

## Advocacy Policy

<b>Approved by</b>	Board of Healthia Limited
<b>Approval date</b>	01/05/2023
<b>Next scheduled review</b>	01/05/2025
<b>Covered under policy</b>	<p><b>Entities:</b> Healthia Limited, My FootDr (Aust) Ltd, Allsports (Aust) Ltd, Extend Rehab Pty Ltd, iOrthotics Pty Ltd, Access Ortho Pty Ltd, DBS Medical Pty Ltd, Natural Fit Footwear Pty Ltd, The Optical Company Pty Ltd, BIM Physiotherapy Group Holding Limited, Motion Health Group Holding Limited (NZ) and any other entity that is a subsidiary of Healthia Limited (collectively referred to throughout this policy as Healthia)</p> <p><b>Who:</b> This policy applies to all Healthia staff and to people who work within Healthia including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Board of Directors of any Healthia entity and Board Sub-Committee Members</li> <li>2. Executive, managers, clinic class shareholders and employees (whether full time, part time, casual, permanent or temporary), and</li> <li>3. Volunteers, students, contractors and consultants</li> </ol>
<b>Related policies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Code of Conduct and Behaviour Policy</li> <li>• NDIS Code of Conduct Policy</li> </ul>
<b>Related documents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)</li> <li>• National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 (Cth)</li> </ul>
<b>Policy owner/s</b>	Clinical Advisory Committee

## Purpose

To outline Healthia's policies and processes with respect to patient advocacy.

## Scope

Healthia's Advocacy Policy applies to all Healthia representatives who work within Healthia including:

1. Board of Directors of any Healthia entity and Board Sub-Committee Members
2. Executives, managers, clinic class shareholders and employees (whether full time, part time, casual, permanent, or temporary), and
3. Volunteers, students, contractors, and consultants

The policy applies to all sites and services.

## Policy

### 1. Principles

Advocacy is acting, speaking or writing to promote and protect the human rights and welfare of a vulnerable person or group of people. Examples of vulnerable people include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, children and their families, refugees, the elderly, the LGBTQIA community, the homeless, and people with disability. Advocacy services for people with disability in Australia are funded by The National Disability Advocacy Program (NDAP) which ensures there is no cost for patients or service providers to access advocacy services.

## 2. Types of advocacy

Types of advocacy include:

- Individual advocacy - a one-on-one advocacy aimed to prevent or address instances of discrimination or abuse to a person with disability
- Systemic advocacy - advocacy to influence or secure long-term changes to ensure the collective rights and interests of people with disability
- Family advocacy - when a parent or family member advocates with and on behalf of a family member with disability
- Group advocacy - advocacy for a group of people with disability, such as a group of people living in shared accommodation
- Citizen advocacy - where community volunteers advocate for a person with a disability over the long-term, supported by a citizen advocacy organisation
- Legal advocacy - where a lawyer provides legal representation, pursues positive changes to legislation, or gives legal advice to people with disability about discrimination and human rights.

**Individual advocates can:**

- Provide direct advocacy on behalf of a person
- Provide information and advice so a person can advocate for themselves (e.g. deal with a landlord, go to court, deal with police, get legal advice, negotiate deals, deal with problems at work or education, deal with guardianship and financial matters)
- Connect a patient to relevant services e.g., solicitor
- Help a patient work through problems
- Help a patient make formal actions on matters e.g., assist to make a complaint with the anti-discrimination board.

**Advocates do not:**

- Provide counselling
- Make decisions for another person
- Provide mediation
- Provide case management.

## 3. Advocacy commitment

- Upon commencing services, new patients are informed of the role of advocates, their right to use advocates and advocacy services, and how to contact and involve advocacy agencies
- Patients are supported if they choose to self-advocate, change advocates, or withdraw their authority for an advocate
- If a patient needs an advocate and a family or carer cannot provide it, Healthia will attempt to introduce an advocate chosen by the patient
- A patient may seek an advocate by contacting the Aged and Disability Advocacy Australia (ADA Australia). For more information, visit [www.adaaustralia.com.au](http://www.adaaustralia.com.au) or call 1800 818 338
- If a patient requests one of our team members to be an advocate, their authority to act is recorded along with the issues important to the patient and their goals
- Will work with the advocate chosen by a patient and involve the advocate in all areas of the patient's service planning and decision making
- Whenever a patient is assisted by an advocate, we will document this.

## Related Policies

Other Healthia policies that should be read in conjunction with this policy are:

- Code of Conduct and Behaviour Policy
- NDIS Code of Conduct Policy

## Related Documents

Each employee that is governed by a professional association or body must also be aware of their obligations under each the associations/ organisation/ agent or statutory obligations. Other relevant resources in relation to this policy are:

- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
- National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 (Cth)