



**MULTICAP**<sup>®</sup>

HIGH NEEDS DISABILITY SUPPORT

*all ways.always*

## Media Release

24 September 2020

### **Use of Positive Behaviour Support to minimise use of restrictive practices**

Multicap's Chief Clinical and Practice Officer this week shared insight and expert opinion on the benefits of Positive Behaviour Support practices in the disability sector, as a first-option alternative to the use of restrictive practices and chemical restraint for people with disability.

For almost 60 years, Multicap has worked to improve the lives of people with disability in Queensland and northern New South Wales, specialising in supporting people with complex needs. Multicap uses an integrated multi-departmental approach in managing behaviours of concern, acknowledging successful and sustainable support requires expertise across clinical, operational and human resources departments.

Multicap Chief Clinical and Practice Officer, Simon Wardale, has more than 30 years' experience in specialist high needs intellectual disability support, including research and policy development. Mr Wardale was invited to speak at the Disability Royal Commission to provide insight into a best-practice approach for minimising restrictive practices in the disability sector. His appearance at the Royal Commission is a testament to the value he delivers to customers who choose Multicap as their service provider, and evidence of Multicap's dedication in ensuring the organisation's Positive Behaviour Support and complex needs services are among the very best in Australia.

Whilst, in some cases, the approved and ethical use of restrictive practices and chemical restraints can have a place in the management of behaviour which could cause harm, Multicap sees these as options of last resort. Multicap takes a whole-of-organisation approach to customers with complex needs and behaviours, implementing comprehensive and individualised Positive Behaviour Support Plans (PBSP) for customers at risk. It has been Multicap's experience that these customers with individualised PBSPs have better outcomes for themselves and those around them, with the need for psychotropic medication and chemical restraint being significantly reduced.

Mr Wardale said that in line with Multicap's sole purpose of providing support to enhance the quality of life of people with disability, Multicap takes a holistic and integrated approach to managing complex needs and reducing the need for restrictive practices.

"At Multicap our focus is on ensuring the health and wellbeing of each customer at all times, and we implement a wide range of strategies to enable this. We are focused on positive delivery and outcomes, and problem solving until we find the best solution for the customer.

"For customers who exhibit behaviour which could harm themselves or others, we have a dedicated Positive Behaviour Support department who devise and implement plans to support customers to have a high quality of life whilst managing their behavioural issues. We do this through skills training and development, identification of triggers and early warning signs, therapeutic and lifestyle support, as well as options such as appropriate accommodation and activities.

"We take a targeted, whole-of-organisation approach and have a clear structure to address ongoing and critical needs, integrating not just our Positive Behaviour Support department, but our clinical, operational and human relations departments, across frontline, senior leadership and governance levels.

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“This level and structure of commitment is not typical for many disability support organisations, however Multicap believes it is essential for comprehensive and effective support for people with disability experiencing behavioural issues.

“We believe that if a few external policy settings were addressed across the disability sector, it would improve access and delivery of Positive Behaviour Support generally, and result in reduced reliance on restrictive practices and chemical restraints.

“These factors include better support for frontline staff to receive support plans in a less clinical and more accessible fashion, with a focus on training so they fully understand how to best support each customer; and conversely, increased focus at the tertiary level on offering Positive Behaviour Support as a specialisation to encourage more expert practitioners in the sector.

“There is also opportunity to adjust funding models so customers who require ongoing intervention are appropriately supported; and more emphasis on evidence-based research and measurements in assessing the progress of a customer and adjusting their support accordingly,” Mr Wardale said.

Multicap was pleased to be able to share with the Disability Royal Commission our experience in delivering safe and effective support for people with disability who have complex needs and experience distressing and harmful behaviours. Multicap thanks the Disability Royal Commission for providing the opportunity to contribute to this vital investigation in the pursuit of a standard of world-leading excellence in the treatment, support and advocacy of people with disability in Australia.

#### **ABOUT MULTICAP:**

*Operating for almost 60 years, Multicap is one of the most highly regarded disability service providers in Queensland and northern New South Wales.*

*We are known for the range, breadth and excellence of our services, our approach to customer safety, and the outcomes achieved by the people who choose to be supported by us.*

*Multicap offers an individualised range of supports for people of all ages; in areas such as home and well-being, community and lifestyle, education and employment, creative arts, transport, positive behaviour support, and much more.*

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