

CLIENT CONTRIBUTION POLICY

Policy number	General 3	Version	2
Drafted by	Garry Lane	Approved by Board on	18 May 2021
Responsible person	Garry Lane	Scheduled review date	6 June 2026

CLIENT CONTRIBUTION FRAMEWORK

In October 2015, a principles-based Client Contribution Framework (the Framework) was introduced for the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP). CHSP service providers must adhere to this principles-based approach to the charging, collecting and reporting of client contributions.

The Framework outlines the principles service providers should adopt in setting and implementing their own client contribution policy with a view to ensuring that those who can afford to contribute to the cost of their care do so, whilst protecting those most vulnerable. It is designed to support the financial sustainability of the CHSP whilst creating fairness and consistency in the way both new and existing clients contribute to the cost of their care.

POLICY STATEMENT

TransCare Hunter Limited is committed to promoting equity through a nationally consistent fees framework in the provision of CHSP services. TransCare Hunter Limited has also extended this framework to include other service provision including Home Care Packages and Transport services. TransCare Hunter Limited is also committed to being a sustainable organisation operating in Aged Care and Community Transport and as such may exercise its right to adjust fees and services to meet changing demand and operating costs.

POLICY OBJECTIVE

TransCare Hunter Limited acknowledges the need for determining and requesting a contribution fee that is consistent, cost effective and fair.

CLIENT CONTRIBUTION PRINCIPLES

1. **Consistency:** All clients who can afford to contribute to the cost of their care should do so. Client contributions should not exceed the actual cost of service provision.
2. **Transparency:** Client contribution policies should include information in an accessible format and be publicly available, given to, and explained to, all new and existing clients.
3. **Hardship:** Individual policies should include arrangements for those who are unable to pay the requested contribution.
4. **Reporting:** Grant agreement obligations include a requirement for service providers to report the dollar amount collected from client contributions.
5. **Fairness:** The Client Contribution Framework should take into account the client's capacity to pay and should not exceed the actual cost to deliver the services. In administering this, service providers need to take into account partnered clients, clients in receipt of compensation payments and bundling of services.
6. **Sustainability:** Revenue from client contributions should be used to support ongoing service delivery and expand the services providers are currently funded to deliver.

Policies can be established or altered only by the Board: **Procedures** may be altered by the CEO.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the following individuals or groups:

- TransCare Hunter Limited management team for the purpose of making relevant decisions where there are identified patterns of frequent client cancellations or non-attendance for service;
- All TransCare Hunter Limited clients and/or their carers or representatives currently in receipt of one or more TransCare Hunter Limited services; and
- External agencies, service providers, advocates and case managers who may be advising clients that are in receipt of TransCare Hunter Limited services.

TransCare Hunter Limited reserves the right to review the service delivery to clients that display a pattern of frequent cancellations or where the client is not present for the scheduled time of service. Clients that are reassessed in these circumstances will be advised of their rights and responsibilities and a decision on eligibility for future services will be determined.

This ensures that all TransCare Hunter Limited clients have equitable access to funded and non-funded services, especially where there is a demand and a possible waitlist for services.

AUTHORISATION

TransCare Hunter Limited

6th June 2023

CLIENT CONTRIBUTION POLICY

RESPONSIBILITIES

It shall be the responsibility of the CEO to implement this policy and to report to the Board annually on its progress.

PROCEDURES

Client Contribution Arrangements

- All TransCare Hunter Limited clients are informed and provided with a copy of the Client Contribution Policy either through discussions with staff prior to service delivery (new clients) or through mail/website access.
- Clients are responsible for paying their fees promptly.
- Our preferred method of payment is via credit/debit card or via direct transfer from the client's bank.
- Client contribution rates may be reviewed at any time but usually this is done on an annual basis.
- Clients will be provided with at least one month's notice of any changes to the Fees Schedule relevant to their service(s).
- Potential clients requesting a service will be asked if the contribution will pose a difficulty for them.
- No client will be refused services because of an inability to pay fees. However, if a client is having trouble paying the fee(s), they are expected to bring it to the attention of the appropriate staff member and negotiate an agreement that will be documented.
- Clients and potential clients are encouraged to discuss fees with staff to fully understand their obligations under the Service Agreement/Plan.
- Clients receiving services and/or their representatives have the right to utilise our complaints process to appeal against the client contribution arrangement relevant to their service provision.
- Clients are required to provide a minimum of 24 hours' notice for service cancellation, otherwise the full fee will be charged for the scheduled service.
- TransCare Hunter Limited reserves the right to reassess the needs and goals of its clients when a pattern of cancellations, non-attendances or a client not being at home becomes evident.

Non-Payment of Fees

- If a client's account is identified as being in arrears of at least 30 days of the due date without prior arrangement, we will contact the client and/or their representative to explore the reasons for non-payment.
- Depending on the individual circumstances, a number of options may be considered to finalise or to pay off the fees owing.
- TransCare Hunter Limited will make all reasonable attempts to arrive at a mutually agreed arrangement to recover outstanding fees.
- If the ability to pay is not an issue, and payment is still not forthcoming, services may be discontinued at our discretion.
- If services are discontinued, we will inform the client and/or their representative of our decision in writing and explain their right of appeal.

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REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

- Commonwealth Home Support Programme – Program Manual 2022-2023
- National Guide to the CHSP Client Contribution Framework
- Home Care Common Standards
- Aged Care Quality Standards

AUTHORISATION

Garry Lane, CEO

6th June 2023

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