

Waitlist and Service Access Policy

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Drafted by	TTC Consulting	Approved by Board on	19/5/2026
Reviewed by	Anne Mackay, Josephine Stewart		
Responsible person	Anne Mackay	Scheduled review date	19/5/2028

If there is an urgent risk identified, emergency services should be contacted immediately.

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear, consistent and equitable framework for managing service demand, referrals, waitlists and access to Radiance Network South West Inc (“Radiance”) services.

Radiance is committed to ensuring that all clients are treated fairly, respectfully and transparently when accessing services, including during periods of increased demand or limited program capacity.

This policy supports:

- equitable access to services
- timely and transparent communication
- safe management of referrals and waitlists
- continuity of care and referral pathways
- trauma-informed and culturally safe engagement
- risk identification and escalation processes
- quality improvement and service planning

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- all Radiance referrals and intake processes
- peer-led support groups
- outreach services
- waitlist management activities
- all staff, volunteers and peer workers involved in intake, referral or client engagement processes

3. Principles

Radiance is committed to:

- providing fair and equitable access to services
- reducing barriers to support wherever possible
- communicating openly and respectfully with clients and referrers
- prioritising emotional safety and dignity during intake and waitlist processes
- identifying and escalating immediate safety concerns appropriately
- supporting referral pathways to alternative services where required
- maintaining confidentiality and privacy
- monitoring demand and service accessibility to inform continuous improvement

4. Service Access and Referral Processes

Radiance accepts:

- self-referrals
- referrals from health professionals
- referrals from community organisations
- referrals from support services and agencies

All referrals are reviewed to determine:

- suitability for Radiance services
- service availability and capacity
- immediate safety concerns or escalation needs
- appropriate referral pathways where Radiance may not be suitable

Radiance operates as a non-clinical, peer-led support service and does not provide crisis intervention, emergency mental health care or clinical case management.

Where Radiance is not the most appropriate service, staff will support referral or connection to alternative services where possible.

5. Waitlist Management

A waitlist may be implemented when:

- service demand exceeds available capacity
- groups or programs reach safe participation limits
- staffing or venue limitations impact service availability
- temporary service interruptions occur

Radiance will maintain a centralised and confidential waitlist process to support fair and consistent access management.

Clients placed on a waitlist will:

- be informed of the waitlist process
- receive clear communication regarding expected wait times where possible
- be provided with information about alternative or crisis supports where appropriate
- be contacted when positions become available
- be treated respectfully and without judgement

Radiance recognises that waiting for support may increase distress for some individuals and aims to minimise wait times wherever possible.

6. Prioritisation and Risk Considerations

Radiance does not undertake clinical triage or suicide risk assessment. However, staff and peer workers may identify concerns requiring escalation or prioritised support pathways.

Factors that may influence prioritisation include:

- level of distress observed or disclosed
- perinatal mental health vulnerability
- social isolation
- family violence concerns
- recent discharge from hospital or specialist services
- limited access to alternative supports
- safety concerns relating to parent, infant or family wellbeing

Where significant concerns are identified:

- appropriate escalation pathways must be followed
- management must be notified where required
- referral to emergency or crisis services may occur
- alternative supports may be prioritised or facilitated

Placement on a waitlist does not replace emergency or clinical care requirements.

7. Communication with Clients and Referrers

Radiance is committed to respectful, trauma-informed and transparent communication throughout the referral and waitlist process.

Communication may include:

- confirmation that a referral has been received
- updates regarding service availability
- information about waitlist processes
- referral to alternative services where appropriate
- crisis support information where required

Where consent has been provided, Radiance may communicate with referrers regarding:

- referral outcomes
- engagement status
- inability to contact a client
- service capacity limitations
- escalation concerns

All communication must comply with privacy and confidentiality obligations.

8. Re-engagement and Removal from Waitlist

Clients may be removed from the waitlist where:

- the client no longer wishes to engage
- repeated (at least three) contact attempts are unsuccessful
- alternative supports have been established
- referral criteria are no longer met

Removal from a waitlist will occur respectfully and, where possible:

- clients will be informed
- re-referral options will be explained
- alternative support pathways will be provided if appropriate

Radiance recognises that support needs may fluctuate and aims to maintain low-barrier re-engagement pathways.

9. Documentation and Data Management

Radiance will maintain accurate records relating to:

- referrals received
- waitlist status
- communication attempts
- engagement outcomes
- referrals to alternative services
- identified risks and escalation actions

Waitlist data may be reviewed to:

- identify service demand trends
- inform workforce and program planning
- monitor accessibility and equity
- support continuous quality improvement activities

10. Service Capacity and Continuity Management

Radiance recognises that service demand, workforce availability and operational capacity may fluctuate over time.

Where staffing levels, volunteer availability, funding limitations or service demand impact service capacity, Radiance will implement reasonable and safe service continuity strategies to maintain access to support wherever possible.

Strategies may include:

- prioritising clients with higher levels of identified need or vulnerability
- temporary waitlist implementation
- adjustment of group sizes or service frequency
- increased use of telephone or telehealth-based peer support
- flexible outreach arrangements
- spacing or staggering of appointments and group programs
- redistribution of referrals across available programs or facilitators
- use of community partnerships and referral pathways to support continuity of care
- temporary modification of non-essential programs or activities
- increased supervision and support for remaining staff and volunteers during periods of workforce pressure

Radiance will communicate openly with clients, families, carers and referrers regarding any significant service changes or delays impacting access to support.

Where workforce shortages or operational pressures create concerns regarding safe service delivery, management will:

- review risks and service priorities
- implement escalation and contingency processes where required
- monitor staff wellbeing and workload
- notify the Board of significant service delivery risks where appropriate

Radiance remains committed to maintaining safe, trauma-informed and accessible support services, even during periods of increased demand or reduced workforce capacity.

11. Workforce Responsibilities

Staff, volunteers and peer workers involved in intake or waitlist processes are responsible for:

- following this policy and associated procedures
- communicating respectfully and professionally
- maintaining confidentiality
- escalating safety concerns appropriately
- documenting actions accurately
- working within the Peer Workforce Scope of Practice

Management is responsible for:

- oversight of waitlist systems and processes
- monitoring service capacity and accessibility
- reviewing waitlist trends and risks
- supporting workforce training and supervision

12. Continuous Improvement

Radiance will review waitlist and access processes regularly to ensure:

- equitable and timely access
- culturally safe and trauma-informed engagement
- alignment with NSQMHCMO Standards, governance and other requirements
- responsiveness to community need
- effectiveness of referral and communication systems

Feedback from clients, families, referrers and staff will inform ongoing service improvements.

13. Related Documents

- Model of Care
- Referral Process Internal and External
- Suicide Prevention and Response Policy
- Occupational Health and Safety Policy
- Information Technology & Privacy Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Peer Workforce Scope of Practice
- Incident Management Procedures
- Risk Management Policy

Document Control

Version	Date	Author/Reviewed By	Description of Changes
0.1	7 May 2026	TTC Consulting	Initial draft developed
1.0	TBD	Radiance Board	Final approved version