

Policy Statement

The Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) is an Australian Government subsidised programme to help older people stay independent and in their homes and communities for longer. Carers of these clients also benefit from services provided through the CHSP.

SCC HC seeks a standard financial contribution from clients towards the cost of CHSP services they receive; at a level that is fair and affordable, but sufficiently flexible to adapt to individual circumstances and align with the CHSP Client Contribution Framework.

SCC HC has a range of service types and associated fees. Fee schedules are subject to change and may be updated regularly.

Payment of Fees

All clients are informed of the SCC HC Fees Policy in discussions about their service plan and prior to service delivery. Clients will be given at least 14 days' notice of any changes to the Fees Schedule.

Payment of fees is by Direct Debit or Electronic Transfer (Direct Deposit) on a fortnightly basis and in arrears.

In all cases:

- An assessment of a client's need for support precedes identification of a client's capacity to contribute to the cost of the support service (the fee).
- No client will be refused support because of an inability to pay fees.
- Mechanisms limit the total fees a client can pay and allow assessed fees to be reduced in individual circumstances.
- In assessing, setting and charging fees SCC HC at all times respects the rights of clients and carer.

Clients have a right to:

- Have their fees determined in a way that is transparent, accessible and fair;
- Receive invoices and statements that are clear and in a format that is understandable;
- Have their fees reviewed periodically and on request when there are changes to their financial circumstance;
- Not to be denied care and services because of their inability to pay fees.

Clients have the responsibility to:

- Pay any fee as specified in the agreement or negotiate an alternative arrangement with SCC HC if any changes occur in their financial circumstances
- Provide enough information for SCC HC to determine an appropriate level of fee.

Client Contribution Framework Principles

In charging fees SCC HC apply the CHSP Client Contribution Framework principles:

- Payment of fees that contribute to the cost of CHSP support is only sought from clients who have the capacity to pay.
- Fees will not exceed the actual costs of service provision

Commonwealth Home Support Programme Fees Policy

- Clients who do not have the capacity to pay will have their fee reduced. This is negotiated between the client and the Coordinator. A Fee Reduction Request form is to be completed and approved by senior management. The agreed fee is to be included in the Service Agreement and Service Plan.
- In situations where the client's financial situation changes, the client should contact the coordinator and arrange for a fee review.
- If a client has received (or is receiving) a compensation payment, that is intended to cover some or all of the costs of home based care and services, the full cost of the service/s should be requested.
- In circumstances where the client is receiving multiple services concurrently, a discussion with the Coordinator to 'bundle' the contribution amounts, may be appropriate to ensure cost of the combined services are not unreasonable.
- Couples/Partners that are both CHSP clients and the service provision assists both clients, only one client will be asked to contribute. Example: Domestic Assistance for one hour; only one client will be charged for the hour service.
- When client transport is provided as part of the service, any tolls and parking fees are the responsibility of the client.
- Clients may have to pay for transport when requesting community access. This will be explained by the Coordinator to the client.
- Client contribution policies is publicly available, in an accessible format and be given to, and explained to, all new and existing clients.

Non-Payment of Fees

If a client is identified as being in arrears of at least 21 days of the due date without prior arrangement, SCC HC will contact the client to explore the reasons for non-payment.

The client will be advised of their right to have an advocate during the discussions.

If a client is not paying the required fee, SCC HC will review their ability to pay. Depending on the circumstances, a number of fee payment options may be considered, including the client paying the outstanding amount in instalments or reducing it.

All reasonable attempts to negotiate with the client will be made to arrive at a mutually agreed fee. The client will be made aware of their right to appeal and use the services of an advocate.

If the client still fails to pay the agreed outstanding amount, a written reminder will be issued, requesting payment within 14 days. Once all avenues have been explored, SCC HC's Operational Manager will decide how to manage the debt. If ability to pay is not an issue, the organisation may notify the person that services will be withdrawn. If payment is still not made within a total of 42 days of the original due date, services can be ceased at the discretion of SCC HC. The client will be informed in writing of the service provider's decision and will have their right of appeal explained to them.

Related Documents

National Guide to the CHSP Client Contribution Framework
CHSP Client Contribution Framework
CHSP Programme Manual