# Operational Policy: Informed Consent for Specialist Service Provision (NAG 6)

## Blind & Low Vision Education Network NZ

## Statement of Intent:

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that staff of the Blind & Low Vision Education Network NZ (BLENNZ) meet the legal and ethical requirements for informed consent. Informed consent is an integral aspect of the specialist service provision provided by BLENNZ and is an ongoing process.

## Guidelines:

### Homai Campus School

Discussion is held with families and whānau at enrolment outlining all the permissions required including the provision of specialist services.

Ongoing consent for specialist provision and for agreed IP/IEP/ITP goal interventions is obtained at each six monthly meeting.

Should a specialist need to introduce an entirely new intervention that will have a significant impact on ākonga, the specialist will contact the family and gain their understanding and consent for the intervention. All discussions will be documented.

Staff will:

* Provide information and answer questions about the specialist services they are able to provide. This will include the names and roles of the specialists who will be working with ākonga.
* Provide information that explains the assessment process and service options.
* Provide information for parents/whānau and ākonga, as appropriate, about their rights and limits in respect to confidentiality including the sharing of information with relevant others such as health agencies, welfare and in supervision.
* Explain the process for accessing the information about ākonga that is held by BLENNZ.
* Share information about the BLENNZ complaints procedures.
* Discuss the right to withdraw consent for any aspect of therapy provision, at any time.
* Inform parents/caregivers in the instance of a visiting student specialist working with ākonga e.g. Speech Language Therapist, Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist, Psychologist or other specialists in training.
* BLENNZ specialists will consult with community specialists prior to introducing new interventions.

### National Specialist Services Provision for ORS Vision Only Verified Ākonga

The Ministry of Education (MOE) is the provider of all services with the exception of Developmental Orientation & Mobility (DOM). The DOM service, as with all MOE specialist services, is compliant to the Specialist Services Standards.

BLENNZ follows MOE processes, protocols and timelines when accessing MOE specialist services for ākonga.

RTVs regularly include discussion about Specialist Services with families, whānau and the team at IPs, including DOM services from BLENNZ. The RTV discusses DOM with the family before any referral is made and also completes the Parent Consent Form. Parent consent includes information about DOM, signed permission, risk factors and family DOM goals.

Ongoing consent for specialist provision and for agreed programme goals is obtained following each programme review and at IPs. This may be via the RTV or DOM as agreed across parties.

VRC Staff will:

* Provide information and answer questions about the specialist services they are able to provide. This will include, if available, the names and roles of the specialists who will be working with ākonga, once services to be provided through the MOE have been confirmed through the IEP/IP process.
* Provide information that explains the assessment process and service options.
* Provide information for parents/whānau and ākonga, as appropriate, about their rights and limits in respect to confidentiality including the sharing of information with relevant others such as health agencies, welfare and in supervision.
* Explain the process for accessing the information about ākonga that is held by BLENNZ. This is also written on the Parent Consent Form for DOM Services.
* Share information about the BLENNZ Policy and Complaints process (available for parents/whānau to access through the BLENNZ website)
* Discuss the right to withdraw consent for any aspect of specialist services provision, at any time.
* Inform parents/caregivers in the instance of a provisional specialist working with ākonga.

### Immersion & National Assessment Services

Parents and whānau are provided with an invitation and application outlining all the permissions required including the provision of Immersion and Assessment serviceds.

Staff will:

* Provide information and answer questions about the specialist services that will be part of the course programme. This will include the names and roles of the specialists who will be working with the ākonga if requested.
* Provide information for parents/whānau and the ākonga, as appropriate, about their rights and limits in respect to confidentiality including the sharing of information with relevant others such as health agencies, welfare and in supervision.
* Share information about the BLENNZ complaints procedures when required.
* Discuss the right to withdraw consent for any activities, at any time.

Approved: 

Date: 8 November 2023

Next Review: 2026