



Policy Name:	Fee Policy	Policy Number:	ELO-004
Date Approved:	21 st February 2018	Approved By:	Management Committee
Date Issued:	22 nd February 2018	Review Date:	21 st February 2021

1. Aim

Early Links is committed to the provision of a fair and consistent fee structure for the parents/carers of children currently accessing Early Links services and, where relevant, staff and community members. Early Links understands that at times, families may experience financial stress and we encourage families to discuss this with one of our staff so that we can work on a solution together.

Early Links has traditionally been, a free service for families , funded through government block grants with supplementary funding of special programs from community sources. However, with funding of disability services transitioning to a model which provides funding directly to the individual, Early Links' operational model must also transition to align with this.

The purpose of this policy is to clarify roles and responsibilities within Early Links pertaining to the setting and collection of fees for service.

The supporting systems and procedures will ensure that there are guidelines and consistency around how we administer fees.

2. Scope

This policy applies to parents/caregivers of children in the service, staff and community members who are clients of Early Links or wish to access Early Links services. This policy also applies to administration and finance staff who are responsible for the administration of fees.

3. Policy

3.1 Fee for Service

Fee for service will apply to those families who access services through Early Links other than as an ADHC-funded or Medicare-funded client. Fee for service will apply to clients utilising funding through the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and to those families accessing therapy as privately funded clients.

3.1.1 Standard fees for service are as follows:

NDIS Transdisciplinary Team Service	
All Early Links team members (excluding Clinical Psychologist and Specialist Behaviour Team)	\$165 per hour
Clinical Psychologist and Specialist Behaviour Team	\$196.45 per hour
External providers as part of the Transdisciplinary Team	\$175.57 per hour

NDIS Therapy Only	
Occupational Therapy, Speech Pathology, Physiotherapy and Music Therapy	\$165 per hour
Psychology	\$175.57 per hour

NDIS Assessments and Reports (outside Transdisciplinary Plan)	
Occupational Therapy, Speech Pathology and Physiotherapy (5 hours)	5 x \$165 per hour
Psychology (5 hours)	5 x \$175.57 per hour

Developmental Support Worker	
Developmental Support worker	Rates determined by NDIS Support Category

Privately Funded Services (inclusive of travel)	
Occupational Therapy and Speech Pathology	\$165 per hour
Psychology	\$175.57 per hour

Medicare Funded - Mental Health Care or Chronic Disease Management Plan	
Occupational Therapy, Speech Pathology and Physiotherapy	Bulk Billed – No fee
Psychology	Bulk Billed – No fee

3.1.2 Families are asked to pay fees as negotiated in the Agreement of Service.

3.1.3 Fees will only be charged for actual services provided or for cancellations that are specified in the Agreement of Service.

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3.2 Notification of Fees

- 3.2.1** Fees payable by NDIS clients will be discussed with families prior to commencement with service and signed off in the Agreement of Service.
- 3.2.2** Privately funded clients will be provided with an Early Links “Therapy Services – Pricing Information Sheet”. An invoice for fees payable will be provided following each therapy session including terms for payment.
- 3.2.3** Clients using a Medicare plan to access services will be advised that there is no gap fee payable.

3.3 Outstanding Fees

- 3.3.1 Families will be issued with an invoice
- 3.3.2 Any outstanding fees must be paid before service can resume.
- 3.3.3 Families may receive up to three follow up letters to pay outstanding fees:
 - Second letter requests payment of outstanding fees and advises that debt collection may follow
 - Third letter is a letter of demand and reminds that debt collection may follow, but also includes information on financial support agencies and options
 - At all stages, families are invited to contact Early Links to discuss how they can be supported
 - The General Manager / Finance Officer will also attempt to contact the family to offer support options
- 3.3.4 Payment of fees is reviewed every 4 weeks by the General Manager.
- 3.3.5 Any outstanding amounts that are deemed unrecoverable may be written off by the General Manager. These amounts are reported to the Early Links Management Committee.
- 3.3.6 Service delivery will be suspended until account is paid and will not resume until agreement has been reached between the family/carer and the General Manager.

3.4 Review of fees

All Early Links fees will be reviewed by the Committee annually in May for the following financial year or as deemed necessary by the General Manager. Fee increases will apply to subsequent contracts and will not impact on existing contractual arrangements until the contract comes up for renewal

4. References

Therapy Services – Pricing Information Sheet (available on the Early Links website – www.Early Links.org.au)
NDIS Pricing guide
Medicare Statement of Benefits

5. Persons Responsible

All employees are responsible for:

- Understanding the difference between the different services and the relevant fees

- Referring families to the appropriate staff to assist with an fee enquiries

The Finance Officer is responsible for:

- Preparing and maintaining an up to date Fee Fact Sheet
- Processing payment of fees and issuing fee statements
- Providing reports on fees paid to the General Manager
- Ensuring that the financial records are correct against service participant listings
- Processing NDIS payments for NDIS participants
- Sending letters as required regarding outstanding fees
- Maintaining an accurate service participant list

The General Manager is responsible for:

- Providing the Management Committee with this policy for approval and/or amendment
- Ensuring this policy is upheld
- Preparing reports as requested by the Committee in relation to fees and/or service participant lists
- Ensuring an accurate Service Participant List is available at the Annual General Meeting

Management Committee is responsible for:

- Approval of this policy
- Being aware of the services that Early Links provides including the different fees payable
- Reviewing and determining the fees annually

6. Definitions

Early Links – all Early Links offices, services and programs

Management Committee - the governing body of Early Links, comprised of elected or appointed members who jointly oversee the activities and legal responsibilities of the organisation

Manager – refers to the General Manager who is responsible for supervising staff

Staff – refers to employees and volunteers of the organisation

Client / Participant – any person for which Early Links provides a service

Family – refers to the parents/caregivers of the children that are clients of the organisation

Visitor – any person who is visiting an Early Links service who is not a staff member, client or family

This document must be read in conjunction with the Policies and Procedures that it supports

Financial Stewardship Policy (Committee)	ELG-032
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