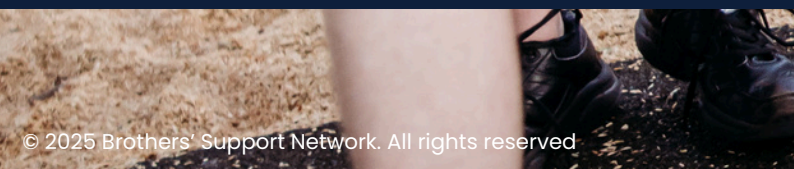


**Changing Lives for the Better**



# **PARTICIPANT & FAMILY HANDBOOK**



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## 1. Introduction



# Welcome to **Brothers Support Network**

This handbook explains the disability services we provide and how they may assist you in achieving your goals. Importantly, this handbook explains how we partner with you to meet your support needs.

## Welcome from our Founder – **Max**



**Max Gow**  
Founder

I am the founder of Brothers Support Network. I am driven by living life with passion and purpose regardless of any challenges and obstacles that are put in our way.

I had supported young guys in the disability space before, and I was thinking about what life feels like for those who don't have social networks or mates to call on.

I could see that many of the participants I worked with needed what I had taken for granted. Healthy routines and habits, a positive mindset, and most of all, a consistent, brother-like figure they could depend on. Feeling part of things and having a mentor gives meaning to life.

# 1. Introduction



Being held back from the things I loved because of injury made me realise there's a huge need for support workers that bring the things males biologically crave.

Mateship, stability, connection, belonging.

In January 2022, I put my industry knowledge, life experience, and vision together to create Brothers Support Network.

We meet the need for positive male role models for boys and men seeking disability support in the Brisbane, Gold Coast, and Sunshine Coast areas. Person-centred and empathetic, we're here to understand you and walk with you, changing your life, every day.

Brothers is not your average support service, we have put together a select team of support workers who live and work by our Brothers' values and ideals, and I believe our team at Brothers can make a difference and change people's lives for the better despite them having what may be considered a disability.



Welcome to the Brothers community!

**Max Gow**  
**FOUNDER**

# 1. Introduction



## About Us

*Brothers Support Network* is a group of vibrant, passionate young men striving to make a real difference in the lives of the people we care for.

We provide a service to the disability community that is invaluable. We build relationships based on the foundation of a big brother and mateship. We genuinely want to make a difference and help the clients in our care to live their best possible lives.

Our support is based on helping our clients pursue their passions and feel a sense of purpose. Helping our brothers live their lives, smashing goals.

<b>Address</b>	10 Immarna St, Albion, QLD, 4010
<b>Phone</b>	1300 002 760
<b>Email</b>	<a href="mailto:info@brotherssupportnetwork.com">info@brotherssupportnetwork.com</a>

# 1. Introduction



For <b>onboarding queries</b>	Contact the Recruitment & Growth Manager on 0449 636 699 or <a href="mailto:careers@brotherssupportnetwork.com">careers@brotherssupportnetwork.com</a>
For <b>invoice queries</b>	Contact the Accounts Department at <a href="mailto:accounts@brotherssupportnetwork.com">accounts@brotherssupportnetwork.com</a>
For <b>shift queries</b>	Contact your Team Leader. (A Team Leader will be appointed to you when you start with us and you will be provided their contact details). If you are unable to get in touch with your Team Leader, please contact our Operations Manager on 0420 274 794.
For <b>concerns, questions, or feedback</b>	Contact the Operations Manager on 0420 274 794 or at <a href="mailto:operations@brotherssupportnetwork.com">operations@brotherssupportnetwork.com</a>

If you are unsure who to contact, please call our office on 1300 002 760 and we will help you find the right person to assist you with your query.

# 1. Introduction



## Our Purpose

Changing lives for the better.

## Our Values

At Brothers, we truly believe that our team must live our values in order to provide the highest standard of care to our clients. Our four core values are:



<p><b>Mateship</b></p> <p>Create bonds I've got your back Your big brother, companion, and equal</p>	<p><b>Passion</b></p> <p>Passionate about changing lives Live life to the max Vibrant</p>
<p><b>Growth Mindset</b></p> <p>Helping others grow, develop, and reach their full potential Take responsibility for personal development Guide, advise, and support you to be your best</p>	<p><b>Humility</b></p> <p>No one is better or worse, we are all human Be vulnerable, we are not perfect No arrogance</p>

Our staff endeavour to live our values whilst they are working but also in their daily life.



# Words We Use and What They Mean

## 1 **Support worker or worker**

The Director, senior management, employees, contractors, other service providers, or organisational volunteers.

## 2 **Participant**

You, your family, carer or advocate.

## 3 **Workplace or environment**

Service delivery, including in your home, during transport, community spaces, public spaces, or other facilities.

## 4 **Service**

The services and activities we deliver are related to a Service Agreement and Support Plan.

## 5 **We, us, and our**

Means the legal entity with the highest authority of Brothers Support Network.



## 2. Getting Started with Us



### Our Services

Brothers Support Network offers support and services to people with disabilities. We are funded under NDIS to provide the following services: Community Access, Assistance with Daily Living, Group Days / Community Events, STA / Respite.

### Access and Entry Requirements

To be eligible for the NDIS, you must:

- have a permanent and significant disability or a developmental delay
- be an Australian citizen, hold a Permanent Visa or a Protected Special Category Visa
- be under 65 years of age
- require support from a person or equipment to do everyday activities.

To be eligible for our NDIS services, you must:

- meet the NDIS eligibility criteria
- have an NDIS plan that identifies the services provided
- have funds available in your plan to pay for our services.

Note: We do offer a fee for service. Please let us know if you wish to pay the full fees.



## 2. Getting Started with Us



# Onboarding Process

You can contact us via phone, email or our online form to enquire about our services. We will then make contact with you to see if we are the right fit for you and advise you of the next steps to getting started with us!

## The Onboarding Process



## **2. Getting Started with Us**



### ***Your Service Agreement***

Once Brothers Support Network has been selected as your service provider, we will develop a Service Agreement with you, your family, or your advocate (if required). This Service Agreement will list the schedule of support, the responsibilities of Brothers Support Network, your responsibilities (as a participant), your information consent form, and our cancellation policy.

### ***Your Support Plan***

Your Support Plan is developed with you as its focus. We will create the plan in collaboration with you, your family or advocate, our team, and any other required support professionals. Assessments will be undertaken before you receive service from Brothers Support Network.

The plan will focus on you as an individual and be designed to promote your independence. We will record your unique skills and strengths, together with your goals and aspirations.

The following documents will help create your individualised Support Plan:

- Individual Risk Assessment Profile
- Personal Emergency and Disaster Plan
- Medical Emergency Plan
- Participant Safe Environment Risk Assessment
- Safe Environment Checklist Home
- Contingency Emergency and Disaster Plan

## 2. Getting Started with Us



# Medication Requirements

Our Operations team will discuss your medication requirements with you and then complete an assessment regarding your medication needs. If our team has concerns regarding your ability to manage your medication safely, they will complete a Self-Administration of Medication Assessment.

If you need assistance with your medication, all oral medications will be provided in a Webster Pack (or another multi-dose-controlled medication pack). During your assessment, our team will determine if you have any issues with taking medication and how we can arrange a medication plan to support you.



## 3. Your Rights



### Consent

When you consent, you give your permission or say that it is okay for something to happen. You must always fully understand why a person requires your consent. If you have any doubt about this, you should ask our Director, or your advocate, for help.

You can withdraw your consent at any time. For example, the withdrawal of consent means if you are participating in a particular program and decide that you do not like the program, you can tell us that you no longer want to participate.



Brothers Support Network will need your consent to:

- read the information that service providers have about you and for us to provide any information about you to other service providers, your family, or your advocate
- collect data relating to you for funding bodies
- ask people to attend your person-centred planning meeting
- carry out any training programs or behaviour change programs we want to put in place for you
- assist you in seeing a doctor or a dentist
- provide appropriate services and supports
- provide you with medication.

## 3. *Your Rights*



Usually, consent will be documented in your Support Plan. However, we will ask you to sign a consent form to release your personal information. We will always ask for your permission and explain the reasons for accessing your information when providing it to a Support Worker or another service provider. If you are unsure during this process, you should ask your advocate for help.

If you feel you cannot consent to issues in your life, we can talk to your family or advocate and ask them to assist. If you do not have family who can make decisions for you, we will help you apply to the court, or other government bodies, to appoint a Guardian who can legally help you make these decisions.

### ***Privacy***

Brothers Support Network complies with all relevant privacy legislation and has systems for the collection, use, disclosure, quality, security, accuracy, and correction of personal information relating to you as our participant.

Your privacy and dignity will always be maintained. You will be asked to sign a Participant Information Consent Form to collect, use, and disclose your personal information to comply with the Privacy Act 1988. Information regarding your privacy is also included in your Service Agreement.



# Participant Access to Personal Records

Brothers Support Network keeps personal records of our participants. At any time, you, or your advocate/guardian, can request access to your personal information. Included below is the process we will follow to provide you with your personal information/records:

1. You, or your appointed advocate/guardian, request access to your records, verbally or in writing.
2. The management team will confirm your request within forty-eight (48) hours.
3. The management team will update you about releasing your information within seven (7) working days.
4. A reply to your request for information will be provided within two weeks of your original application.
5. Personal information is only released with the approval of the Director.
6. When consent is received, we will provide your personal information to the agreed person.
7. The Director can assist you in understanding the information and will explain the terminology used.
8. On infrequent occasions, access to records may be denied. Denial is based on advice received from our legal representative. Should this situation arise, the denial will be discussed with you, your family, and your advocate.

## 3. Your Rights



### **Data Security**

Brothers Support Network data is password-protected and stored on a secure online cloud server. Participant files are kept for seven years, as required by legislation. Aboriginal or Torres Strait Island participant files are stored indefinitely.

### **Money Handling and Property Assistance**

Your money, or other property, will only be used with you and for the purposes you request.

If you require Brothers Support Network to provide financial assistance, you, your family, or your advocate must approve the arrangement and complete a Participant Money and Property Consent Form.



If your Support Plan requires Brothers Support Network staff to be involved in handling your money, strict procedures will be followed to protect you from financial abuse. Your Service Agreement and Support Plan will outline the assistance you need relating to your money and property.



### 3. Your Rights



Our staff are not permitted to provide you with financial advice or information other than what is required under your Support Plan.

If our staff need to hold your house key or have access to a house code, to provide your services, the Authority to Hold Key Form will need to be completed by yourself and our Director on your admission to our service, or when the need arises.

When you no longer want us to hold your house key or know your house code, you must complete a Withdrawal of Authority to Hold Key Form. The Director will help you to do this.

## Legal Documents

The Support Workers of Brothers Support Network are not permitted to advise you on making or changing your Will. Support Workers are not allowed to witness any legal documents, including a Will.



## **4. About Our Services**



### **Re-negotiating an Agreement**

When your needs or circumstances change (e.g. Support Worker or Advocate), or where you request an increase or decrease in the number or type of services, re-negotiating your Brothers Support Network Service Agreement may be required. Our Operations Manager will advise you if this is the case and arrange for a revised Service Agreement to be prepared.

### **Fees / Rates**

We follow the NDIS guidelines for our pricing. We claim funding under Core (Assist with Daily Living and Community Access) and Capacity Building. If you would like to discuss funding and your plan in detail, please call the office on 1300 002 760.

### **Transition and Re-entry to Our Service**

Your needs and interests may change while working with our service, which may mean you need to transition (move) to another provider. Brothers Support Network will assist and support you during this process. With your approval, we will work with the other service providers to ensure your smooth transition meets your needs.

## **4. About Our Services**



If you leave our service and want to return, we would be pleased for you to come back. You will need to:

- meet the program requirements to access funding, including prioritisation
- be placed on a waiting list (if no positions are currently available) and be contacted once a position is available
- undergo a risk assessment that reviews the risks relating to staying and leaving our service
- undertake a screening assessment
- agree to the conditions of the program
- pay any relevant fees.

During temporary absences, such as a hospital visit or respite, our team will regularly contact you, your family, or your advocate when planning your entry to or exit from our service. We will also assist you in contacting the hospital to book any appointments.

## ***Withdrawal from Our Service***

When using our services, you may terminate them for any reason, and at any time, you need to provide us with the length of notice included in your Service Agreement.

You may request that your services be suspended as per your Brothers Support Network Service Agreement. You may leave Australia on holiday or for another reason. Note: there is a grace period of six (6) weeks before the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) reviews your need to continue our services.

## 4. About Our Services



Brothers Support Network may choose to stop providing services for the following reasons:

- the participant does not meet the responsibilities listed within this Handbook. Note: a participant will never be excluded from service provision because of a 'dignity of risk' choice, as long as this choice doesn't result in a direct breach of your agreement with Brothers Support Network.
- the participant engages another service provider
- the participant is unable to meet the reasonable conditions outlined in the Service Agreement
- the participant has had no support or contact with Brothers Support Network (despite multiple follow-ups from Brothers Support Network) for a period of 2 months or longer
- the participant and/or family demonstrate unacceptable behaviour such as violence, aggression, property damage, or any criminal activity

## ***Continuity of Support/Cancellations***

The Operations Manager will arrange your support schedule, so you know who will work with you to deliver your services and support. We will provide you with a Support Worker or a team of Support Workers who have the skills and the knowledge you require. Wherever possible, we will meet your support requests, e.g. you would like a Support Worker who speaks the same language, is from the same culture, or meets other specific criteria.

## 4. About Our Services

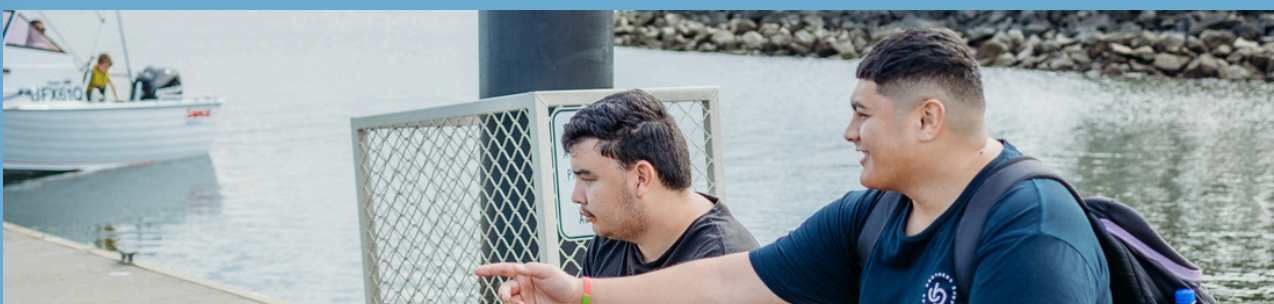


### ***What will happen if your Support Worker is unavailable?***

- Brothers Support Network will contact other Support Workers with relevant qualifications as suitable replacements.
- Where possible, we will provide a Support Worker who has worked with you and is aware of your requirements.
- Where possible, we will advise you of the details of the replacement Support Worker.
- We will gather your feedback on the replacement Support Worker member on completion of the service.
- The replacement Support Worker will be sensitive to your needs and ensure that care is consistent with your expressed preferences.
- We will seek your approval for the placement Support Worker and will never place someone to support you who you do not wish.

### ***What will happen if no replacement Support Workers are available?***

We will always do our best to find you a replacement Support Worker. In the unfortunate circumstance that we can not find you a Support Worker, a cancellation may occur. If this occurs, you will not be charged.





# ***Incident Management***

While we hope that a critical incident does not occur, in the event it does, we are prepared to support and assist you by following procedures that appropriately deal with a critical incident.

A critical incident is an event (or alleged event) that occurs because of, or during, the delivery of services and has caused, or is likely to cause, a significant negative impact on your health, safety, or well-being.

If an incident does occur, we will engage the required authorities to support you during this time.

Critical incidents that relate to you may include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- an unexpected death, serious injury, or alleged assault (including physical, sexual abuse, sexual assault, or indecent assault) that occurs as a result or during the delivery of services
- allegations of serious, unlawful, or criminal activity or conduct involving a Brothers Support Network employee, subcontractor, or volunteer that has caused, or has the potential to cause, serious harm to you
- an incident where you assault or cause serious harm to others (including our employees, volunteers, or contractors), as a result, or during the delivery, of services
- a severe fire, natural disaster, accident, or another incident that will, or is likely to prevent service provision, or that results in closure or significant damage to premises or property, or that poses a substantial threat to your health and safety.

## 4. About Our Services



Brothers Support Network has established procedures that identify, manage, and resolve incidents which include:

- Support Worker members will report all incidents to the Operations Manager
- completion of an incident report that identifies and records an incident
- The Director is responsible for reporting incidents that are 'reportable incidents' to the NDIS Commissioner and other required agencies
- compliance with the National Disability Insurance Scheme (Incident Management and Reportable) Rules 2018
- supporting and assisting you if you are affected by the incident
- review of the incident by the Operations Manager if you or others were affected
- collaborating with you, your family, and/or advocate to manage and resolve the incident
- reviewing the incident and making necessary amendments to systems and processes to reduce the risk of recurrence.





# ***Charter of Rights***

## ***Your Rights***

As an individual, you have many rights, and we support and assist you in identifying and exercising these rights to achieve your goals. Brothers Support Network adopts a policy of non-discrimination regarding eligibility and entry to our services and when providing support services to you.

You have the right to:

- access supports that promote, uphold, and respect your legal and human rights
- exercise informed choice and control to maximise independence
- freedom of expression, self-determination, and personal decision-making
- access supports that respect your culture, diversity, values, and beliefs
- a support service that respects your right to privacy and dignity
- be helped to make informed choices that will maximise independence
- receive support that is free from violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation, or discrimination
- receive supports which are overseen by strong operational management
- receive services that are safeguarded by informed and compliant risk and incident management systems
- receive services from workers who are competent, appropriately qualified, and have expertise in providing person-centred supports
- advise consent to the sharing of information between providers during the transition
- opt-out of giving information as required by NDIS.





### ***Your Responsibilities***

As individuals using our support services, we ask you a few essential things. The information below explains your responsibilities when using our services. We ask that you:

- respect the rights of Support Workers, to ensure their workplace is safe, healthy, and free from harassment
- abide by the terms of your agreement with us
- tell us if you have problems with the care or service you are receiving from us
- provide us with enough information to develop, deliver, and review your Support Plan
- provide us with a minimum of twenty-four (24) hours' notice if you need to cancel your service
- remember that our Support Workers are only authorised to perform the agreed number of hours and tasks outlined in your Service Agreement
- pay the agreed amount for the services provided
- tell us in writing (where able) and provide appropriate notice when you want to stop receiving our services

## 5. Capacity



### ***Our Responsibilities***

Brothers Support Network will:

- provide the supports that meet your needs at your preferred times
- communicate openly, honestly, and promptly
- treat you with courtesy and respect
- discuss with you all decisions regarding your support and how they are being provided
- listen to your complaints and feedback, and address any problems that may arise
- endeavor to provide you with twenty-four (24) hours notice if we need to change a scheduled support provision appointment
- keep your personal information confidential
- support your culture, community, and any other needs
- implement policies and procedures to ensure your safety and the safety of others during service provision.

### ***Dignity of Risk***

You have the right to participate in lawful activities that may involve risk. We will always allow you a dignity of risk, and our role is to look at the activity, not you. We will discuss this with you if you wish to undertake the activity. Any dangerous risk may require you to sign that you are willing to take the risk. We always assume that you can make your own choices.

We will work with you and advise the various options available regarding the activity to make an informed choice.

We will undertake an individual risk profile of you and a risk assessment of your environment. These assessments will include risk assessments when you leave your home environment.

## 5. Capacity



### **Risk Assessment**

Your risk will be assessed when you first start working with us. After an initial assessment, we will review your risk annually. If we feel you need another review, we will work with you. Your review may happen due to changes in your:

- health
- living arrangements
  - additional person
  - person leaving
- physical environment

Your safety is at the centre of all we do, and we will consult you during the risk process.

### **What is an Advocate?**

An advocate is a person who will listen to you, help you make decisions about what should happen in your life, and then speak, on your behalf, to arrange for those decisions to be implemented. An advocate will ensure your rights are respected and speak out for you if needs are unmet.

You can ask anyone that you know well and trust to be your advocate, such as a:

- member of your family or a friend
- a person from a legal advocacy service.

Once you have selected an advocate, the Director will provide you with a form that must be completed called the Authority to Act as an Advocate Form.

## 5. Capacity



With your permission, Brothers Support Network will:

- provide your advocate with all the information they need to ensure that we (and any other service providers) are acting in your best interest
- work closely with your advocate and involve them in the planning of services that will be provided to you
- ensure our Support Workers understand the role of your advocate.

You can use your advocate:

- any time you wish to communicate with us
- during your initial assessment consultation
- during your interviews and reviews
- during service delivery
- when you want to make a complaint
- when you want to give feedback.

You can change your advocate at any time. If you change your advocate, please inform us as soon as possible to update your information and ensure that we talk to the correct person.

### ***What is a Guardian?***

A Guardian is usually a person legally appointed by a court to make decisions on your behalf. This person may be a friend, a family member, or a person from your State Government Advocate.

## 6. Complaints & Feedback



### ***What to do if you are not happy***

You always have the right to expect the best possible standard of service from us, and we will treat any concern or complaint you provide as a serious issue. No matter the situation, a Support Worker will not react badly to your complaint; you should feel safe knowing they will not retaliate or hurt you.

You can make a complaint to our Operations Manager using the Complaints and Feedback form on our website. Remember not to identify yourself during this process if you wish us not to know who is making the complaint.

If you do not feel comfortable making a complaint, someone else can do this on your behalf, including:

- an advocate
- a family member
- a close friend
- your care worker
- a person you know and trust.

We do not ignore your feedback but have a process to ensure that our management hears your voice. You can also be part of our feedback system by providing feedback and sharing ideas with our management. Don't hesitate to contact us if you wish to express your thoughts, lived experience, and ideas.

## 6. Complaints & Feedback



### **Phase 1 - Complaint is Received**

Once a complaint has been submitted through our online complaints form, you will receive an email confirming that we have received your complaint.

### **Phase 2 - Investigate**

Your complaint will then be investigated, and a plan to resolve it will be created. This process can take up to 14 days from the date we receive your complaint.

### **Phase 3 - Resolve**

We will contact you to provide a resolution. We will ask you to provide your opinion on our recommended solution. You can advise if you are happy with the proposed solution or unhappy with the outcome and feel the matter is not resolved.

## 6. Complaints & Feedback



### Useful Contacts

If you are not happy with the solution proposed by Brothers Support Network regarding your complaint, you can speak to other organisations, such as:

Commonwealth Ombudsman – Disability Services  
Telephone: 1300 362 072  
Email: [ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au](mailto:ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au)  
Website: [www.ombudsman.gov.au](http://www.ombudsman.gov.au)

NDIS Complaints  
Telephone: 1800 800 110  
Email: [enquiries@ndis.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@ndis.gov.au) or  
Website: <https://www.ndis.gov.au/contact/feedback-and-complaints>



*Changing Lives for the Better*



*THANK YOU & WELCOME TO*  
**BROTHERS SUPPORT  
NETWORK**