



CUMBERLAND
CITY COUNCIL

Seniors and Disability Services Guidelines

AUTHORISATION & VERSION CONTROL

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PURPOSE

These guidelines aim to ensure Councils Seniors and Disability Services provide quality, transparent, person centred services and consumer directed care to customers receiving programs under the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) and the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). This includes:

- Implementing and meeting the required standards, (Aged Care Quality Standards or NDIS Practice Standards)
- Ensuring CHSP services are delivered in line with the CHSP manual
- Ensuring CHSP Client Contribution Framework is met
- Ensuring NDIS Price Guide is implemented

DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Abuse	As it is used throughout this policy refers to sexual assault, physical, emotional, financial, and systemic abuse, domestic violence, constraints, and restrictive practices, and to neglect.
Advocate	A person who represents and works with an individual or group of people who may need support and encouragement to exercise their rights, to ensure that their rights are upheld by Cumberland City Council.
Appointments	A time allocated for a 1 on 1 meeting between the customer and provider.
Assault	As described in the Crimes Act 1900, is against the law. For the purpose of this policy assault is any attempt or threatened attempt to cause unwanted immediate physical contact or bodily harm that puts the victim in fear of such harm or contact.
Cancellation of Service by Provider	Refers to when a scheduled delivery of support or program is cancelled by a Council Service.
Cancellation with Notice of Service Booking	Cancellation of a scheduled service or delivery of supports with notice, as required by the service agreement with 7 days notice.
Cancellation with no notice of Service booking	Where no notice or less than the outlined notice period has been given.
Carer	A person who, through family relationship or friendship, looks after a frail older person or someone with a disability or chronic illness. Carers look after these people in the community or in their own homes (DoHA, 2006)

CHSP	Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) is an entry level home support program that helps older people to live independently in their homes and communities.
Client Contribution (fees and charges)	Refers to the fee paid by the person using the service.
Cross Infection	Transmission of an infectious agent.
Customer	A person who is over 18 years of age purchasing or accessing the services or programs provided by Council's Seniors & Disability Services Team.
Domestic Violence	Violence, abuse, and intimidation perpetrated by one person against another in a personal, intimate relationship. Domestic violence occurs between two people where one has power over the other causing fear, physical and/or psychological harm.
Duty of Care	The requirement that the Seniors and Disability Services Team has to take reasonable care to avoid foreseeable harm to a customer.
Emotional Abuse	Includes verbal assaults, threats of maltreatment, harassment, humiliation or intimidation, frightening, dominating and bullying actions or failure to interact with a person or to acknowledge that person's existence. This may also include denying cultural or religious needs and preferences.
Exit (or discharge)	Is the process through which customers transition out of the Seniors & Disability Services of Cumberland City Council.
Fee for Service	Service a customer is purchasing at their own expenses. (a non-funded service).
Financial Abuse	The improper use of another person's property or assets, or the use or withholding of another person's resources by someone with whom there is a relationship implying trust.
Funded Services	Services funded or provided under the NDIS or CHSP.
Guardian	A guardian is someone who can make healthcare, lifestyle, and medical decisions on behalf of a person who lacks decision-making ability.
Guardianship Order	A guardianship order is a legal document issued by the Guardianship Division of the NSW Civil & Administrative Tribunal or the Supreme Court of NSW. The order outlines who the legal guardian is and the type of healthcare, lifestyle, and medical decisions that a guardian is authorised to make on behalf of another person.
Home Care Package (HCP)	A home care package is a coordinated package of care and services to help people to live independently in their own home for as long as possible.

Illness	Refers to a sickness, an infection, a bug, a virus, or unusual poorer health.
My Aged Care (MAC)	My Aged Care is the Australian Government's starting point for a person's aged care journey. It assists people find and access the government-funded services they need.
Neglect	Is a failure to provide the basic physical and emotional necessities of life. It can be wilful denial of medication, dental or medical care, therapeutic devices or other physical assistance to a person who requires it because of age, health, or disability. It can also be failure to provide adequate shelter, clothing, food, protection, supervision and nurturance or stimulation needed for social, intellectual, and emotional growth or well-being. It can be the placement of persons at undue risk through unsafe environments or practices thereby exposing them to the danger of physical, mental, or emotional harm.
NDIS	National Disability Insurance Scheme is a scheme of the Australian Government that funds costs associated with disability.
No Show	Where a customer does not attend the service, is not available or is not at the agreed location to receive a scheduled service.
Person responsible	<p>A person responsible is not necessarily the next of kin. Following this hierarchy, they can be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A guardian, who has the function to consent to medical, dental and health care treatments or, if there is no guardian: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The most recent spouse or de facto spouse with whom the person has a close, continuing relationship. 'De facto spouse' includes same sex partners, or if there is no spouse or de facto spouse; - An unpaid carer who is now providing support to the person or provided this support before the person entered residential care or if there is no carer; - A relative or friend who has a close personal relationship with the person.
Physical Abuse	Is assault, non-accidental injury, or physical harm to a person by any other person. It includes but is not limited to inflicting pain or any unpleasant sensation and causing harm or injuries.
Prohibited Practices	There are a range of practices which employees are prohibited from using. These include corporal punishment, deprivation of basic conditions, taking customers' money or property as payment, and exclusionary time out.
Restraints and Restricted Practices	Restraining or isolating a customer for any reasons other than medical necessity or in the absence of a less restrictive alternative to prevent self-harm. This may include the use of chemical or physical means or the denial of basic human rights or choices. These practices are not considered to be abuse if they are applied under an approved restricted practice authorisation.
Seniors & Disability Services	Refers to the services delivered by Council's Seniors & Disability Services Team to eligible persons.

Service Booking / Sessions	An agreement between a customer and provider detailing the timeframe and cost of supports.
Service Agreement	A written agreement between a service provider (Council) and customer detailing an agreed set of expectations of what supports will be delivered and how they will be delivered. It sets out each party's responsibilities and obligations and how to resolve any problems that may arise.
Sexual Assault	Any non-consensual sexual activity with a person who is threatened, coerced, or forced to engage in sexual behaviour is sexual assault. It includes language or exploitive behaviour and can take the form of rape, indecent assault, sexual harassment, or sexual interference in any form.
Support Person	In the context of this policy, a customer who has been abused may be required to talk to the police, a sexual assault worker or representative of a legal or victim's service and may need support at these times. The support person does not have the same function as the person responsible and cannot make decisions for the customer. The person may be an employee who is known and trusted by the client. The support person may also be from an advocacy service.
Transition	Is preparing for and supporting the customer to exit the service or referral to another service or program where appropriate.

SCOPE

These guidelines apply to all council staff, volunteers and contractors when undertaking work within the Seniors and Disability Services Team.

PROCEDURE STEPS / GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The below sets out the principles and procedural steps for Cumberland City Council Seniors and Disability Services to guide staff, volunteers, and customers to ensure quality services and the implementation of standards are met. Items covered within these guidelines include:

1. Customer Access
2. Intake and Referral
3. CHSP Customer Contributions
4. Decision Making and Choice
5. Cancellations
6. Infection Control and Illness
7. Freedom from Abuse and Neglect
8. Customer Transition or Exit from services

1. Customer Access

Council is committed to maximising access to the organisation's Seniors & Disability services for everyone within the agreed target customer group and to ensuring equity of access across eligible customers. Council's Seniors & Disability Team will work within its available resources while endeavouring to optimise access for people to services and activities.

Council will:

- Identify, review and address barriers to access for people in the target group/s and develop strategies to eliminate or reduce identified barriers
- Use service planning to maximise accessibility for people in the target group/s, ensuring that all services, activities, facilities, and premises are designed to maximise physical and cultural accessibility for customers
- Use proactive information strategies for potential customer groups to increase knowledge of and understanding about Council and the services offered by the Seniors and Disability Services Section
- Ensure that all staff within the seniors and disability services team are inducted on the eligibility criteria for services and the entry/exit process.

Eligibility Criteria

A person/ customer must fit the following criteria to be eligible for assistance:

- Frail Aged and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) community aged 65yrs+
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Aged 50yrs+
- Adults aged between 18 and 65 years who have an intellectual disability
- Carers of the frail aged or a person living with a disability
- Living within the Cumberland LGA or within a close perimeter
- CHSP is for seniors needing 1 or 2 entry-level services
- Level of need, assistance required may be:
 - For low-level needs on an ongoing basis
 - Short-term after injury or illness
 - Interim support while waiting for a Home Care Package (HCP)
 - Due to a risk of homelessness.

Identifying Barriers to Access

Council recognises our main target group has varied needs and issues such as:

- Accessibility including physical access
- Language barriers
- Access to culturally appropriate services
- Sight and/or hearing impairment
- Childhood and adult life experiences such as abuse histories and experiences of discrimination
- Day-to-day social, family, and economic realities such as poverty, housing situation
- Expression and experience of mental health and/or Alcohol or drug issues
- Pathways to services, treatment needs and responses such as help-seeking behaviour and the type of service sought
- Cultural and community background
- Physical health issues such as risk factors and responses to medication.

Council will endeavour to address the identified needs and issues by providing:

- Accessible buildings
- Accessible services including after-hours programs
- Accessible information in a variety of formats
- Translated documentation
- Suitable transport – accessible buses and vehicles
- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Specific programs

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific programs
- Services and programs suitable to the needs of our target customer group
- High-quality care that will require ongoing reflection, supervision, and education in relation to gender-specific issues, for individuals to ensure sensitivity and safety
- Care that takes into consideration people in the context of their gender identity and sexual preferences
- Care that acknowledges the range of other factors that interplay with gender and impact on people's health and wellbeing.

To identify barriers to access, Council will:

- Compare the profile of customers with local population data and past service records on an annual basis to identify groups who are underrepresented
- Review relevant literature and practice experience
- Consult with customers and/or their advocates, other agencies, and staff
- Seek advice from relevant community groups or members
- Form partnerships with relevant community groups or organisations.

Ensuring Physical and Cultural Access

Council will try to ensure the following:

- Premises are accessible and transport can be provided where public transport is not available
- Premises and facilities are physically accessible to people with limited mobility or disability
- Opening hours provide access to the full range of service users
- Services are provided in a flexible manner to meet the needs of individuals where possible.
- Maintain effective messaging systems for customers to contact Council
- Customer areas are kept clean, comfortable, and welcoming
- The cultural and language needs of people within the target group/s are identified and accommodated
- Interpreters and/or bilingual staff are available for any person requiring this assistance
- Programs and services consider people in the context of their gender identity and sexual preferences, as well as the range of factors that interplay with gender and impact on people's health and wellbeing.

Promotion of Service

Council will produce specific information about its services and activities in a range of formats.

This will include:

- Service promotional materials/brochures
- Service specific documentation
- Service Programs.

General information about the organisation and its services and activities will be made available through written documentation, Council staff members and the council website.

2. Intake and Referral

Management of Requests for a Service

Requests for service by customers can be made by the person themselves or by a friend, relative or health professional or through My Aged Care. This can be done by contacting any staff member of the Seniors & Disability Services Team via phone, fax, email or in person.

A member of the Service Development Team will respond to the request within 48 hours to: discuss referral, confirm support needs, and arrange service commencement. At that stage a goal planning meeting will be set to coincide within three months of service delivery. This meeting organised by our Intake Officer will involve a face to face home visit to develop a person-centred goal plan (aligned with MAC support plan). It is expected that the process of becoming a customer will take no longer than 3 working weeks from the time the person contacted Council's Seniors and Disability Services.

NDIS customers / carers will discuss with NDIS coordinator their personal goals, preferences, eligibility to determine core support budget available i.e. Assistance with Social & Community Participation prior to referral to the Service Development Team for final onboarding.

Each customer's (NDIS, HCP, CHSP) access to the service is determined according to their individual level of assessed need. Eligibility does not converse entitlement to service provision. Services may not be able to be provided due to other people being assessed as a higher priority or resources not being available.

Decisions are based on the assessment of each individual's situation and consideration of factors such as:

- The level of service to be provided given that the Home Support Program funds entry-level supports
- The vulnerability of the individual to further deterioration
- The effect of service delivery on the unpaid carer
- The likely effect of the service provided in assisting individuals to attain their goals
- The effect on other existing and prospective consumers of providing services for the individual
- Safety for consumers and staff.

Factors such as the person's relative needs and the capacity of service providers to respond with existing resources may mean that the services cannot be provided even if the person is eligible.

On specific occasions the Intake Officer will highlight responsive service provision on the goal plans for an agreed time period and with agreed review points. This can lead to discussion of exit strategies and short-term service use as part of the wellness and restorative approach to service provision.

All services to customers are monitored on an ongoing basis to ensure that it is meeting the needs of the individual. Once a year each customer is reviewed to identify any changes in the services being provided and or individual requirements. If a customer provides feedback to staff, volunteers, or the Coordinator, on changes to their health or needs their goal plan will be updated. Where necessary, customers are referred to My Aged Care or other NDIS service provider(s).

The Coordinator receiving a request or application for service will ensure:

- The person has a clear understanding about the services available and the eligibility criteria
- Advocates, support services and interpreters are involved as required
- The person's needs are assessed

- If eligible, the person is provided with access to the service, if Council is unable to provide the service for any reason the customer will be placed on the waiting list and/or provided with alternative service options by way of referral to an appropriate service
- If ineligible or excluded from the service, the person is informed of the reason for refusal of service, advised of their right to appeal and provided with information about alternative options and a referral to an appropriate agency wherever possible
- Decisions are consistent and transparent
- A record is kept of who has requested a service, how they were referred, their eligibility and any onward referrals made on Council's ECM.

Making Referrals

The Service Development Team will be responsible for maintaining an accurate and current contact and referral database.

Informal referrals are made by providing the customer with contact information about other services or agencies.

In instances where additional support needs have been identified the customer will be referred to My Aged Care for reassessment.

The staff member making the referral will ensure that:

- Confidentiality and privacy of the customer is maintained at all times
- They have clarified with the customer the service needs they have expressed
- The customer is given an accurate picture of the other agency and its service.

3. CHSP Customer Contribution

In setting and collecting customer fees, Cumberland City Council's Senior's & Disability Services team adopts the Principles outlined in the CHSP Client Contribution Framework to ensure a fair and equitable approach to user charging in the CHSP Program.

These guidelines consider both the level of income and amount of services used provided by Cumberland City Council's Senior's & Disability Services, when considering the customer's capacity to pay. In doing so, the guidelines acknowledge that the majority of Cumberland City Council's Senior's & Disability customers are dependent upon some form of pension or benefit for income support.

Cumberland City Council is committed to supporting the following principles provided by the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) Client Contribution Framework as principles for its Seniors & Disability Services:

- **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 the service provision.
- **Transparency:** Information about client contributions is available, given to and explained to all new and existing clients.
- **Hardship:** Client contribution framework includes those who are unable to pay.
- **Reporting:** Grant agreement and Council obligations will be met by reporting to the dollar amount collected from client contributions.
- **Fairness:** The client contribution framework will take into account the client's capacity to pay and should not exceed the actual cost to deliver the services. In administering this, the needs of partnered clients, clients in receipt of compensation payments and bundling of services will be taken into account.
- **Sustainability:** Revenue from client contributions should be used to support ongoing service delivery and expand the services currently funded for delivery.

Steps

- i. All customers assessed as eligible to receive Cumberland City Council's Senior's & Disability services will be required to make a contribution towards the cost of the services they receive. Assessment of a person's capacity to pay will be made as simple and unobtrusive as possible with due regard for the individual's privacy.
- ii. Customers will be informed of the contribution applicable to them at the time of the initial assessment, review, or service variation. Where a couple receive a shopping service they will not be separately charged. Requests to waive a client contribution will be considered in accordance with this policy.
- iii. Seniors & Disability Services will not commence until the CHSP Fee Reduction Application is completed if required, unless approved by the Coordinator, Manager or Director.
- iv. Where a customer has been assessed as not having the capacity to pay the determined fee, the rate may be reviewed in accordance with these guidelines.
- v. Inability to pay cannot be used as a basis for refusing or withdrawing a service to those customers who are assessed as requiring a service. However, unwillingness to pay may result in services being reduced or withdrawn, and no new or additional services will be provided until any outstanding debts are paid.
- vi. Customers may require or elect to have an advocate during any discussion on income and/or contribution or review, and have the right of appeal against a given contribution determination; and
- vii. Customer contributions and fees will be reviewed annually, or in accordance with the CHSP Client Contribution Framework. Where an increase is to be applied to a service, customers will be notified in writing including their rights to have their individual contribution rates reviewed.

Income and Customer Contribution & Fee Assessment

- i. At the time of the initial assessment or review, all customers will be provided with a copy of the information about Council's fees for service.
- ii. At the time of the initial assessment or review, Cumberland City Council's Seniors & Disability Team will ensure that the customer is receiving all financial assistance available to them (e.g. rent assistance, Health Care Card concession on utilities, carer's allowance etc).
- iii. Customers are to be encouraged to raise any difficulties they have in paying their contribution and to advise Cumberland City Council's Seniors & Disability Team as soon as practical of any significant changes in their financial circumstances which may affect their income assessment or resulting level of fees;
- iv. All customers who advise of inability to pay will be required to complete a CHSP Fee Reduction Application to determine the appropriate fee to be charged for the Seniors & Disability services.
 - a. Where a customer is living alone, or in a household of unrelated people living together, or is living with a family member (other than a spouse or partner) or carer (who is not a CHSP client), the customer's income is assessed;
 - b. Where one member of a couple living together is the customer, or a couple are both customers, the couple's combined income is assessed.
 - c. Customers assessed on higher incomes are eligible for CHSP services subject to availability and demand, and contributions charged appropriate to the income level of the individual; and

- d. Where a customer has received a lump sum or other compensation payment intended to cover the cost of community care, the client contribution will be set at the full cost recovery rate.

Customer Review of Contributions and Fees

- i. Customer fees may be reviewed at the request of a customer or initiated by Cumberland City Council either as part of the initial customer assessment or at any time the customer's service requirements or their financial situation changes. Customers will be required to complete the Income Self-Declaration Form and provide supporting information.
- ii. If a Customer declines to complete any element of the Income Self-Declaration Form or provide relevant supporting information they are to be informed that a contribution review will not be conducted and the customer will be required to continue paying the originally assessed contribution rate;

The following documents will be required to facilitate a fee review:

- the customer's Income Self-Declaration Form and
 - all relevant supporting information, and
- iii. Where a customer who is receiving all relevant assistance would still experience financial hardship in paying the assessed fee, the Intake Officer and Team Leader will negotiate with the customer to determine what the customer can contribute. The Intake Officer will discuss with the Senior Coordinator, Seniors & Disability Services or Director and seek approval for a reduced rate; and
 - iv. A fee reduction may be approved for a set period or for the duration of the service to be provided. The reduction, if approved, would start from the date the customer's request was received. All approvals for long term contribution fee reductions will be reviewed annually as part of the customer's annual review.

Customer Contribution and Fee Schedule

- i. The Customer Fee Schedule will be reviewed annually in accordance with this policy and Council procedure. The customer fees will reflect the level of funding required to meet the expected level of service to be delivered in the following year based on an assessment of:
 - the amount of CHSP funding to be received,
 - the expected amount of indexation to be received,
 - the expected amount of client contributions to be received (per service by client income level),
 - the total cost of each service that is provided (total costs to include direct staff costs, operating costs and allocated administrative overhead costs), and
 - any gap between total funding expected to be received and the cost of service delivery.
- ii. Following the annual review of the Client Contribution & Fee Schedule and where a general rate increase is applied; the same percentage increase is to be applied to customers with reduced contribution rates.

Collection of Customer Contribution Fees and Cancellation of Service

- i. Customers will be charged based on service times recorded on staff and volunteer timesheets.
- ii. Transport fees will be invoiced fortnightly for each individual one-way or return trip provided.

- iii. Cumberland City Council will issue fortnightly invoices detailing the customer charges including the types and quantity of services provided in the previous fortnight. Accounts are due and payable by the date specified on the invoice.
- iv. If a service is cancelled by the customer less than 24 hours prior to the delivery of the service or the customer is not at home when the Cumberland City Council staff member or volunteer arrives, the customer will incur a service cancellation charge as per the Guidelines - Cancellations, unless the reason for cancellation is due to circumstances beyond the control of the customer due to hospitalisation or medical emergency.
- v. If a customer is in arrears without prior arrangements, the Team Leader, Senior Coordinator or Director will implement measures to recover outstanding monies by working with the customer or their carer, advocate or other individuals or agencies to determine a suitable arrangement in-line with Council's Debt Management Policy.
- vi. If, after all reasonable attempts to negotiate payment and a customer still has not paid their outstanding account, the matter will be referred to the Senior Coordinator Seniors & Disability Services for a review of services being provided to the customer. The customer will be advised in writing that Cumberland City Council will exercise its right to reduce or cease services to address any non-payment issues. The advice will specify the hours of service that will be reduced if there is no effort made to pay or substantially reduce the debt.

Appeals and Complaints

Customers, or their nominated advocates, have a right of appeal if they are unhappy with any aspect of their income assessment, fee setting or review, or any dispute over outstanding payments. All customers will be advised of this right and the process of appeal under Cumberland City Council's Complaints and Compliments Management Policy at the time of assessment and subsequent reviews. If there is still no satisfactory resolution after an internal review, the customer will be encouraged to refer their complaint via the Aged Care Complaints Commissioner on 1800 550 552. No customer will be disadvantaged or penalised as a result of lodging an appeal.

4. Decision Making and Choice

Council's Seniors and Disability Services Team gives respect to and endorses customer rights, by enabling decisions and choices in all aspects of life. Customers have the opportunity to develop and maintain maximum possible control over decisions that impact on their life. Customers are supported to make decisions about services they wish to receive, activities they wish to participate in and the lifestyle they wish to follow.

Council's Seniors and Disability Services allow opportunities for customers to receive information and education to improve decision making skills, independence and allow informed choices involving risk taking to be made.

Council's Seniors and Disability Services recognise that customer advocates, customer stakeholders and / or legally appointed guardians have a right to make decisions on their behalf, best interests, and best possible customer outcome.

Council's Seniors and Disability Services provide opportunities for customers to participate in the management, evaluation, and development of the service(s) they access. This allows for the greatest possible input and decision making from customers.

The operation and administration of Cumberland City Council's Seniors & Disability Services are guided by the following;

1. Council's Seniors and Disability Services programs promote opportunities and provide support for customers to develop competence in decision-making.
2. Each customer is given the opportunity to access the necessary information, education, and support to be able to make as many of their own decisions and choices as possible. This information is presented in ways that are accessible and meaningful to the customer and supports the principle of the least restrictive approach.
3. Council's Seniors and Disability Services programs provide support to customers in a manner that maximises their potential to realise their individual goals. This includes providing information about the range of services available, using appropriate modes of communication.
4. Informed choice is maintained with staff delivering information and support to customers by detailing the possible consequences of their choices and decisions. This enables customers to take responsibility for their choices.
5. Customers will be given opportunities to make decisions. Decisions about day to day matters are made by the customer/s. If support is required / requested, a family member, close friends, advocate, legal guardian, or staff can provide informal support.
6. Where and when required, customers are encouraged to involve their support person and/or advocate in assisting them to make decisions about their lives to ensure that the best outcome is achieved.
7. Customers will be supported by staff to participate in the planning and implementation of their Individual Support Plan.
8. Informed decisions made by customers are encouraged, supported, respected, and accepted by the Service.
9. Customers are supported to take 'reasonable risks' in situations whereby an informed choice and decisions can be exercised. Decisions made that involve 'reasonable risks' are supported by information, education and practice to minimise the risk. They are documented as part of the customer's Individual Support Plan.
10. Where critical decisions require a customer to provide formal consent and they cannot provide it, a decision may be made informally by a legal guardian, advocate, family member or other relevant support person.
11. Where a conflict arises as a result of a customer's decision, a review is arranged in the context of an Individual Support Plan or team meeting with the customer involved. The review aims to mediate and seek options that minimise the risks associated with the situation without sacrificing the benefits. All information is to be documented in the customer's individual file.
12. Where a customer's risk-taking behaviour involves physical or emotional harm to another person, the Coordinator, in consultation with the Senior Coordinator, will intervene to protect the well-being of all concerned.
13. Where it is unclear if a customer can make an informed choice they are provided with support, further information, and education to enhance the ability to make an informed decision. A customer who is unable / unwilling to make decisions or choices in one area of the service is not generalised / nor categorised as exempt from all areas of decisions making and choice.
14. Customers who are unable to make decisions with or without support and who have a legally appointed guardian with a specific function or financial manager, are to be represented by that

person whenever this is required

15. When a customer has a legally appointed guardian, decisions are to be made only about matters or issues on which the customer has difficulty or is unable to decide
16. A legally appointed guardian with a specific function may only decide for a customer on the function defined by the Guardianship order
17. Where substitute decision-making is necessary, Council's Seniors and Disability Services is to ensure it only occurs on the issue/s about which the customer is unable to make decisions on. Consultation with the customer must always acknowledge their point of view.
18. A customer may request or refuse assistance from a service at any time. In each incident the consequence of their decision is explained to them to assist them to make informed decisions.
19. Staff actively encourage customers to be involved in the evaluation of the quality of that support without fear or judgement of a consequence.
20. Customers are encouraged to access any independent support or advocacy to assist them in decision-making and choice.
21. Customers receiving a service are to be actively supported and encouraged to:
 - (a) Provide comment and feedback regarding staff who provide support
 - (b) be involved in the induction and training of new staff
 - (c) assist in the development and review of policies
22. Customers from a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) background who require support to make decisions receive it from services that reflect their culture and beliefs
23. Information is provided in a language or communication format that customers, families, carers, advocates, and guardians can best understand

5. Cancellations

Cancellations under NDIS

If a customer does not provide 7 days notice of a cancellation for a service booking, Cumberland City Council will charge the 100% scheduled service fee for the program of support as detailed in the service agreement.

There is no limit on the number of short notice cancellations (or no shows) that Cumberland City Council can claim in respect of a participant. However, providers have a duty of care to their participants and if a participant has an unusual number of cancellations then Council will seek to understand why they are occurring.

The NDIA will also monitor claims for cancellations and may contact Council if a participant has an unusual number of cancellations.

All cancellations must be made by email or phone within the hours of 8.00am to 4.00pm.

If Cumberland City Council is to cancel or make a change to a scheduled booking or appointment a minimum of 24 hours' notice will be provided to the customer.

Where a customers' attendance can be replaced by another customer the cancellation fee will not be applicable.

Who to Notify

Cumberland Lifestyle and Leisure Links Program

Who to Notify	Notification period	Applicable Charge
Email paul.spiteri@cumberland.nsw.gov.au Phone 8757 9797 or 0409 985 112 Between 8am and 4.00pm	Customer No Show or Short Notice Cancellation (with less than 7 days notice).	100% Charges are payable (plus out of pocket expenses eg: ticket costs)
	A cancellation whereby another customer can attend and accepts the scheduled service and support	No cancellation charges are applicable
	Cancellation with notice for a Service booking or program	No cancellation charge

Cumberland Social Inclusion

Who to Notify	Notification period	Applicable Charge
Phone 8757 9031 Between 8am and 4.00pm	Customer No Show or Short Notice Cancellation (with less than 7 days notice).	100% Charges are payable (plus out of pocket expenses eg: ticket costs)
	A cancellation whereby another customer can attend and accepts the scheduled service and support.	No cancellation charges are applicable
	Cancellation with notice for a service booking/program or appointment (more than the specified notice required)	No charge

Cumberland Nutrition Services

Who to Notify	Notification period	Applicable Charge
Phone 8757 9033 Between 8am and 4.00pm	Less than 7 days notice is provided by the customer for a booked delivery of prepared meal/s.	100% Charges are payable (plus out of pocket expenses eg: meal cost)

	Cancellation with notice (more than 7 days)	No charge
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Cumberland Service Development

Who to Notify	Notification period	Applicable Charge
Phone 8757 9041 Between 8am and 4.00pm	No Show for a service booking or appointment	No Charges are payable
	Cancellation with no notice for an appointment (less than 24 hours)	No Charges are payable

Cancellations under the CHSP

Cumberland Social Inclusion

Who to Notify	Notification period	Applicable Charge
Phone 8757 9031	No Show or less than 48 hours' notice	Full charges are payable (including out of pocket expenses eg: ticket costs)
	Cancellation No Notice (notice of 2 to 6 days provided)	50 % of full charge is payable
	Cancellation with Notice More than 7 days	No Charge

Cumberland Nutrition Services

Who to Notify	Notification period	Applicable Charge
Phone 8757 9033	No Show or less than 48 hours' notice	Full charges are payable (including out of pocket expenses eg: meal costs)
	Cancellation No Notice (notice of 2 to 6 days provided)	50 % of full charge is payable
	Cancellation with Notice (more than 7 days)	No Charge

Waiving of Cancellation Fees

Charges may be waived under special circumstances and these will be reviewed by the relevant Service Coordinator on a case by case basis.

In the event that a Council Service has had to cancel a scheduled support, there will be no charge to the customer.

In addition, NDIS Community, Social and Recreational Activities (contribution for unaffordable program activity cost) is a support item designed to enable providers to claim reimbursement for the costs of enabling a participant to independently engage in community, social and recreational activities when costs of participation exceed an affordable level and without, the participant would be at risk of social isolation. Participants may use this funding for activities such as camps, vacation and outside school hours' care, course or membership fees. This support item can be delivered to individual participants subject to the rules set out in this Price Guide. This support item is not subject to price limits. It should only be used to recover the costs of the participant's attendance at the community social and participation activities. NDIS Code 04_210_0125_6_1

No Show

Staff will follow the Work Procedure Schedule – Customer No Show or Not Home, when a customer fails to show at a scheduled support without any notification.

6. Infection Control and Illness

A customer's health is an important aspect of their overall well-being. If a customer is unwell, they are not able to enjoy their program experience. Also, in some instances their continued attendance increases the chance of cross infection to other customers. We believe that the health and wellbeing of all customers, staff, and volunteers whilst in service is of utmost importance and all reasonable steps will be taken to reduce the risks of cross infection.

The most effective way to ensure this is to prohibit anyone who is unwell from the service environment.

Below outlines the requirements in relation to customers being unwell and unfit for service. It also outlines circumstances where customers need to be isolated to reduce the spread of infection.

The proximity of people in service (especially in transport and in a centre-based environment) makes the likelihood of cross infections high. Therefore, our services require co-operation in keeping customers that are ill, away from service. This will ensure that illnesses are kept at a minimum. It is the responsibility of all staff, volunteers, customers, and carers to act in a responsible educated manner when dealing with infectious diseases and illnesses.

Prevention of Transmission

Staff / volunteers involved in direct care situations must always exercise strict hygiene. Viruses and infectious diseases are primarily transmitted by respiratory droplets and bodily fluids, with transfers mainly through touching, covering surfaces infected or being air borne.

Ways to prevent transmissions are:

- Staff / volunteers must wear disposable gloves when dealing with first aid, faeces, urine, blood etc
- Practice good hygiene by washing hands (using soapy water or hand sanitiser)
- Coughing or sneezing - inside of elbow or with a tissue (disposing immediately)
- Protect any cuts or broken skin
- Prohibit staff / volunteers, customers and visitors who demonstrate symptoms from attending/accessing programs until they are symptom free
- Ensure there is always adequate quantities of PPE and cleaning products

Should any bodily spills occur they should be cleaned as follows:

- Use a spills kit
- Wear disposable gloves
- Soak up with paper towel
- Clean area with disinfectant / detergent and allow to dry
- All soiled material to be placed in a sealed plastic bag
- Bagged material should be disposed of as soon as possible in an appropriate way
- Wash hands and lower arms with soapy water

A customer or volunteer will need to exit the daily activity, program, or service within a reasonable period of time due to the following indicators.

Criteria of illness:

- Fever in excess of 38 degrees
- Two or more symptoms of diarrhoea (watery stools within a 24-hour period)
- An episode of repeated vomiting
- A non-diagnosed rash or skin irritation
- Eye discharge
- Symptoms of an upper respiratory tract infection (cough, nasal discharge, sore throat, shortness of breath, earache) with an associated fever
- Extreme lethargy, weakness, or increased confusion
- Started a course of antibiotics within the last 24 hours
- In the event of a pandemic Council will follow guidelines, recommendations and advice provided by the government and health departments

If a customer or volunteer becomes ill whilst in care:

- Staff will contact the emergency contact person
- It is important that emergency contact person comes to the service immediately. In circumstances where it is practical, the service may transport the individual home to seek medical attention (as long as the ill customer is not going to be left alone at home)
- For cases where there is no carer, participants will be supported to access medical assistance (eg their GP or Home Doctor Service)
- If a customer or volunteer appears unwell on arrival, they will be asked to be taken home immediately.

The best place for a participant of service that is sick is at:

- Home resting with supervision
- Seeking medical attention.

For all instances, staff will document the customer's illness and absence from service in a 'Client in Care' record. This notification form will be saved to the customer's individual file.

Essential services and supports may be offered during a time of illness whereby there is no staff / volunteer customer contact. (Examples can include home delivered meals, on-line shopping and deliveries that maintain contactless service).

Returning to service from illness:

- Customers that have been sent home or are absent from service will be advised if a doctor's certificate is necessary before their return.
- Following cases of vomiting and diarrhoea, service may resume 24 hours post the illness.
- It is recommended that customers not be in service during the first 24 hours of antibiotic treatment while symptoms of illness exist.
- In the event where household service is offered (inside the home) direct service provision needs to be cancelled.

HIV, Hepatitis and Blood

It is important that we prevent the spread of infectious diseases such as HIV and Hepatitis and that the additional needs of customers who are diagnosed are recognised. All customers and their families deserve the right to quality supports and services offered by the Seniors and Disability Services Team. No person shall be discriminated against on the grounds of having or being assumed to have HIV/AIDS or Hepatitis.

Our services will always follow proper Universal Control Procedures to eliminate the risk of transmission of HIV / Hepatitis as recommended by the World Health Organisation, the Department of Health and

NSW Health. Services shall follow all the necessary hygiene procedures to eliminate the risk of transmission.

Customers with Hepatitis / HIV positive will have this kept STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL, however it is requested that customers give permission to inform staff / volunteers of this type of infectious disease to provide the necessary safe care and support.

Pandemic Response

In the case of a pandemic event, Council will follow the orders of the relevant health authorities to prevent the spread of infection at a service level. The Seniors and Disability Services Team will work with all customers during this period to ensure essential supports can be available in a way that remains safe for all concerned.

Essential services and supports may be offered during a pandemic to allow for incidental, minimal, or even no staff / volunteer customer contact. (Examples can include phone based assessments, welfare phone calls, home delivered meals, on-line shopping and deliveries that maintain contactless service and 1:1 exercise sessions that maintain safe distancing). Refer to the Business Continuity Plan for more specific program management.

Customers Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the customer to notify the relevant service contact in the event of illness and service suspension / cancellation for the day (or period).

These contacts are:

- Cumberland Lifestyle and Leisure Links (Peer Support) P 8757 9797 M 0409 985 112
- Cumberland Social Inclusion P 8757 9031
- Cumberland Nutrition Services P 8757 9033
- Service Development Team P 8757 9041

7. Freedom from Abuse and Neglect

This Guide aims to work within the framework of relevant legislation to ensure that the human and legal rights of customers of the Seniors and Disability Services are upheld in relation to the prevention, identification or reporting of sexual, physical, emotional and financial abuse and/or neglect. The allegation may refer to abuse by employees, other customers, or other adults.

These guidelines relate to customers of the Seniors and Disability Services Team who fall outside of Council's Child Protection Policy.

Below outlines the guiding principles and procedures which will be followed

1. Council's Seniors and Disability Services staff and volunteers will take all steps to avoid foreseeable harm/abuse/neglect to the customer.
2. All staff and volunteers of Council's Seniors and Disability Team have a "duty of care" to their customer(s) and others who may be affected by the staff's actions or inactions.
3. The factors to be considered in situations of potential harm/abuse/neglect are:
 - The risk and likelihood of harm/abuse/neglect.
 - Precautions that could be taken to minimise the risk of harm/abuse/neglect.
 - The usefulness of the activity involving risk.
 - Current professional standards about the issues.

4. Council's Seniors and Disability Services staff need to use their professional skills and experience to decide on what actions they should take in each situation of suspected abuse/neglect.
5. All staff of Council's Seniors and Disability Services have a duty of care to identify and report situations of potential, suspected or actual abuse/neglect of customers and carers.
6. Council has adopted WHS procedures to ensure that all volunteers and Seniors and Disability Services staff are not harmed when carrying out tasks and responsibilities allocated to them.
7. Where it is probable that a customer will cause self-harm or harm to others by declining service, take action accordingly. This action may include notification to other relevant community services, the police, and other services. The first priority is to ensure the safety of others.
8. While staff have a duty of care to encourage customers to accept a service where appropriate, it is the customer's choice whether to accept or decline the service. If a customer declines a service this decision must be recorded in the customer's file.
9. The Coordinator will ensure that correct follow-up is conducted for each customer of concern or incident reported.
10. It is the responsibility of the council to ensure that all staff and volunteers receive adequate information and training on duty of care.
11. Council's Seniors and Disability Services Team will take positive action to minimise risks by:
 - providing information to volunteers regarding their responsibilities in protecting customers from Abuse and Neglect
 - monitoring care and safety issues
 - promptly addressing areas of recognised identified risk.

Staff will seek advice from relevant bodies if they have concerns about a customer being abused, neglected, or exploited by someone in their home or in the community and follow those agencies recommendations / procedure. Relevant contacts are:

- NSW Ageing and Disability Commission
Ageing and Disability Abuse Helpline – 1800 682 221
- NDIS Commission
Reportable Incidents Team – 1800 035 544
- Internal Ombudsman Shared Service – 8757 9617
- Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission – 1800 951 822

In emergency situations staff will call 000 and follow instructions given by emergency services.

Council's Executive Team will be informed of any incidents and will implement relevant investigations, notifications etc. and instigate any relevant course of action deemed reasonable or necessary and is aligned to relevant agency protocols and guidelines. For example: If it is found that a staff member or volunteer has abused a customer(s), the matter may warrant dismissal by Council as well as action taken by the NSW Police.

8. Customer Transition or Exit from Services

Cumberland City Council is committed to providing customers with information and support through the process of transition or exit from the organisation's Seniors & Disability Services.

Council will:

- Ensure that staff explain to all customers at the time of the development of their individual support plan how and when the process of transition and exit will occur
- Ensure that the issue of transition and exit is discussed in customer reviews
- Ensure that transition and exit is timely, seamless and offers flexible and reliable support linked to other services
- Support customers to transition to other services or cease services as needed
- Employ service planning and management staff that have the necessary skills and experience to undertake the role and provide them with regular structured supervision and staff development.

Termination of services can be initiated by either the customer and/or their advocate or Council's Seniors & Disability Team. The customer is not locked into a contract and can terminate the service at any time.

A customer may transition or exit Seniors & Disability Team services in the following circumstances:

- The customer's health status improves, and they no longer fit the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) assessment criteria
- The customer's health status declines and they no longer fit the service delivery guidelines
- The customer demonstrates aggressive, abusive, violent, or irrational behaviour that places staff, volunteers, other customers or the consumer at risk or injury
- Access to home or home environment is a Work Health and Safety risk for staff/volunteer
- Where other CHSP and community services are funded to cover the requested need
- Customer enters long term residential care
- Customer relocates to an area outside the serviceable area
- Customer and/or Carer decides they no longer require the service
- The service cannot meet the ongoing increased needs of the customer, as they exceed the capacity of the service
- The customer does not respect the staff/volunteer or the agreed support plan
- Continued absence without notice
- Death of the customer.

Developing a Transition or Exit Plan

The Coordinator or delegated staff member will annually, or as required, undertake monitoring of the customer's progress against their goals and seek feedback from relevant representatives where appropriate.

Once the need for a transition or exit has been identified a Transition and Exit Form will be completed and included in a customer's file. The plan will include:

- The reason for transition or exit
- Details of further services that can be accessed
- Referrals made for the customer.

Support

Council encourages customers to be involved in the process of transition and exit by implementing the following support strategies:

- Providing specific assistance to customers where required e.g. cultural or language barriers, using accredited interpreters where required, or involvement of a larger group of extended family members identified by the customer
- Ensuring staff involved in customer transition and exit processes are provided with on-going

support and professional development to assist them to undertake their duties effectively.

Support Options

As a customer nears transition/exit the Coordinator will ensure there are discussions with them about options for support following transition or exit or if appropriate the ability to again access the services of Council.

In determining the most appropriate support options with the customer Council will consider:

- Cultural and language requirements
- Existing family and carer support
- Whether the person is of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Island background
- The person's mental health
- The age of the customer
- Current risks to customer.

Involving Other Professionals

Council will involve other professionals in the transition process if the customer has complex care needs or a mental health issue and a registered nurse/ psychologist / or allied health professional has been working with the service user.

Customer consent will be sought prior to involving any other professionals in the development of a transition or exit plan.

Exit and Transition

Prior to a customer transitioning or exiting a service of Council an exit plan will be created to ensure all appropriate formal and informal supports are in place.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

The Seniors and Disability Services Team are responsible for the below:

- Implementation of the Guidelines
- Ensuring the review of the guidelines as required
- Ensuring regular consultation processes have been followed
- Ensuring communications on the guidelines to relevant stakeholders occurs
- Ensuring guidelines are updated to reflect changes in relevant standards or legislation.

Seniors and Disability Services Team Volunteers are responsible for the below:

- To ensure they are aware and implement these guidelines.

The Director or Executive Team are responsible for:

- Final approval of the guidelines
- Providing advice and direction as stated within the guidelines.

RELATED LEGISLATION

- Aged Care Act 1997
- Aged and Disability Commissioner
- Commonwealth Home Support Program Manual

- Aged Care Quality Standards
- National Guide to the CHSP Client Contribution Framework
- Charter of Rights & Responsibilities for Home Care (Department of Social Services)
- National Disability Insurance Scheme
- NDIS Practice Standards
- NDIS Practice Standards – Worker Screening
- National Disability Standards
- Disability Inclusion Act 2014
- Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998
- Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002
- Council’s Model Privacy Management Plan 2013
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011
- Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011.
- NDIS Pricing Arrangements and Limits

RELATED DOCUMENTS AND COUNCIL POLICY

- Guidelines - Complaints and Compliments Management Policy
- Cumberland City Council Fees and Charges
- Seniors & Disability Fees Flyer
- Debt Management Policy
- Form – Confidential Fee Reduction / Waiver Application
- Form - NDIS Service Agreement
- Customer Handbook
- Disability Inclusion Action Plan
- Access & Equity Policy
- Customer Service Charter
- Volunteer’s Policy
- Community Strategic Plan & Operational Plan
- Code of Conduct
- Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Disciplinary Action Policy
- Grievance and Dispute Handling Policy
- Dealing with Workplace Aggression and Violence
- Guidelines Following a Critical Incident.