



# Home and Community Care (HACC)

## Client Handbook



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## What is HACC?

HACC stands for Home and Community Care. The Home and Community Care Program aims to help the frail aged and people with a disability to live in the community, for as long as it is practical, rather than being admitted to a Nursing Home or Hostel.

A range of community and government organisations offer HACC services. Both the Commonwealth and State Governments fund them. Many HACC services rely on volunteer workers. Services are organised by a coordinator.

## Who may use HACC services?

Anyone of any age, who has a disability that makes independent living difficult, can apply for HACC services. That is, people, including those with dementia, who have difficulty carrying out any of the tasks of daily living (eg. dressing, cooking, travelling, showering etc.). People using HACC services are often called clients.

HACC services are also available to carers. Carers are the family members or friends who assist the frail aged person, or the person with a disability to live independently.

## Assessment

All clients in the HACC program are assessed. Sometimes people are assessed by more than one service coordinator. Usually the assessment takes place in the person's home or in the coordinator's office.

There are a number of reasons for assessment including:

- To find out if the person is eligible for HACC services
- To find out what services the person needs
- To work out how much service can be offered
- To work out when the service will be delivered
- To work out what fees will be charged for the service

## Client Feedback

Your feedback is valued by HACC services. If you have any minor concerns please talk them over with the worker that you see most often. We can try to improve your service if we know that there is a problem.

You have the right to complain about the service you are receiving without fear of retribution. You can expect to have your complaints dealt with promptly and fairly. Your complaint will be kept confidential. If it would make you feel more comfortable you can have a friend help you to make your complaint.

Each organisation will provide you with a copy of their complaints mechanism.

## **Fees**

Fees for HACC services are determined by each organisation's management and are reviewed annually. You will be given fee information before services are provided. Revenue from fees is used to provide more services for people who need them.

People who are assessed as needing HACC services are eligible to receive the service, regardless of their ability to pay.

## **Disputes**

HACC coordinators will assist in the resolution of any conflict that may arise between you and your carer or family as a result of the use of HACC services. Please ask your coordinator to help.

## **Client Information and Confidentiality**

The only information held by HACC organisations will be that necessary to provide safe and comfortable services. Information should be as non-obtrusive and objective as possible, yet relevant and up-to-date.

You have the right to withhold information for privacy reasons.

Your information will only be shared with other service providers with your informed consent. You will usually be asked to give consent in writing. In some circumstances verbal consent can be given, either in person or over the telephone. You have the right to withdraw your consent to the release of information at any time.

Some of your information will be passed on to government in data collections. These data collections are used to improve service provision. Identifying information, such as your name and address, will not be passed on to government.

You have the right to read any personal information about you, held by HACC organisations. Just ask your coordinator and your file will be made available. If any information on your file is incorrect please advise the coordinator and corrections will be made.

Your information will be kept secure at all times.

## **Can somebody else help me to talk to the coordinator?**

Yes. HACC organisations call this using an advocate. Your advocate could be a family member or a friend or another service provider. There are some organisations that specialise in providing advocacy services. All HACC organisations and Community Health Centres in the New England have information on advocacy services and can help you to contact a suitable advocate.

If needed, your coordinator will help you with communication:

- by arranging for an Aboriginal worker to talk to you about your service needs; or
- by arranging for an interpreter service to help you

# Client Rights and Responsibilities

## Client Rights

- You may see all of your personal information held by HACC organisations. Ask your coordinator to make the necessary arrangements
- The rights of legal guardians or advocates for clients, will be respected to the extent stipulated in the guardianship or advocacy arrangements
- You will be involved in decisions about the service that will be provided. You will be informed of the options available and any fees to be charged
- Changes to service provision will be negotiated with you
- Services will be provided in a safe manner and with respect for your dignity and independence. Services will be responsive to your social, cultural and physical needs and will be provided without discrimination
- Access to service will be decided on the basis of your need and the capacity of the organisation to meet that need. You have the right to refuse a service without prejudicing future access to services
- You have the right to express concern about the services you are receiving without fear of retribution. You may have an advocate represent your interests. Your concerns will be dealt with fairly and promptly
- Your right to confidentiality will be respected
- HACC staff and volunteers will not smoke in your home or HACC centres where services are provided.



## **Client Responsibilities**

- You should let your coordinator know if you are not going to be home when a staff member or volunteer is due to visit
- You should respect the rights of other clients and staff
- You need to take responsibility for your own decisions
- You should play your part in cooperating with HACC organisations that are providing you with a service
- You are requested not to smoke while HACC staff or volunteers are in your home.

## **Under what circumstances might my services cease?**

There are several circumstances that may cause your HACC services to be withdrawn. If your services are to cease you will be given an explanation and the coordinator will try to help you to find alternative support if it is necessary. You will be given information explaining the circumstances that may result in you being eligible for HACC services in the future. You will also be given the opportunity to give feedback on the quality of the services you have received. Because of legal requirements HACC organisations may need to hold client files for seven years.

Your HACC services may be withdrawn because:

- You request that the services cease
- You relocate outside of the service area
- Your level of disability or frailty becomes so great that providing services to you causes an Occupational Health and Safety Risk to the workers
- Your behaviour has become unsafe or unacceptable to workers or other service users
- The HACC organisation no longer has the resources to meet your needs
- Demand for HACC services is greater than the supply. When this happens the coordinator may need to reallocate services to make sure that the people most in need receive support. This may mean that people with lower needs have service withdrawn.

*Please note: If your circumstances change and you wish to apply for HACC services again your request will be treated fairly.*

## HACC Service Types

The HACC program funds a range of service types. In smaller towns one organisation may provide several types of service. Services include:

- Personal Care – help with bathing, dressing or eating
- Help in your home – with housework or jobs that are too difficult to do on your own
- Home Nursing – a nurse who visits to help with health problems
- Food Services – help for people who have trouble getting their own meals. This may be food delivered to your home, sharing a meal with a group, or help with shopping or meal preparation.
- Respite Care – provides a rest for carers. The person that you are caring for can be looked after in your home or taken on an outing.
- Day Care Centres – provide a chance for people to meet with others and do things they enjoy. Transport is usually arranged.
- Transport – help with going to doctors, day care centres or shopping. You can be picked up by a volunteer driver or by a community bus.
- Home Maintenance and Modification – help with making changes to your home so that you can live there in safety and comfort. This may be as simple as help with light globes or tap washers, or may be a bigger job such as hand-rails in the bath or fixing up a toilet or kitchen.
- Community Health Services – such as physiotherapy or podiatry.

*If you believe that any of these services would help you, please talk to your coordinator.*

## **Find a HACC service in your area**

The following organisations can help you find HACC service providers in your local area.

### **Commonwealth Carelink Centres**

Use the Commonwealth Carelink Centres service quick find website to search for service providers within your area.

[http://www9.health.gov.au/ccsd/usr\\_general/wiz\\_service\\_map\\_search\\_03.cfm?section=service&state=4&region=7063](http://www9.health.gov.au/ccsd/usr_general/wiz_service_map_search_03.cfm?section=service&state=4&region=7063) or freecall 1800 052 222.

### **Your local council**

See the NSW Division of Local Government's website for a full list of local councils and contact details. Link to listing of local Council boundaries:

[http://www.dlg.nsw.gov.au/dlg/dlghome/dlg\\_regions.asp?mi=o&ml=8&region=NR&regiontype=1](http://www.dlg.nsw.gov.au/dlg/dlghome/dlg_regions.asp?mi=o&ml=8&region=NR&regiontype=1)

### **HACC Development Officers**

There are a number of HACC Development Officers across NSW that can be contacted directly for information about local HACC and related community care services. Please follow link to see the list of HACC Development Officers across Northern NSW:

<http://www.nswhaccdos.org.au/regional-contacts/northern>

# **Service Provider Information**

*Service provider to provide the information about their services under the following headings.*

## **Contact details**

## **Services provided**

## **Schedule of fees**

## **Complaints process**

