Purpose

This policy aims to clarify Carers Victoria’s Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) client contribution framework.

Scope

This policy applies to all carers who are registered with the Carers Victoria CHSP program. This program is funded through the Department of Health’s Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP).

Responsibilities

Specifying responsibilities to avoid confusion, double handling or essential tasks failing to be completed because people are unsure who is responsible.

* Identify person responsible using position title or task-descriptive title. Never use a person’s name.
* Identify specific area of responsibility. Be clear and concise.

Example: Everyone working at Carers Victoria, whether in a paid or unpaid position, is responsible for the wellbeing and protection of the children within our care (or contact) and reporting information about suspected child abuse.

Policy

The CHSP provides entry-level home support for older people and their carers who need assistance to keep living independently at home and in their community.. Carers Victoria operate respite services via a brokerage model (respite services are arranged by Carers Victoria and delivered by a registered respite service provider with whom Carers Victoria hold a service agreement) and broker in home, community access and centre based respite.

It is expected that CHSP providers charge client contributions where clients can afford to do so.

This policy was developed based on the following CHSP Client Contribution Principles. 1.1 CHSP Client Contribution Framework

**Consistency:** All clients who can afford to contribute to the cost of their care should do so. Client contributions should not exceed the actual cost of service provision.

**Transparency:** Client contribution policies should include information in an accessible format and be publicly available, given to, and explained to, all new and existing clients.

**Hardship:** Individual policies should include arrangements for those who are unable to pay the requested contribution.

**Reporting:** Grant agreement obligations include a requirement for providers to report the dollar amount collected from client contributions.

**Fairness:** The Client Contribution Framework should take into account the client’s capacity to pay and should not exceed the actual cost to deliver the services. In administering this, providers need to take into account partnered clients, clients in receipt of compensation payments and bundling of services.

**Sustainability:** Revenue from client contributions should be used to support ongoing service delivery and expand the services providers are currently funded to deliver.

The CHSP aims to promote equity and sustainability through a national fees policy and framework. Carers Victoria’s client contribution fee arrangement is consistent throughout the program, making it fair and sustainable. Carers Victoria will:

* Provide carers with consistent contribution expectations dependant of type of service received.
* Take into account a carers capacity to pay and an income and expenditure review may occur.
* Consider applications for hardship on a case by case basis with waivers approved by the Manager – Carer Services.
* Will ensure it reports contributions to Department of Health as required
* Set a reasonable contribution rate based on the CHSP Client contribution framework
* Ensure that revenue received through the program is reinvested in to carer services review the fee structure annually. Carers will be given at least 3 months’ notice of any changes to the existing fee structure.

Carer CHSP Fee Process

**Accounts**

Accounts are issued monthly and should be paid within a fortnight. Accounts can be paid via internet banking, credit card, cheque or money order or by deposit at NAB or Bank Australia. If a carer is unable to pay the account they should contact Carers Victoria finance department as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements.

**Overdue Accounts**

In the event a carer fails to pay their account by the due date or fails to honour a payment plan, Carers Victoria reserves the right to withdraw services until the account is reconciled. This is at the discretion of the CHSP program Service Manager. If a decision to withdraw services is made, the carer and the respite service provider will be given one month notice in writing.

**Hardship**

If a carer is unable to pay the account, they should contact Carers Victoria finance department as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements. Carers Victoria will take into account a carers capacity to pay and an income and expenditure review may occur, using the Income/Expenditure Assessment form.

**Change of time/date or cancellations**

Carers should contact Carers Victoria if a change or cancellation of service is required. If notice is given Carers Victoria will endeavour to meet the request, however this is dependent on the availability of the brokered service provider. Services must be cancelled at least 24 hours before the service is due. If less than 24 hours is given Carers Victoria incur a cancellation fee. Therefore, carers will still be charged the client contribution fee if services are not cancelled within 24 hours. Under certain circumstances fees may be waived with the approval of a Service Manager.

References and related documents

Information Privacy Act 2000 (Vic)

Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)

Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) Manual 2023-24

National Guide to the CHSP Client Contribution Framework 2022

Carers Victoria CHSP Guide

CHSP Service Agreement

Income/Expenditure Assessment

Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) Service Review

Document Control

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| Version | Details of changes | Authorised by / Date if applicable | Issue date (mth/yyyy) |
| 2.0 | Update in line with current CHSP Guidelines and legislation. | GM CCSDec 2023 | Dec 2023 |