

**Wollongong City Council**

**Service User  
Information Guide**



*Connecting You*



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome.....	1
WE HAVE A VARIETY OF WAYS TO SUPPORT YOU.....	1
SOCIAL SUPPORT SERVICES.....	2
Social Support - Companionship.....	2
Social Support – Group Activities.....	2
Respite Services.....	2
COMMUNITY TRANSPORT SERVICES.....	3
Community Transport.....	3
Individual Transport Service.....	3
Group Transport Service.....	3
Taxi Vouchers.....	3
Travel Training.....	3
HOW YOUR SUPPORT WILL BE PROVIDED.....	4
Wellness.....	4
Re-ablement.....	4
Restorative Care.....	4
HOW DO YOU START SERVICES?.....	5
WHO WILL PROVIDE YOUR SUPPORT?.....	6
WHAT IF YOU’RE NOT GOING TO BE HOME FOR A SCHEDULED SERVICE?.....	7
WHERE IS YOUR INFORMATION STORED AND CAN YOU ACCESS IT?.....	7
INFORMATION & CONFIDENTIALITY.....	7
YOUR FEEDBACK ASSISTS US TO IMPROVE OUR SERVICES.....	8

## WHAT IF YOU'RE NOT HAPPY WITH THE SERVICE YOU RECEIVE?8

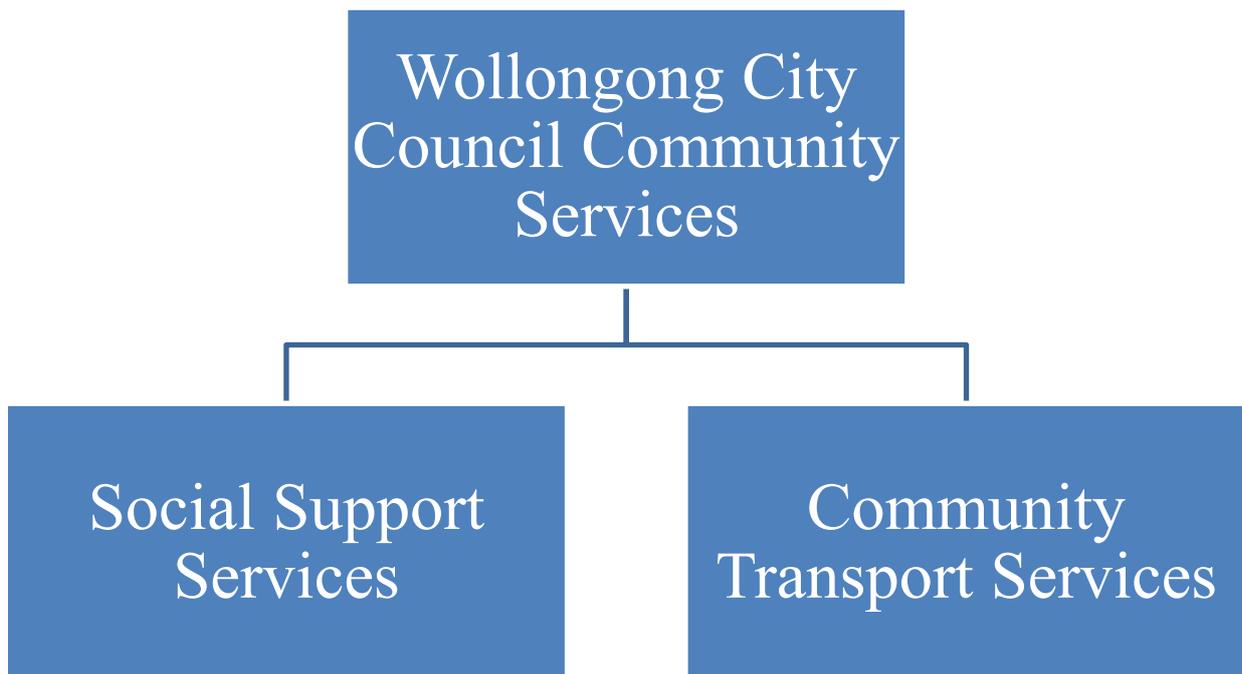
What can you complain about? .....	8
How do you make a complaint? .....	8
Who do you complain to? .....	9
Anonymous complaint .....	9
What if you're not happy with how your complaint was handled?.....	10
<b>CRIMINAL MATTERS.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>ADVOCACY SERVICES.....</b>	<b>10</b>
What can an advocate do?.....	10
Who do you contact about advocacy? .....	11
<b>RIGHTS &amp; RESPONSIBILITIES .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>HELPFUL CONTACTS .....</b>	<b>13</b>
Appendix No: 1 - Feedback / Complaints Form.....	14
Appendix No: 2 - Tell Us What You Think.....	15
Appendix No: 3 Authority to Act as an Advocate .....	17
Appendix No: 4 Charter of Recipient Rights.....	18

# Welcome to Wollongong City Council's Community Services.

We're pleased you have chosen us to work with you so you can continue to be an active member of your community.

We can assist you to remain living in your own home, access the services and activities you need, enhance your social connections and keep living the lifestyle you choose.

## WE HAVE A VARIETY OF WAYS TO SUPPORT YOU



## **SOCIAL SUPPORT SERVICES**

### **Social Support - Companionship**

We can link you up for a get together, an outing or a social event. This can be done one-to-one, in a small group or in a larger group.

Activities include:

- Bus outings
- Shopping trips
- Individual companionship
- Coffee
- Movies
- Luncheons
- Visiting a local club

Have a chat to one of our staff who will be happy to personalise the support you are looking for.

### **Social Support – Group Activities**

Come along to one of our centre-based groups for a great day out. If you would prefer a bus outing we can offer that too.

Our groups enjoy a range of activities including:

- Book club
- Art and crafts
- Bingo
- Gentle exercise
- Yoga
- Bus trips
- Coffee mornings
- Aqua aerobics
- Movies and shows

We encourage our customers to be involved in choosing and planning the activities you do. We'd love to hear your suggestions!

### **Respite Services**

If you're a carer we provide respite programs so you can have a break from your care responsibilities. Respite support includes:

- Respite at home during the day
- Community access – individual and cottage respite
- Small bus outings for people with dementia.

## **COMMUNITY TRANSPORT SERVICES**

### **Community Transport**

Community Transport services will assist you to get where you need to go. The transport we offer includes:

### **Individual Transport Service**

Transport for you and your carer to attend essential appointments such as medical, shopping, paying bills, nursing home visits, hospital visits, rehabilitation services and hairdressing appointments.

### **Group Transport Service**

Group travel to day care, social support bus trips, social group outings for other local community organisations and shopping bus trips.

### **Taxi Vouchers**

If you're eligible for this service you receive an allocated number of vouchers each month to assist you to meet your transport needs.

### **Travel Training**

This is a personalised service that develops your confidence and supports you in learning to use public transport to access the places and services you need.

## HOW YOUR SUPPORT WILL BE PROVIDED

You're the best person to decide what is best for you!

Our programs work on a model of care that puts **you** in charge and at the centre of decision making that affects you. Some of our approaches to assist you include:

### Wellness

Our wellness approach focuses on working with you and your career, if appropriate, to maximise your independence. This approach involves identifying your needs, planning for the care you require and providing support that builds on your strengths, capacities and helps you make the most of the services you access.

### Re-ablement

Like wellness, re-ablement supports you to reach your goals!

We ensure your independence is maintained and you're the centre of all decision making.

Our re-ablement approach involves short-term or time-limited interventions that support you to achieve a specific goal or desired outcome. It's about assisting you to adapt to changes in your health, mobility or capacity. Re-ablement is focused on supporting you to resume doing the things you used to do, or to begin new activities.

### Restorative Care

Our commitment to restorative care involves working with allied health workers such as occupational therapists, to help improve your mobility or functioning after an operation or other, similar, health issue. Restorative care can also help you avoid injury.

## HOW DO YOU START SERVICES?

***If you are aged 65 years or older*** your referral for Council's Social Support Services and Community Transport services must come through the Commonwealth Government's *My Aged Care* service. *My Aged Care* will then arrange for your service needs to be assessed and your eligibility for service confirmed. You can ask *My Aged Care* to be referred directly to Wollongong Council's services or choose another service provider.

The *My Aged Care* website can be found at: [www.myagedcare.gov.au](http://www.myagedcare.gov.au), or you can call them for free on 1800 200 422.

***If you are under 65 years of age*** you may call Wollongong Council Social Support or Community Transport direct to arrange services.

Once Council receives your referral, one of our Project Officers will call you and (if necessary) make an appointment to meet with you to discuss the services you would like to receive. This information assists us in developing a personalised support plan for you.

Where services are being delivered in your home, our Project Officer will complete a general safety assessment of your home at their first meeting with you. This includes gathering general information on possible hazards in the home – such as pets, smokers, access, etc. This will ensure you and our workers stay safe and we meet our legal commitments.

Any fees or payment for services will be discussed and agreed with you before you start receiving assistance.

All of our Project Officers carry a Wollongong City Council identification tag, which they will show to you when they first visit you at home. Remember never to allow someone into your home if they do not have identification.

If you would like a new service or to change the services you currently receive, or if your personal situation changes in the future you will need to go through the new *My Aged Care* service for re-assessment and referral.

## WHO WILL PROVIDE YOUR SUPPORT?

Social Support Services and Community Transport work with a dedicated group of volunteers who are trained to provide you with a caring, quality service to help you achieve your goals.

If you have specific or higher level needs that cannot be met by our volunteers, we may engage external service providers, such as a nursing service, to assist you.

Your Project Officer will:

- Arrange for a volunteer or suitable service provider, such as a nursing service, to deliver the services you need
- Make a second appointment to visit you at home along with the volunteer who will be providing your service. This is called a “match visit” (this only occurs if your services are being delivered by one of our volunteers).
- Discuss appropriate days, times and the finer details of your service with you and with your volunteer.
- Mail you written confirmation on what was discussed and agreed to during your “match visit”.
- Contact you for feedback after your first service.
- Organise a follow up visit to check how your service is progressing.  
*(If at any time you need to speak with your Project Officer before the review occurs please do not hesitate to call.)*

## WHAT IF YOU'RE NOT GOING TO BE HOME FOR A SCHEDULED SERVICE?

It's your responsibility to inform us if you are not going to be home for your scheduled support visit or transport trip. If you're not going to be able to keep the appointment, please contact the Project Officer who arranged the visit, as soon as possible, so we can cancel the support person and make other arrangements

If you have a support visit or transport trip scheduled and the volunteer or support person does not turn up at the expected time (*give or take 15mins*), please contact your Project Officer.

## WHERE IS YOUR INFORMATION STORED AND CAN YOU ACCESS IT?

Your personal information is stored electronically in secured files on the Wollongong City Council database. Some information is stored in locked filing cabinets. The only persons able to access these file are the Project Officers and Coordinators.

***Freedom of Information Act 1982*** – Outlines the rights of members of the public rights to access official documents of the Commonwealth Government of the Commonwealth and its agencies. To request information the following process is in place:

- a. Contact the Coordinator.
- b. The Coordinator will explain the process and time frame according to Wollongong City Council's Policy.
- c. The Coordinator will ensure you are supported in obtaining your information and you have a clear understanding of the information you receive.

## INFORMATION & CONFIDENTIALITY

We respect your privacy. All our staff (including volunteers) strictly abide by the Wollongong City Council Privacy/Confidentiality policies. All information provided by you will be used for the purpose of providing a safe quality service. Under no circumstances is your information

forwarded to another service provider unless you, your carer, advocate or legal guardian gives consent.

## **YOUR FEEDBACK ASSISTS US TO IMPROVE OUR SERVICES**

To help improve our services we encourage your comments. If you have something you would like to provide feedback about, you can:

- a. Fill in the “Tell Us What You Think” form located at the back of this Information Booklet, or ask your Project Officer for a copy
- b. Contact your Project Officer or Council’s Customer Service Unit
- c. Write a letter to the Manager Library and Community Services or the Middle Manager responsible for Social Support and Community Transport services. You can also provide feedback to the General Manager Wollongong City Council.

## **WHAT IF YOU’RE NOT HAPPY WITH THE SERVICE YOU RECEIVE?**

If you’re concerned about the care or quality of the services you receive, you can make a complaint. Complaints assist the Social Support and Community Transport Services to improve the services we provide.

### **What can you complain about?**

You can make a complaint about anything you are not satisfied with regarding the support provided. This might include areas such as:

- Quality of care
- Choice of activities
- Communication between you and staff
- Physical environment

### **How do you make a complaint?**

Complaints can be made in a number of ways such as, a letter, email, over the phone, in person or using the online complaint form which can be found on our website [www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au](http://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au).

We will help if you require assistance to make a complaint. For example, we can organise an interpreter if you require one.

You may wish to have an advocate or someone to act on your behalf to help you make a complaint. There are a number of advocacy services that provide this kind of assistance.

### **Who do you complain to?**

If you feel comfortable, the first thing you should do is let us know about your concerns. Generally, your Project Officer or their supervisor are best placed to resolve complaints and alleviate your concerns. This can be the quickest and most effective way to find a solution.

Wollongong Council's Social Support and Community Transport Services are open and responsive to customer feedback and complaints. Making a complaint will not affect your right to continue to receive care.

If you're not satisfied with the initial response to your complaint, you should contact the Middle Manager responsible for Social Support and Community Transport services or the Manager Library and Community Services.

If you don't feel comfortable speaking to Council's Social Support or Community Transport team, or if your complaint hasn't been resolved, you can contact the Aged Care Complaints Scheme (the Scheme). This is a free service.

For more information about how the scheme can help you resolve your complaint, visit the Aged Care Complaints Scheme website <https://agedcarecomplaints.govspace.gov.au/concern-2/>  
<https://www.humanrights.gov.au/complaints/make-complaint>

### **Anonymous complaint**

You may choose to make an anonymous complaint. However, if you choose to do so we will be unable to contact you to inform you of the outcome.

If you speak a language other than English, we can assist through the Translating and Interpreter Service (TIS) on 131 450.

If you are hearing or speech impaired, you can contact us through the National Relay Service:

TTY Users Phone 02 4227 7888

Speak and Listen users phone 1300 555 727 then ask for 02 4227 7888.  
NRS Internet relay users connect then ask for 02 42277888.

### **What if you're not happy with how your complaint was handled?**

If you are unhappy with the way your complaint is handled you are able to contact the NSW Ombudsman.

The Ombudsman

Web: [www.ombo.nsw.gov.au](http://www.ombo.nsw.gov.au)

Email: [nswombo@ombo.nsw.gov.au](mailto:nswombo@ombo.nsw.gov.au)

## **CRIMINAL MATTERS**

Allegations of abuse or other criminal activities, such as theft, should be reported to the police.

**NSW Elder Abuse Hotline 1800 628 221**

## **ADVOCACY SERVICES**

You have a right to use an advocate of your choice to negotiate on your behalf. This may be a family member, friend or advocacy service.

### **What can an advocate do?**

An advocate can:

- give you information about your rights and responsibilities
- listen to your concerns
- help you resolve problems or complaints
- speak with Council on your behalf if you wish
- refer you to other agencies when needed

Advocates may be used during assessments, reviews and complaints or for any other communication between yourself and Wollongong City Council – Social Support Services.

If you choose to appoint an advocate you need to inform Wollongong City Council Social Support Services or Community Transport in writing using the 'Authority to Act as an Advocate' form located at the back of this guide or available from your project officer.

You must let us know if you change your advocate or wish that your advocate not be informed of a particular issue.

### **Who do you contact about advocacy?**

The National Aged Care Advocacy Line is 1800 700 600. Please note that the number may not be available from mobile phones and in some capital cities. For alternative contact details see below:

#### **Illawarra Advocacy**

Suite 1 level 4, 166 Keira St Wollongong NSW 2500

P.O. Box 5134, Wollongong NSW 2500

Telephone: (02) 4229 4999

Facsimile: (02) 4228 0406

Email: [info@illawarraadvocacy.org.au](mailto:info@illawarraadvocacy.org.au)

#### **The Aged-Care Rights Service Inc.**

Level 4 / 418a Elizabeth Street

SURRY HILLS NSW 2010

Phone: (02) 9281 3600 or 1800 424 079 (free call)

Email: [tars@tars.com.au](mailto:tars@tars.com.au)

Website: [www.tars.com.au](http://www.tars.com.au)

Wollongong City Council – Social Support Services staff will assist and support people with special needs to access an advocate of your choice.

### **RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES**

As a consumer of Wollongong City Council's Social Support and Community Transport Services you have a right to be provided with high-quality care and services. To make sure you get the best care, we ensure all of our staff and volunteers are aware of and committed to their responsibilities. We're also required to meet certain standards.

For further information, please refer to “The Charter of Rights and Responsibilities for Community Care” which is located at the end of this document. (Appendix 4)

## HELPFUL CONTACTS

**Wollongong City Council Social Support Services 4227 7888**

**Wollongong City Council Community Transport 1300 987 422**

### **(TIS) Interpreter Services – (Sydney)**

If you speak a language other than English you can phone:

**Translating and Interpreting Services (TIS) on 131 450.**

TIS covers more than 100 languages and is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, for the cost of a local call

### **Wollongong City Council Interpreter Service**

On site face-to-face interpreting service, fees apply.

Phone: 4227 7650                      Fax: 4227 2641

### **Health Care Interpreter Service**

Free for in/out patients of the Public Health System.

Phone: 4274 4211                      Fax: 4276 2487

After hours service available for emergencies or public hospitals.

### **National Relay Service**

People who are deaf or who have a hearing or speech impairment can contact the National Relay Service website [www.nationalrelayservice.gov.au](http://www.nationalrelayservice.gov.au) and choose from many options for communication.

### **New South Wales Ombudsman**

Phone                      9286 1000    or                      1800 451 524

TTY:                      9264 8050

### **Senior Rights Service (Formally known as TARS)**

Phone                      1800 424 079

### **Family Advocacy**

Phone                      9869 0866

### **Elder Abuse Helpline & Resource Unit**

Phone                      1800 628 221

## Appendix No: 1 - Feedback / Complaints Form



### WOLLONGONG CITY COUNCIL SOCIAL SUPPORT & COMMUNITY TRANSPORT SERVICES **FEEDBACK / COMPLAINTS FORM**

*Please complete and return this form to:*

Manager Library & Community Services  
Wollongong City Council  
Locked Bag 8821  
WOLLONGONG DC NSW 2500

Name:

Address:

Phone: (     )

Service:

**What would you like us to do?**

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.....  
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**How would you like to be involved in your feedback?**

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.....  
.....

**Do you wish for any further involvement regarding your feedback?**

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.....  
.....

## Appendix No: 2 - Tell Us What You Think



### WOLLONGONG CITY COUNCIL SOCIAL SUPPORT & COMMUNITY TRANSPORT SERVICES

### TELL US WHAT YOU THINK!

We value your comments and suggestions for improving our service, so please tell us what you think and give this form to your Project Officer, or place and return it in the prepaid envelope.

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**Are you a (please ):**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Service User                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Staff member on behalf of a service user Staff |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family Member / Representative | <input type="checkbox"/> Other  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Staff Member                   |   |

**Name (optional):**

.....

**Date:**

\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_



**COORDINATOR TO COMPLETE**

Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Action Plan	Who	By When	Date Completed

**CLOSURE:**

**Evaluation** (if appropriate, describe how action / improvements were evaluated and the result)

.....

.....

.....

.....

**Outcome or end result (please 

- Issue resolved – no improvement implemented
- Improvement Implemented
- Other (Describe)**

.....

.....

.....

**Coordinator Signature**

.....

**Date:**

\_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix No: 3 Authority to Act as an Advocate



### WOLLONGONG CITY COUNCIL SOCIAL SUPPORT & COMMUNITY TRANSPORT SERVICES

#### AUTHORITY TO ACT AS AN AVOCATE

##### Service User Details:

Name:

Address:

Phone:

(      )

I authorise the person named below to act as an advocate on my behalf and represent my interests in relation to my involvement with Wollongong City Council – Social Support & Community Transport Services. I understand that Wollongong City Council – Social Support & Community Transport Services may discuss details of my Support Plan/s and the services it provides with my advocate if the need arises.

This authority takes effect from \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ and replaces any previously advised arrangements. I understand that I can change my choice of advocate at any time and undertake to advise Wollongong City Council – Social Support & Community Transport Services of any such change in writing.

Signature:

Date:

\_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_

##### Advocates Details:

Name:

Address:

Phone:

(      )

As an advocate of the abovementioned person I undertake to ensure that:

- The service user has provided written authority for you to act as their advocate.
- You always act in the best interests of the service user.
- The service user is aware of any issues and developments in relation to the support they receive and which you, as their advocate, may be involved.
- You be familiar with contents of the consumer's Support Plan and Fees Schedule.
- You are familiar with the service users 'Rights and Responsibilities'.
- You advise Wollongong City Council – Social Support & Community Transport Services about any changes in service user's circumstances and any concerns about their changing needs.
- Be prepared to relinquish the role of advocate should the service user wish this.

Signature

Date

/

/

## Appendix No: 4 Charter of Recipient Rights

# Charter of Care Recipients' Rights and Responsibilities – Home Care

*Aged Care Act 1997, Schedule 2 User Rights Principles 2014  
(amended on 1 July 2015)*

## 1 Care recipients' rights - home care

### *General*

(1) Each care recipient has the following rights:

- (a) to be treated and accepted as an individual, and to have his or her individual preferences respected
- (b) to be treated with dignity, with his or her privacy respected
- (c) to receive care that is respectful of him or her, and his or her family and home
- (d) to receive care without being obliged to feel grateful to those providing the care
- (e) to full and effective use of all human, legal and consumer rights, including the right to freedom of speech regarding his or her care
- (f) to have access to advocates and other avenues of redress
- (g) to be treated without exploitation, abuse, discrimination, harassment or neglect.

### *Consumer Directed Care - choice and flexibility*

(2) Each care recipient has the following rights:

- (a) to be supported by the approved provider:
  - (i) to set goals in relation to the outcomes he or she seeks from home care
  - (ii) to determine the level of ongoing involvement and control that he or she wishes to have in the provision of the home care

18

- (iii) to make decisions relating to his or her own care
- (iv) to maintain his or her independence as far as possible
- (b) to choose the care and services that best meet his or her goals and assessed needs and preferences, within the limits of the resources available
- (c) to have choice and flexibility in the way the care and services are provided at home
- (d) to participate in making decisions that affect him or her
- (e) to have his or her representative participate in decisions relating to his or her care if he or she requests it or if he or she does not have capacity.

*Consumer Directed Care - care and services*

- (3) Each care recipient has the following rights:
- (a) to receive reliable, coordinated, safe, quality care and services which are appropriate to meeting his or her goals and assessed needs
  - (b) to be given before, or within 14 days after, he or she commences receiving home care, a written plan of the care and services that he or she expects to receive
  - (c) to receive care and services that take account of his or her other care arrangements and preferences
  - (d) to ongoing review of the care and services he or she receives (both periodic and in response to changes in his or her personal circumstances), and modification of the care and services as required.

*Consumer Directed Care - individualised budget and monthly statement of available funds and expenditure*

- (3A) Each care recipient has the following rights:
- (a) to receive an individualised budget for the care and services to be provided
  - (b) to have his or her individualised budget reviewed and, if necessary, revised if:
    - (i) the care and services to be provided, or the costs of providing the care and services, change; or

- (ii) he or she requests the approved provider to review and, if necessary, revise the individualised budget
- (c) to receive a monthly statement of the funds available and the expenditure in respect of the care and services provided during the month.

### *Personal information*

- (4) Each care recipient has the following rights:
  - (a) to privacy and confidentiality of his or her personal information
  - (b) to access his or her personal information.

### *Communication*

- (5) Each care recipient has the following rights:
  - (a) to be helped to understand any information he or she is given
  - (b) to be given a copy of this Charter
  - (c) to be offered a written agreement that includes all agreed matters
  - (d) to choose a person to speak on his or her behalf for any purpose.

### *Comments and complaints*

- (6) Each care recipient has the following rights:
  - (a) to be given information on how to make comments and complaints about the care and services he or she receives
  - (b) to complain about the care and services he or she receives, without fear of losing the care or being disadvantaged in any other way
  - (c) to have complaints investigated fairly and confidentially, and to have appropriate steps taken to resolve issues of concern.

### *Fees*

- (7) Each care recipient has the following rights:
  - (a) to have his or her fees determined in a way that is transparent, accessible and fair
  - (b) to receive invoices that are clear and in a format that is understandable

- (c) to have his or her fees reviewed periodically and on request when there are changes to his or her financial circumstances
- (d) not to be denied care and services because of his or her inability to pay a fee for reasons beyond his or her control.

## 2 Care recipients' responsibilities - home care

### *General*

- (1) Each care recipient has the following responsibilities:
  - (a) to respect the rights of care workers to their human, legal and workplace rights including the right to work in a safe environment
  - (b) to treat care workers without exploitation, abuse, discrimination or harassment.

### *Care and services*

- (2) Each care recipient has the following responsibilities:
  - (a) to abide by the terms of the written home care agreement
  - (b) to acknowledge that his or her needs may change and to negotiate modifications of care and service if his or her care needs change
  - (c) to accept responsibility for his or her own actions and choices even though some actions and choices may involve an element of risk.

### *Communication*

- (3) Each care recipient has the following responsibilities:
  - (a) to give enough information to assist the approved provider to develop, deliver and review a care plan
  - (b) to tell the approved provider and their staff about any problems with the care and services.

### *Access*

- (4) Each care recipient has the following responsibilities:
  - (a) to allow safe and reasonable access for care workers at the times specified in his or her care plan or otherwise by agreement

- (b) to provide reasonable notice if he or she does not require home care to be provided on a particular day.

### *Fees*

- (5) Each care recipient has the responsibility to pay any fees as specified in the agreement or to negotiate an alternative arrangement with the provider if any changes occur in his or her financial circumstances.



## **Australian Government**

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### **Department of Health**