

# Consenting to Student Therapists

## Information for Direct Support Professionals

### Your role as a direct support professional

- Help the person you support to make a decision.
- Help seek consent from the person responsible (if needed).
- Make and attend appointments with the person you support.

### What is a student?

- A student is a person who is learning to become a therapist. The student must work with qualified therapists to help learn practical skills.
- The person you support may be asked if they would like to work with a student.

### Why work with a student?

- The student might be able to provide extra services or appointments.
- Students have access to the most recent research through their study.
- The person you support might enjoy working with a student.
- Working with students helps train the next generation of therapists.

### How will risks be managed?

- Students are monitored by their supervisors.
- The student must follow the same professional standards, policies and privacy laws that the therapist follows.
- The student will have professional insurance in place.

### Questions to ask

The person you support has a choice about whether they want to work with a student. To help them decide they might ask:

- Where will the student work with them? e.g. home, school, work
- How will the student work with them? e.g. weekly
- How will the student be supervised?



- How much will it cost?
- What should they do if they change their mind about working with a student

## Helping the person you support to make a decision

The person you support might need help to make a decision about working with a student. You can do this by:

- Making sure the information has been provided to the person you support in a way that they best understand.
- Giving the person you support the time they need to make their decision.
- Encouraging the person you support to talk with other people to help them make a decision.
- Helping the person you support to communicate their decision.
- Ensuring the person you support knows they can change their mind at any time about working with students.

## What if the person you support cannot make a decision?

If the person you support is unable to make a decision, then their 'person responsible' may be asked to make a decision. The person responsible could be:

1. A guardian who has the function to consent to the service.
2. A spouse or partner.
3. An unpaid carer who provides support on a regular basis.
4. A relative or friend who has a close relationship with the person.
5. A parent or guardian for a person under the age of 16.

## Providing feedback

- You or the person you support can give feedback about working with a student. This might include what you liked and what you didn't like.
- Feedback can be given to the supervisor, student, organisation or university.



The **Consenting to Student Placements: A Guide for Families, Carers and Direct Support Professionals** provides more detailed information about providing consent for working with students.

A copy of the guide can be found at: <https://www.benevolent.org.au/about-us/professional-resources/disability>