and psychological recovery, rehabilitation and social reintegration of persons with disabilities who become victims of any form of exploitation, violence or abuse, including through the provision of protection services. Such recovery and reintegration shall take place in an environment that fosters the health, welfare, self-respect, dignity and autonomy of the person and takes into account gender- and age-specific needs.
5. States Parties shall put in place effective legislation and policies, including women- and child-focused legislation and policies, to ensure that instances of exploitation, violence and abuse against persons with disabilities are identified, investigated and, where appropriate, prosecuted.

#### **Article 17. Protecting the integrity of the person**

Every person with disabilities has a right to respect for his or her physical and mental integrity on an equal basis with others.

#### **Article 18. Liberty of movement and nationality**

1. States Parties shall recognize the rights of persons with disabilities to liberty of movement, to freedom to choose their residence and to a nationality, on an equal basis with others, including by ensuring that persons with disabilities:
- (a) Have the right to acquire and change a nationality and are not deprived of their nationality arbitrarily or on the basis of disability;
  - (b) Are not deprived, on the basis of disability, of their ability to obtain, possess and utilize documentation of their nationality or other documentation of identification, or to utilize relevant processes such as immigration proceedings, that may be needed to facilitate exercise of the right to liberty of movement;
  - (c) Are free to leave any country, including their own;
  - (d) Are not deprived, arbitrarily or on the basis of disability, of the right to enter their own country.
2. Children with disabilities shall be registered immediately after birth and shall have the right from birth to a name, the right to acquire a nationality and, as far as possible, the right to know and be cared for by their parents.

#### **Article 19. Living independently and being included in the community**

States Parties to this Convention recognize the equal right of all persons with disabilities to live in the community, with choices equal to others, and shall take effective and appropriate measures to facilitate full enjoyment by persons with disabilities of this right and their full inclusion and participation in the community, including by ensuring that:

- (a) Persons with disabilities have the opportunity to choose their place of residence and where and with whom they live on an equal basis with others and are not obliged to live in a particular living arrangement;
- (b) Persons with disabilities have access to a range of in-home, residential and other community support services, including personal assistance necessary to support living and inclusion in the community, and to prevent isolation or segregation from the community;

- (c) Community services and facilities for the general population are available on an equal basis to persons with disabilities and are responsive to their needs.

**Article 20. Personal mobility**

States Parties shall take effective measures to ensure personal mobility with the greatest possible independence for persons with disabilities, including by:

- (a) Facilitating the personal mobility of persons with disabilities in the manner and at the time of their choice, and at affordable cost;
- (b) Facilitating access by persons with disabilities to quality mobility aids, devices, assistive technologies and forms of live assistance and intermediaries, including by making them available at affordable cost;
- (c) Providing training in mobility skills to persons with disabilities and to specialist staff working with persons with disabilities;
- (d) Encouraging entities that produce mobility aids, devices and assistive technologies to take into account all aspects of mobility for persons with disabilities.

**Article 21. Freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information**

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that persons with disabilities can exercise the right to freedom of expression and opinion, including the freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas on an equal basis with others and through all forms of communication of their choice, as defined in article 2 of the present Convention, including by:

- (a) Providing information intended for the general public to persons with disabilities in accessible formats and technologies appropriate to different kinds of disabilities in a timely manner and without additional cost;
- (b) Accepting and facilitating the use of sign languages, Braille, augmentative and alternative communication, and all other accessible means, modes and formats of communication of their choice by persons with disabilities in official interactions;
- (c) Urging private entities that provide services to the general public, including through the Internet, to provide information and services in accessible and usable formats for persons with disabilities;
- (d) Encouraging the mass media, including providers of information through the Internet, to make their services accessible to persons with disabilities;
- (e) Recognizing and promoting the use of sign languages.

**Article 22. Respect for privacy**

1. No person with disabilities, regardless of place of residence or living arrangements, shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his or her privacy, family, home or correspondence or other types of communication or to unlawful attacks on his or her honour and reputation. Persons with disabilities have the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.
2. States Parties shall protect the privacy of personal, health and rehabilitation information of persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others.

**Article 23. Respect for home and the family**

1. States Parties shall take effective and appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against persons with disabilities in all matters relating to marriage, family, parenthood and relationships, on an equal basis with others, so as to ensure that:
  - (a) The right of all persons with disabilities who are of marriageable age to marry and to found a family on the basis of free and full consent of the intending spouses is recognized;
  - (b) The rights of persons with disabilities to decide freely and responsibly on the number and spacing of their children and to have access to age-appropriate information, reproductive and family planning education are recognized, and the means necessary to enable them to exercise these rights are provided;
  - (c) Persons with disabilities, including children, retain their fertility on an equal basis with others.
2. States Parties shall ensure the rights and responsibilities of persons with disabilities, with regard to guardianship, wardship, trusteeship, adoption of children or similar institutions, where these concepts exist in national legislation; in all cases the best interests of the child shall be paramount. States Parties shall render appropriate assistance to persons with disabilities in the performance of their child-rearing responsibilities.
3. States Parties shall ensure that children with disabilities have equal rights with respect to family life. With a view to realizing these rights, and to prevent concealment, abandonment, neglect and segregation of children with disabilities, States Parties shall undertake to provide early and comprehensive information, services and support to children with disabilities and their families.
4. States Parties shall ensure that a child shall not be separated from his or her parents against their will, except when competent authorities subject to judicial review determine, in accordance with applicable law and procedures, that such separation is necessary for the best interests of the child. In no case shall a child be separated from parents on the basis of a disability of either the child or one or both of the parents.



5. States Parties shall, where the immediate family is unable to care for a child with disabilities, undertake every effort to provide alternative care within the wider family, and failing that, within the community in a family setting.

#### Article 24. Education

1. States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to education. With a view to realizing this right without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity, States Parties shall ensure an inclusive education system at all levels and life long learning directed to:
  - (a) The full development of human potential and sense of dignity and self-worth, and the strengthening of respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and human diversity;
  - (b) The development by persons with disabilities of their personality, talents and creativity, as well as their mental and physical abilities, to their fullest potential;
  - (c) Enabling persons with disabilities to participate effectively in a free society.
2. In realizing this right, States Parties shall ensure that:
  - (a) Persons with disabilities are not excluded from the general education system on the basis of disability, and that children with disabilities are not excluded from free and compulsory primary education, or from secondary education, on the basis of disability;
  - (b) Persons with disabilities can access an inclusive, quality and free primary education and secondary education on an equal basis with others in the communities in which they live;
  - (c) Reasonable accommodation of the individual's requirements is provided;
  - (d) Persons with disabilities receive the support required, within the general education system, to facilitate their effective education;
  - (e) Effective individualized support measures are provided in environments that maximize academic and social development, consistent with the goal of full inclusion.
3. States Parties shall enable persons with disabilities to learn life and social development skills to facilitate their full and equal participation in education and as members of the community. To this end, States Parties shall take appropriate measures, including:
  - (a) Facilitating the learning of Braille, alternative script, augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication and orientation and mobility skills, and facilitating peer support and mentoring;
  - (b) Facilitating the learning of sign language and the promotion of the linguistic identity of the deaf community;
  - (c) Ensuring that the education of persons, and in particular children, who are blind, deaf or deafblind, is delivered in the most appropriate languages and modes and means of communication for the individual, and in environments which maximize academic and social development.
4. In order to help ensure the realization of this right, States Parties shall take appropriate measures to employ teachers, including teachers with disabilities, who are qualified in sign language and/or Braille, and to train professionals and staff who work at all levels of education. Such training shall incorporate disability awareness and the use of appropriate augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication, educational techniques and materials to support persons with disabilities.
5. States Parties shall ensure that persons with disabilities are able to access general tertiary education, vocational training, adult education and lifelong learning without discrimination and on an equal basis with others. To this end, States Parties shall ensure that reasonable accommodation is provided to persons with disabilities.

#### Article 25. Health

States Parties recognize that persons with disabilities have the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health without discrimination on the basis of disability. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure access for persons with disabilities to health services that are gender-sensitive, including health-related rehabilitation. In particular, States Parties shall:

- (a) Provide persons with disabilities with the same range, quality and standard of free or affordable health care and programmes as provided to other persons, including in the area of sexual and reproductive health and population-based public health programmes;
- (b) Provide those health services needed by persons with disabilities specifically because of their disabilities, including early identification and intervention as appropriate, and services designed to minimize and prevent further disabilities, including among children and older persons;
- (c) Provide these health services as close as possible to people's own communities, including in rural areas;
- (d) Require health professionals to provide care of the same quality to persons with disabilities as to others, including on the basis of free and informed consent by, inter alia, raising awareness of the human rights, dignity, autonomy and needs of persons with disabilities through training and the promulgation of ethical standards for public and private health care;
- (e) Prohibit discrimination against persons with disabilities in the provision of health insurance, and life insurance where such insurance is permitted by national law, which shall be provided in a fair and reasonable manner;
- (f) Prevent discriminatory denial of health care or health services or food and fluids on the basis of disability.

**Article 26. Habilitation and rehabilitation**

1. States Parties shall take effective and appropriate measures, including through peer support, to enable persons with disabilities to attain and maintain maximum independence, full physical, mental, social and vocational ability, and full inclusion and participation in all aspects of life. To that end, States Parties shall organize, strengthen and extend comprehensive habilitation and rehabilitation services and programmes, particularly in the areas of health, employment, education and social services, in such a way that these services and programmes:
  - (a) Begin at the earliest possible stage, and are based on the multidisciplinary assessment of individual needs and strengths;
  - (b) Support participation and inclusion in the community and all aspects of society, are voluntary, and are available to persons with disabilities as close as possible to their own communities, including in rural areas.
2. States Parties shall promote the development of initial and continuing training for professionals and staff working in habilitation and rehabilitation services.
3. States Parties shall promote the availability, knowledge and use of assistive devices and technologies, designed for persons with disabilities, as they relate to habilitation and rehabilitation.

**Article 27. Work and employment**

1. States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to work, on an equal basis with others; this includes the right to the opportunity to gain a living by work freely chosen or accepted in a labour market and work environment that is open, inclusive and accessible to persons with disabilities. States Parties shall safeguard and promote the realization of the right to work, including for those who acquire a disability during the course of employment, by taking appropriate steps, including through legislation, to, inter alia:
  - (a) Prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability with regard to all matters concerning all forms of employment, including conditions of recruitment, hiring and employment, continuance of employment, career advancement and safe and healthy working conditions;
  - (b) Protect the rights of persons with disabilities, on an equal basis with others, to just and favourable conditions of work, including equal opportunities and equal remuneration for work of equal value, safe and healthy working conditions, including protection from harassment, and the redress of grievances;
  - (c) Ensure that persons with disabilities are able to exercise their labour and trade union rights on an equal basis with others;
  - (d) Enable persons with disabilities to have effective access to general technical and vocational guidance programmes, placement services and vocational and continuing training;
  - (e) Promote employment opportunities and career advancement for persons with disabilities in the labour market, as well as assistance in finding, obtaining, maintaining and returning to employment;
  - (f) Promote opportunities for self-employment, entrepreneurship, the development of cooperatives and starting one's own business;
  - (g) Employ persons with disabilities in the public sector;
  - (h) Promote the employment of persons with disabilities in the private sector through appropriate policies and measures, which may include affirmative action programmes, incentives and other measures;
  - (i) Ensure that reasonable accommodation is provided to persons with disabilities in the workplace;
  - (j) Promote the acquisition by persons with disabilities of work experience in the open labour market;
  - (k) Promote vocational and professional rehabilitation, job retention and return-to-work programmes for persons with disabilities.
2. States Parties shall ensure that persons with disabilities are not held in slavery or in servitude, and are protected, on an equal basis with others, from forced or compulsory labour.

**Article 28. Adequate standard of living and social protection**

1. States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to an adequate standard of living for themselves and their families, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions, and shall take appropriate steps to safeguard and promote the realization of this right without discrimination on the basis of disability.
2. States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to social protection and to the enjoyment of that right without discrimination on the basis of disability, and shall take appropriate steps to safeguard and promote the realization of this right, including measures:
  - (a) To ensure equal access by persons with disabilities to clean water services, and to ensure access to appropriate and affordable services, devices and other assistance for disability-related needs;
  - (b) To ensure access by persons with disabilities, in particular women and girls with disabilities and older persons with disabilities, to social protection programmes and poverty reduction programmes;
  - (c) To ensure access by persons with disabilities and their families living in situations of poverty to assistance from the State with disability-related expenses, including adequate training, counselling, financial assistance and respite care;
  - (d) To ensure access by persons with disabilities to public housing programmes;

- (e) To ensure equal access by persons with disabilities to retirement benefits and programmes.

#### **Article 29. Participation in political and public life**

States Parties shall guarantee to persons with disabilities political rights and the opportunity to enjoy them on an equal basis with others, and shall undertake to:

- (a) Ensure that persons with disabilities can effectively and fully participate in political and public life on an equal basis with others, directly or through freely chosen representatives, including the right and opportunity for persons with disabilities to vote and be elected, inter alia, by:
- (i) Ensuring that voting procedures, facilities and materials are appropriate, accessible and easy to understand and use;
  - (ii) Protecting the right of persons with disabilities to vote by secret ballot in elections and public referendums without intimidation, and to stand for elections, to effectively hold office and perform all public functions at all levels of government, facilitating the use of assistive and new technologies where appropriate;
  - (iii) Guaranteeing the free expression of the will of persons with disabilities as electors and to this end, where necessary, at their request, allowing assistance in voting by a person of their own choice;
- (b) Promote actively an environment in which persons with disabilities can effectively and fully participate in the conduct of public affairs, without discrimination and on an equal basis with others, and encourage their participation in public affairs, including:
- (i) Participation in non-governmental organizations and associations concerned with the public and political life of the country, and in the activities and administration of political parties;
  - (ii) Forming and joining organizations of persons with disabilities to represent persons with disabilities at international, national, regional and local levels.

#### **Article 30. Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport**

1. States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to take part on an equal basis with others in cultural life, and shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that persons with disabilities:
  - (a) Enjoy access to cultural materials in accessible formats;
  - (b) Enjoy access to television programmes, films, theatre and other cultural activities, in accessible formats;
  - (c) Enjoy access to places for cultural performances or services, such as theatres, museums, cinemas, libraries and tourism services, and, as far as possible, enjoy access to monuments and sites of national cultural importance.
2. States Parties shall take appropriate measures to enable persons with disabilities to have the opportunity to develop and utilize their creative, artistic and intellectual potential, not only for their own benefit, but also for the enrichment of society.
3. States Parties shall take all appropriate steps, in accordance with international law, to ensure that laws protecting intellectual property rights do not constitute an unreasonable or discriminatory barrier to access by persons with disabilities to cultural materials.
4. Persons with disabilities shall be entitled, on an equal basis with others, to recognition and support of their specific cultural and linguistic identity, including sign languages and deaf culture.
5. With a view to enabling persons with disabilities to participate on an equal basis with others in recreational, leisure and sporting activities, States Parties shall take appropriate measures:
  - (a) To encourage and promote the participation, to the fullest extent possible, of persons with disabilities in mainstream sporting activities at all levels;
  - (b) To ensure that persons with disabilities have an opportunity to organize, develop and participate in disability-specific sporting and recreational activities and, to this end, encourage the provision, on an equal basis with others, of appropriate instruction, training and resources;
  - (c) To ensure that persons with disabilities have access to sporting, recreational and tourism venues;
  - (d) To ensure that children with disabilities have equal access with other children to participation in play, recreation and leisure and sporting activities, including those activities in the school system;
  - (e) To ensure that persons with disabilities have access to services from those involved in the organization of recreational, tourism, leisure and sporting activities.