



AGED CARE CONSUMER CONTRIBUTION POLICY & PROCEDURE

Review Details

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DETAILS OF CHANGES

Date of Revision	Revision Description
23/03/2023	Reviewed, updated and changed document layout
25/09/2024	Added "6.3 Consumer" under Procedure

PLANNED REVIEW

Date of Planned Review	Revision Description
25/09/2026	

Related Legislations and Standards

- Aged Care Act 1997
- User Rights Principles 2014
- Quality of Care Principles 2014
- Aged Care Quality Standards

Related Policies and Procedures

- Consumers' Rights Policy
- Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
- Care Plan Policy
- Consumer Complaint Policy & Procedure
- Equal Opportunity Policy
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1. BACKGROUND

The National Guide to the CHSP Consumer Contribution Framework prepared by My Aged Care (under Department of Social Services) required all providers to make a consumer contribution arrangement.

ViWA informs all consumers and potential consumers of the rates of charges for accessing CHS Program services. These rates are determined by the Committee of Management (COM) and that they are fallen within the price ranges that determined by My Aged Care (MAC).

MAC is the funder of the CHS Program.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

This Policy is intended to establish criteria to:

1. Determine the rates of charges for services provided to consumers.
2. Determine the appropriateness of waiving or lowering consumer's contribution towards costs of participating in services / activities and
3. Ensure that all consumers of CHS Program understand about fee charges and rates and their right of requesting for fee waivers or reduced.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all staff employed by ViWA and its consumers.

4. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Committee of Management (COM)

The COM is responsible for making decision on recommendation(s) on fee charges submitted by the Manager. This includes fee to be waived or reduced.

4.2 Manager

The manager staff member is responsible for preparing fee charges for the COM to review when appropriate. This including reviewing fee to be waived or reduces requests.

4.3 Staff

All staff who employed under the CHS Program is required to aware of the fee charges and rates and inform potential consumers and existing consumers.

5. DEFINITION

For the purpose of this policy financial difficulty is defined as

- a. a situation where a consumer is unable, reasonably to make contribution towards fees of services/activities due to recent un-foreseen circumstances that impact on consumer's financial commitments, or
- b. Unforeseen circumstances may include sudden illness, loss of employment, family breakdown, illness including physical incapacity, hospitalisation, or mental illness of the consumer, a death in the family or consumer has been through natural disaster or any other reasonable cause, e.g. a death in your family.

6. PROCEDURE

6.1 Staff

All staff must advise:

- potential consumers of fees charged and rates when conducting initial assessment.
- existing consumers of new fees charged and rates when applicable.

6.2 Manager

- Prepare a fees structure that is appropriate within the price ranges guided by MAC.
- Seek for COM approval of the fees structure with applicable commencement date.
- Write to all CHS Program consumers to advise of the new approved fee charges. This letter must be sent within 6 weeks prior to the new rates commencement date.
- Confirm of receipt of application for fees waives or reduces within seven (7) calendar days from the date of received consumer's application.
- Prepare a memorandum to the COM seeking their consideration and determination when a request for fee waives or reduces within two (2) business days after receiving consumer's application. Ensure that the memorandum is included:
 1. full details and rational for their consideration;
 2. approved or not approved is recommended; and
 3. date to be approve or not approved by.
- Write to a consumer, who requested for fee waive or reduce, of outcome determined by the COM within seven (7) calendar days of determination being made.
- Ensure the letter of advising "not approved" must include mentioning:
 - the right to request for a review;
 - the right to involve one of Advocacy member or self-appoint an Advocate
 - deadline of lodging a review; and
 - the letter of review is to be presented in letter form.

In the case, receiving the consumers' letter of review:

- The Manager acknowledges receipt of consumer's concerns by sending letter to the consumer within two (2) business day and arranges a meeting with the consumer to discuss and resolve their concerns.
- The consumer is informed of a meeting date and time and encouraged to attend this meeting with one of the Consumer Advocate or self-appointed Advocate, if they so desire.

No consumer will be disadvantaged or penalised as a result of requesting a review of a decision about the fees charged.

Consumers who are not satisfied with outcome of the review have the rights to address their grievance to the Committee of Management.

6.3 Consumers

When a consumer faces with financial hardship and that they are unable to pay for services contribution, they or their representative can seek for fee to be waived or reduced by completing an Application for Reducing or Waiving or send a letter addresses to the Manager.

7. COMMITMENT

7.1 ViWA Commitment

ViWA is committed to providing consumers with flexibility when it comes to making contribution towards costs of participating in services / activities organised by the Association. We recognise that sometimes unforeseen events in consumers' life may affect their ability to make these contributions.

Each consumer experiencing financial hardship will be treated with sensitivity on a case-by-case basis. To ensure that decisions to waive or reduce fees contribution are based upon uniform objective criteria, each consumer who desires a waiver or reduction of fees contribution is asked to complete an Application for Waiving or Reducing CHSP Consumer Contribution Form.

The information consumer provided will be assessed and determined eligibility for waivers or lower the contribution rates.

Decisions to waive or lower contribution rates are based on the financial circumstances provided by the consumer.

ViWA reserves the right to modify the criteria considered for a waiver or reduction without notice.

Consumer who faces financial hardship will be referred to a free counselling service to receive independent advice.

7.2 Consumers' Commitment

We will do our best to assist consumer's experiencing financial hardship. In return, we ask that the consumer:

- Contact us as soon as they begin to experience financial difficulty.
- Agree and maintain a suitable payment arrangement.
- Keep us informed of any changes in their circumstances.
- Contact us to request an alternative arrangement if they are having difficulty
- Maintaining the agreed payment plan.
- Making commitment to meet with a financial counsellor if requested.

7.3 Best Practice and Continuous Improvement

We will undertake the following to facilitate best practice and continuous improvement:

- Ongoing relationship with Financial Counsellors and relevant consumer representative organisations to improve our understanding of the complex issues surrounding financial hardship, communicate agreed processes and protocols and to review and improve practices and processes.
- Early identification and appropriate referral of consumers in financial hardship in consultation with relevant financial counselling and emergency relief organisations.
- Willingness to work with financial counsellors and share information subject to privacy and consumer consent requirements.
- Our hardship policy will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure it meets the needs of consumers experiencing hardship. The review will incorporate the views and recommendations of our stakeholders.

8. RESOURCES

Debt Helpline - 1800 007 007

Anglicare SA Financial Counselling – 1800 759 707

Uniting Communities Financial Counselling – 1800 615 677