

**Providing safe, reliable transport for
the frail aged, younger people with
disability and their carers**

**Service User
Information Handbook**

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Principles of the Commonwealth Health Support Programme

Standard 1: Effective Management

The service provider demonstrates effective management processes based on a continuous improvement approach to service management, planning and delivery.

Standard 2: Appropriate Access and Service Delivery

Each service user (and prospective service user) has access to services and service users receive appropriate services that are planned, delivered and evaluated in partnership with themselves and/or their representative.

Standard 3: Service User Rights and Responsibilities

Each service user (and/ or their representative) is provided with information to assist them to make service choices and has the right (and responsibility) to be consulted and respected. Service users (and/or their representative) have access to complaints and advocacy information and processes and their privacy and confidentiality and right to independence is respected.

Target Group

- Frail or at risk aged persons, being elderly persons with moderate or severe disabilities;
- Younger disabled persons, being persons with moderate or severe disabilities;
- The Carer's of these persons
- Frail, older people (aged 65 years and over or 50 years and over for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people) and who need assistance with daily living to remain living independently at home and in the community
- Frail, older Commonwealth Home Support clients aged 65 years and over (50 years and over for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people) will be the direct service recipients of planned respite services, which will allow regular carers to take a break from their usual caring duties
- People aged 50 years and over on a low income who are homeless or at risk of homelessness as a result of experiencing housing stress or not having secure accommodation
- Grant recipients funded under the Commonwealth Home Support Programme and their service delivery client base.

The Commonwealth Home Support Programme recognises the following special needs groups, which align with those identified under the Aged Care Act 1997:

- People from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- People who live in rural and remote areas
- people who are financially or socially disadvantaged
- Veterans
- People who are homeless, or at risk of becoming homeless
- People who are lesbian, gay men, bisexual, transgender and intersex people (including people who are perceived to be, or have in the past lived as such)
- People who are care leavers
- People who are leaving custody
- Parents separated from children by forced adoption or removal.
- Such other classes of persons, as are agreed upon by the Commonwealth Minister and the State Minister

What services are available?

St George Community Transport delivers transport services only.

Individual Transport- door to door transport from your home to where you need to go and the return journey.

Social Outings- A door to door social outings service to various venues. Please see the most recent newsletter for the social outings calendar.

Group Bus Hire-Our busses may be hired by other Community Groups

How do I obtain assistance?

If you would like further assistance or further information contact the office on

Tel: 02 9585 3000

Fax: 02 9586 0112

E-mail: reception@stgct.org.au

Web: www.stgct.org.au

Mail: 70 Roberts Avenue

Mortdale

NSW 2223

For assessment & referral for transport and other home support services contact

My Aged Care: www.myagedcare.gov.au

Phone: 1800 200 422

STGCT Assessment

Due to the nature of our service the Service develops individual Service Care Plans each time a Service User requires transport. The service care plan will identify:

- The service/s to be provided;
- The frequency/length of time the service will be provided;
- The service provider;
- Any special requirements;
- Other agencies involved in providing services to the Service Users; and
- The agency (if any) responsible for case management.

At the time of requesting support an assessment is completed to assist us to provide you with the most appropriate transport service for your individual needs. The outcome of your assessment may be:

- Provision of a regular service, or
- Provision of a temporary service with duration specified, or
- Refusal of service, or
- Referral to another agency

What happens when the Service is unable to meet your need?

There may be reasons why we cannot provide a service :

- You may not be eligible (do not fit the target group);
- If you are eligible for service but we don't have the resources at the time required to provide the Service to you .

Service Users will always be given information and options regarding other services that may be able to provide assistance. If you are eligible for service but we do not have the resources to provide service at that time you may be placed on a waiting list. If you are on a waiting list and your situation changes please contact the office for further consideration.

Reviews & Reassessment

We will work with you to achieve your goals and undertake regular reassessments. Reassessments are a way of ensuring that we have up to date information regarding your circumstances and to see if your needs have changed. The result of a reassessment may be:

- Referring you to other services that may assist you;
- Our service working alongside other agencies who may be providing you with care;
- Increase in services provided;
- Decrease in service provided;
- Cessation of service provided;
- Identification of WH & S/ Duty or Care issues;
- Change in your details (e.g. change of address etc); and
- Identification of new goals you have and development of a plan to help you achieve them.

When will my service stop?

Some examples of when services may cease:

- When the service is no longer required
- When another service could better meet your needs;
- If you enter fulltime care in a residential setting;
- When care type/level does not meet Government guidelines; and
- When there is a risk to you or Team Members.

What can I expect from the Service?

You can expect our service to:

- Treat you as an individual;
- To support and encourage you to maintain/increase your independence;
- Provide you with information about your transport options;
- To work with you to provide the most appropriate service for you within our resources and capability;
- To support your rights as a Service User; and
- To listen to you and respond to any feedback you provide.

Compliments, Complaints & Suggestions

We want to provide the best service we can and will always be pleased to hear feedback from you. Any suggestions or complaints give us a chance to improve so please feel free to talk to our Team.

If you feel your rights are not being respected or if you have any other complaint or concern about the services you are receiving you can try any of the following:-

- you can make an informal complaint by discussing the situation with the Team Member concerned – this may lead to a quick resolution of the difficulties;
- if the above is not appropriate or fails to sort out the problem you can contact a Manager or the Executive Officer;
- If you feel uncomfortable about speaking of your concern speak to a friend who could speak on your behalf; and
- A satisfactory result would be desired within two weeks of complaint being made.

If you aren't happy with how we work with you and the result of your complaint you can speak to:

Aged Care Complaints Commissioner, GPO Box 9848 SYDNEY NSW.

Freecall 1800 550 552. (Note: mobile phone users may incur charges).

Online complaint form via: www.agedcarecomplaints.gov.au

For complaints relating to Disability & Community services:

Community Services Division, NSW Ombudsman's Office, Level 24, 580 George Street, Sydney NSW 2000.

Phone (Freecall): 1800 451 524 (Note: mobile phone users may incur charges).

Online complaint form via: www.ombo.nsw.gov.au

Email: nswombo@ombo.nsw.gov.au

These are free and confidential service that can assist you in working through any complaints or concerns about the service you are receiving.

What happens if the Carer and Service User disagree about the Service being provided?

As our Service provides support to the Service User and their Carer we will take every opportunity to see that the needs of both parties are being met. All effort will be given to support and maintain family and friendship relationships through providing information and referral to appropriate agencies. If you and your Carer are unsure or disagree with the services being provided then please talk with a Manager or the Executive Officer as soon as an issue arises.

Privacy & Personal Information

As a Service User it is your right to have confidentiality about your care and needs maintained. When seeking information and feedback about your service your privacy will be considered at all times. You have the right to access your file, decide what information you give us and to have your information protected and only released with your permission. Please note that the Funding Body (State & Federal Government) have the right to access your file however their Employees are bound by confidentiality agreements and will not release any information. The only reason the Funding Body would look at your file would be to check that we are providing a quality service.

If you require any further information about the privacy act or your rights contact the STGCT office or Office of the Australian Information Commissioner:

Web site: www.privacy.gov.au Enquiries: privacy@privacy.gov.au
Hotline: 1300 363 992
Mail: GPO Box 5218
SYDNEY NSW 2001

If you need assistance with other languages call the Translating and Interpreting Service on 131450 and ask for the Office of the Federal Privacy Commissioner on 1300 363992.

What information will be passed on to the government?

In order to support our communities, the government (both federal and state) provides funding to many community services. In order to make these services work well, the government needs to know how services support people in their homes and communities. The information reported to them is used for statistical purposes only and will not be used to affect your entitlements or your access to services. The CHSP Minimum Data Set (MDS) records information about those people who receive CHSP-funded assistance from your Service, their circumstances, details of people who may be looking after them, and the types and level of assistance provided to them. This means a record of client and carer details, their circumstances and the assistance received from your Service must be kept and reported for the CHSP MDS. All information transmitted about service users is non-identifying.

Remember that we can only pass on information about you if you give us your permission. The information the government needs to know includes:

- If you are male or female;
- Your postcode, suburb or town, and the State you live in;
- Your age and birth date;
- Whether you are a person of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent;
- If you have an unpaid person who regularly helps you (Carer);
- Whether you own your own home, rent or board;
- Whether you receive a pension;
- What support and how much support you receive from other services;
- What language is spoken at home; and
- Country of birth.

Even though STGCT will ask for your name and address, your name and address will NOT be passed on to other government agencies. The information you give CANNOT be matched or compared to your Medicare records or Centrelink, or any other individual records about you.

At the time of assessment you will be asked if you are willing to sign a consent form this form includes consent for your data to be sent to the Funding Body. This transmission meets all privacy requirements.

What are my Rights?

- You have the right to receive a service that encourages and fosters your independence;
- You and (with your permission) your carer, has access to all information about you held by the Service;
- In cases where a you have a legal guardian or advocate appointed to act on your behalf, the rights of the guardian or advocate are to be acknowledged and respected to the extent stipulated in the guardianship or advocacy arrangements;
- You and/or (with your permission) your carers, will be involved in decisions about your assessment and care plan. You will be made aware of all the options available, and any fees to be charged;
- You will be made aware of the standard of service you can expect. Services will be provided in a safe manner which respects your dignity and independence;
- Services will be responsive to your social, cultural and physical needs;
- Your access to services will be decided only on the basis of need and the capacity of the Service to meet that need;
- You have the right to refuse a service and refusal will not prejudice your future access to services;
- You have a right to complain about the Service you receive without fear of the Service being stopped or you being mistreated because you made a complaint;
- Any complaints you have will be dealt with fairly, promptly and without retribution;
- You may involve an advocate (a friend, family member etc) of your choice to represent your interests;
- Your views will be taken into account in the planning and evaluation of the Service;
- Service Users can nominate an Advocate to speak on their behalf; and
- Service Users' rights to privacy and confidentiality will be respected.

What are My Responsibilities?

- You should let the agency know if you are not going to be at home when Team Members are due to visit;
- You should act in a way which respects the rights of other Service Users and Team Members;
- You need to take responsibility for the results of any decisions you make including the choice not to make a decision;
- You must utilise seatbelts and other vehicle safety devices as directed by authorised Team Members;

- You should respect the confidentiality of information about other Service Users and Team Members which you may obtain whilst using services;
- You need to play your part in helping our Team Members to provide you with services;
- You should inform the Service of any significant change in their circumstances; and
- All effort will be made to be sure that you understand your Rights and Responsibilities. Where needed contracts will be developed to ensure a clear understanding. If you continually refuse to abide by your responsibilities you may be refused service.

Can someone else speak on my behalf?

Yes! You can have a family member or friend to advocate on your behalf. Just talk to our team and we can arrange it. You can change your advocate at any time.

We are all Different and have Different Needs

We live in a diverse community and our service supports and recognises individuality and diversity. You may have specific needs that are important to you such as:

- Your mobility;
- A health condition or disability;
- Your culture;
- Your language;
- Your religion;
- Your preference for male/female staff;
- Your preference for the times you are provided service;

Our service can provide the following options:

- To use interpreters;
- Provide information in plain English format;
- Provide information in various community languages; and
- The choice of Team Member gender to provide service;

So please make sure we are aware of what is important to you – so we can provide you with the best service possible.

How much will the Service cost?

At the time of your assessment you will be given information about the fees that apply to our services.

Please note that if you are experiencing financial hardship or feel you cannot afford the Service, please advise the Assessor so we can work with you to ensure you still get the services you need. Fees may be reduced or waived in certain circumstances.

What about smoking?

All our vehicles and premises are non-smoking areas.

What happens if I'm not at home/at my destination when the transport arrives?

- It is important that you let the Service know if you are not going to be home.
- When you are assessed for the Service you will be asked what we should do if you are not at home when we call.
- If we are concerned for your safety and you have not given us instructions what you would like done we may ring your emergency contact or emergency services

Lost Property

Property left in any vehicle either owned or brokered by the Service is to be returned to the office. Should the driver of the vehicle be able to identify the Service User who owns the property, the Service User will be notified and arrangements made for the return of the property.

All non-perishable items will be donated to a charity after three months. All perishable items may be disposed of after one day.

The Service will not accept any responsibility for items left in the vehicles.

Service Parameters

Often our lives cannot be planned and appointments etc may come up with very little notice. While the Service asks that Service Users provide as much notice as possible, the Service will try to provide service with short notice. Unfortunately due to the demand on the Service this may not always be possible or may require some flexibility on the Service Users part (e.g. assisting us by seeing if appointment time can be changed etc)