



Trauma Informed Practices

Implemented July 2023 | Version 1

1. Introduction

Trauma informed practices are essential in the work that we do at Pathways. They are our founding principles and are at the heart of our service. Our commitment to the principles of inclusion, empowerment, trustworthiness, collaboration and choice is central to our relational practice values embedded within the service and assistance that we provide.

2. How do we implement trauma informed practice response in our daily service?

We understand the necessity of human interactions that centre around safety, care, collaboration and transparency and we aim to ensure that you always remain well-informed throughout the process undertaken with us here at Pathways. Our practices are inclusionary, supportive, family sensitive and always personalised and paced at your level of comfortability.

Below are ways that we align with our principles of supportive care that is trauma informed.

Step 1

Step 1A (Initial engagement - meeting you)

- We will endeavour to get back to all enquiries within 24 to 48 hours.
- We will ask you to nominate your preferred method of contact and to let us know your preferred pronouns.
- We will also ask how you would like for us to address you.
- We will encourage you to nominate a support person who can accompany you through the Pathways experience.
- Only with your permission, we will communicate with your supports, such as family members or close friend(s) to facilitate your ongoing support during the process undertaken with Pathways.
- We will connect you with our Pathways Care Coordinator who will be a consistent point of contact as you engage with the Pathways process.
- If it is established that Pathways is not able to assist, we will operate under a no wrong door policy, and with your consent, make relevant referrals to external organisations who can provide you support and assistance

with your enquiry.

- We will connect you with a qualified psychologist that specialises in traumatic experience.

Step 1B (Case work - connecting you to supports)

- We will discuss with you what in your opinion may best support your wellbeing.
- We will work with you to meet your immediate needs and facilitate arranging therapeutic supports of your choosing and that aligns with trauma-informed practices.
- Based on your needs, we are committed to coordinating external professional supports and connections to community agencies that have the required specialist expertise that you may require.
- We will be responsive to your individual care that is culturally, spiritually and gender affirming by offering relevant support, such as access to an Aboriginal Liaison Officer or Spiritual Advisor, for example.
- We will work with you to determine how you will best feel supported and in accordance to your pace as you journey through Pathways.

Step 1C (Care co-ordination - continuity of support)

- We will keep you up to date regarding the progress of your case and next steps.
- We will be transparent about what to expect and we will ensure that you are fully informed of likely outcomes and timeframes.
- We will help you to plan and prepare for meetings that you can attend and provide accompaniment at any time you would like us to be with you in support.
- Your allocated Care Coordinator will:
 - Communicate your key preferences to relevant staff to maximise the support of you and to ensure continuum of care, whilst always prioritising your goals and choices.
 - Support you by arranging comfortable transportation and accommodation so that you may attend assessments and meetings that may be required.
 - Support you to engage with the Pathways Response and Resolution Director.
 - Ensure that continuity of support is provided to you by undertaking regular check-in calls, at intervals that are comfortable and determined by you (e.g., weekly, fortnightly, monthly).

Step 2

Step 2A (Disclosing your experience)

- We want your experience with Pathways to feel safe and empowering. It will always be your choice of how you would like to disclose your experience to us, in-person or by video-conference. Whatever the format, we will make sure that it is confidential and as comfortable as possible for you.
- If your preference is to participate in an in-person meeting, you will be greeted by our Care Coordinator at our comfortable location who will guide you through the steps of the meeting so that you remain well informed.
- When we do meet you in-person, light refreshments will be offered, including morning tea and lunch for your comfort.
- We will always cater to times that best suit your needs. If you wish to avoid crowds, we can always co-ordinate a time to ensure you commute to our location during off-peak times, if this is your preference.
- We encourage you to bring a support person to meetings attended.
- We also accommodate support dogs to ensure your comfortability.
- If you live regionally or interstate, we can arrange an in-person meeting closer to where you live.
- During meetings we will check-in with you to ensure that you are provided with the opportunity to take breaks and to pace according to what feels right for you. We will always be guided by you in how we can help and support you best.
- Our level of care and support entails that we check-in on you in the days and weeks following any meeting. We will always ask you if you are comfortable with us doing so and be guided by your preference and choice.

Step 2G (Communication)

- We will ask you how you would like to receive updates from Pathways, that is, in-person, teleconference, phone or in writing.
- Our communication regarding outcomes and decisions reached will involve transparency, clarity and rationale of the information considered in the determination.
- You will have the opportunity to ask questions about the outcomes.
- We will provide opportunity for you to express your feedback to us.

Step 3

Step 3B (Impact statement preparation)

- The impact statement form can be forwarded to you physically by mail or electronically by email.
- There are different options in completing the impact statement, in written form, verbally in-person, by teleconference or phone.
- We can help you write the document.
- Our support before, during and after the preparation of the statement will always be available to you as you need it.

Step 3C (Medical/Psychological assessment)

- We can offer you a choice of psychiatrists for preparation of your medico-legal assessment report to be undertaken. Your Care Coordinator can facilitate the undertaking of the independent assessment.
- You can decide the method by which you prefer the assessment to be undertaken, including the choice of in-person, telehealth and/or over several consultations.
- The recommended consultant psychiatrists that we suggest are appropriately qualified and experienced in institutional abuse.
- You are welcome to have someone accompany you to the appointment, however whether the psychiatrist will allow your support person to be present during your consultation is largely dependent on the professional.
- You can elect to have your report forwarded to relevant treating practitioners involved in your care such as your GP and/or treating psychologist.

Step 3D (Mediation process)

- Pathways offers you the choice to participate in mediation. Your Care Coordinator can offer you comprehensive information on the mediation process to ensure that your decision is well informed.
- We support your choice in how you prefer to participate in the mediation, that is in-person or by videoconference.
- You can choose to speak or elect someone to speak on your behalf
- You can select your support person to attend mediation with you, an advocate, a legal representative, a family member or friend.
- Your Care Coordinator will be available to offer you support before and after mediation.
- If mediation is conducted in-person, refreshments will be made available, including morning tea and lunch.
- We will always cater to times that best suit your needs. If you wish to avoid crowds, we can always co-ordinate a time to ensure that you commute to our location during off-peak times, if this is your preference.
- We will check-in with you to ensure that you are provided with opportunity to take breaks and to pace according to what feels right for you. We will always be guided by you in how we can help and support you best.
- Our level of care and support entails that we check-in on you in the days and weeks following mediation. We will always ask you if you are comfortable with us doing so and be guided by your preference and choice.
- We will collaborate with you and accommodate emotional or physical safety related requests where possible.

- We will request that all participants follow relevant directions or requests in relation to your emotional, psychological, or physical safety.

Step 3F (Acknowledgment and apology)

- We recognise the relational and restorative impact of the acknowledgment and apology received that will be tailored to your personal experience.
- We will be guided by you as to the format you would like your acknowledgment and apology to be received, that is, in documented letter form, face-to-face, audio-visual link or telephone.
- You will have an opportunity to speak and be heard if this is your preference.
- It is your choice who you would like to be present during the acknowledgement and apology, your support person, family member or legal representative.
- You can nominate whether you'd like the church representatives to wear their religious garments or lay clothing.
- We will ask for your input into the selection of the institutional representative present in your acknowledgment and apology meeting.
- We will check-in with you to ensure that you are provided with opportunity to take breaks and to pace according to what feels right for you. We will always be guided by you in how we can help and support you best.
- Refreshments will be available, including morning tea and lunch, for your comfort.
- We will confirm that your expectations have been met prior to conclusion of the acknowledgement and apology received.
- We want to ensure that we support you in the best way that we can and according to your needs and choices. We would like to follow-up with you in the days and weeks following the acknowledgment and apology received and will ask if you are comfortable with us doing so and be guided by your preference and choice.

Our aim is to provide care and support that prioritises your safety, choice and control, while establishing collaborative relationships that are built on trust. We value and welcome your suggestions and feedback of your experience with us.