

Advocacy Policy



Policy No.	3.12	Version No.	2
Approved date	July 2021	Approved by	Management Committee
Review frequency	Every two years	Last review	July 2022
Supporting Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stepping Stone Community Member Handbook• Stepping Stone NDIS Participant Welcome & Induction Kit• Stepping Stone Complaints Policy• QAI brochure		
Associated Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•		

1. PURPOSE

This policy outlines how Stepping Stone will provide advocacy, and engage with advocates for, the members who we work with and their Nominated Support Persons (NSP).

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all Stepping Stone staff, members, volunteers, students, Management Committee members, and NSP.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

Stepping Stone believes that everyone should be able to have the help of an independent advocate where they need assistance to help them ensure that their interests are advanced, to protect and defend their welfare, and to make certain that their human rights are respected.

4. PROCEDURES

1. Stepping Stone does not formally provide advocacy services. However, from time-to-time we will by necessity and circumstance be required to assist the people we provide supports to in the provision of informal, discrete, and ad hoc advocacy where another option to access an advocate does not exist.

2. Stepping Stone acknowledges that advocacy takes many forms and may include:

- Personal advocacy – a person advocated on behalf of their own rights and interests.
- Nominated supporter advocacy – when a Nominated Support Person, who may be a family member or friend advocates with and on behalf of a person.
- Individual advocacy – where the focus of advocacy is on one individual's rights and interests.
- Group advocacy – for a group of people's rights and interests.
- Systemic advocacy – to influence systems or policy and advance collective rights and interests.

· Legal advocacy – where a legal practitioner provides legal representation, pursues changes to legislation, or gives legal advice to a person or group of people about rights or interests.

3. Stepping Stone will assist the people we provide support to in accessing advocacy where this is appropriate or where such services have been requested. Stepping Stone employees are aware of locally based advocacy organisations who can provide advocacy services for the people we support

Stepping Stone will include the Queensland Advocacy Incorporated brochure in our NDIS welcome kit and also provide it in conjunction with our member handbook to all community managed mental health funding members.

4. Stepping Stone will work in collaboration with advocates at the request of the people we provide support to.

5. Should an individual we provide support to advocate or seek advocacy in response to an action or position Stepping Stone has taken, Stepping Stone will ensure, consistent with our Complaints Policy, that we act to ensure that individuals are able to do so without fear that doing so will result in retribution or a loss of access to service or other benefit.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Role	Responsibilities
Leadership team	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure all staff, members, volunteers, students and Management Committee are aware of the guidelines within this policy.
Staff, members, volunteers, students, Management Committee, NSP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure you are aware of and adhere to the guidelines in this policy.

