

CABONNE COMMUNITY VISITORS SCHEME POLICY

STRATEGIC POLICY

Responsible Department: Cabonne Services

Responsible Section: Community Services

Responsible Officer: Department Leader - Community Services

Objective

The Cabonne Community Visitors Scheme provides one-on-one visitors for lonely and socially isolated residents in aged care facilities in the Cabonne Local Government Area.

Introduction

The Cabonne Community Visitors Scheme provides one-on-one visitors for lonely and socially isolated residents in aged care facilities in the Cabonne Local Government Area and includes the following aged care facilities:

Canowindra	The Salvation Army Moyne Eventide Home Eugowra Road Canowindra NSW 2804
Molong	Prunus Lodge UPA Aged Care Bells Lane Molong NSW 2866
Yeoval	Hazelholme Hostel Lords Street Yeoval NSW 2868

Policy

CABONNE COMMUNITY VISITORS SCHEME SERVICE CHARTER

Cabonne Council is committed to the ideals of the Community Visitors Scheme.

Council recognises that some residents who live in institutional care have no or very few meaningful visits. They thus lose touch with their community, and as a result, suffer social isolation and a lower quality of life.

The objective of the Cabonne Community Visitors Scheme is to provide one on one Volunteer Visitors for lonely and socially isolated Residents of Moyne Eventide Home, Prunus Lodge, UPA Yeoval and any other aged care facilities designated by the Department of Health and Ageing.

The aim of the service is to improve the quality of life of socially isolated Residents by offering friendship and companionship through the Scheme.

For the purpose of this document the residents that are visited under the Community Visitors Scheme will be known as Friends.

To achieve the objective of the Scheme in an efficient and effective manner, Council has ensured that:

1. Systems have been implemented to support the volunteer visitors

- a) Visitors are chosen with care
- b) Visitors receive service information and orientation before entering the scheme
 - i) Information includes a Rights and Responsibilities of Visitors leaflet, a brief comment on Confidentiality and a Friend's Rights Information Leaflet
 - ii) Orientation includes an escorted visit to the nursing home involved and an introduction to the resident
- c) Visitors are matched with a Friend of like interests where ever possible
- d) Training and information sessions are held regularly and may include information on:
 - Dementia
 - Special Needs
 - Grief and Loss Concerns
 - Confidentiality Issues
 - Stress Management
 - Safety Issues
 - Communication
 - Reinforcement of Friends' Rightsand other relevant subjects as Visitors or facilities suggest
- e) Open communication between the visitor and the service is encouraged
- f) Letters and newsletters offer relevant information and interesting developments
- g) Feed back sessions are held with the Volunteer Visitors
- h) Volunteer Visitors are invited to input into the development of policy

- i) Volunteer Visitors are reimbursed for all expenses incurred whilst engaged in their volunteer work
 - j) Volunteer Visitors are encouraged to actively engage the Friend in social events (where this is possible).
- 2.** The Friend's well-being is safeguarded by:
- a) Careful selection of Visitors
 - b) A visitor National Criminal History Record Check
 - c) Matching of Visitor to Friend where ever possible
 - d) Training of Visitors
 - e) Close co-operation with the facility involved
 - f) Careful monitoring of the Scheme
- 3.** Open communication is encouraged between individual nursing homes and the service by:
- a) Inviting Facility Staff to attend Visitor functions
 - b) Inviting Facility Staff to input into the development of policy
 - c) Consultation with Facility Staff about the Resident and Visitor match
 - d) Regular feed back to Facility Staff about the Scheme
- 4.** Regular reporting to Council by the Co-ordinator will include:
- a) Number of active Visitors
 - b) Number of visits per month
 - c) Workshops, Training or Information sessions held
 - d) Any concerns
- 5.** Clearly stated Service Standards and a Policy and Procedure Manual are in the process of review and development. These are living documents and are subject to a continual review process.
- 6.** Financial accountability is required by the Council Accounting Department by
- a) Volunteer Report Form implementation
 - b) Regular financial print-outs
 - c) Regular budget review
 - d) Operating according to Council's Accounting Procedures
 - e) Annual audit and
 - f) Annual reports submitted to the Department of Health and Ageing.

THE CABONNE COUNCIL COMMUNITY VISITORS SCHEME POLICIES & PROCEDURES

1. BACKGROUND

The Cabonne Community Visitors Scheme provides one-on-one visitors for lonely and socially isolated residents in aged care facilities in the Cabonne Local Government Area.

These include the following aged care facilities:

Canowindra The Salvation Army Moyne Eventide Home
 Eugowra Road
 Canowindra NSW 2804

Molong Prunus Lodge UPA Aged Care
 Bells Lane
 Molong NSW 2866

Yeoval UPA Yeoval
 Lords Street
 Yeoval NSW 2868

And any other facilities designated by the funding body

The Scheme is funded by the Federal Government through the Department of Health and Ageing and is auspiced by Cabonne Council

The funding is provided to support eleven active visitors

The Scheme is managed by a Co-ordinator and has clerical support. Total hours are approximately five hours per week.

2. OBJECTIVES

The Cabonne Council is committed to the ideals of the Scheme and to its effective and efficient operation

The Cabonne Council is committed to the provision and monitoring of a high quality visiting service to residents of aged care facilities in their area.

The objectives of the Cabonne Community Visitors Scheme are to:

- Provide one on one volunteer visitors for lonely and/or socially isolated residents of Commonwealth subsidised aged care facilities in the Cabonne Local Government Area.
- To improve the quality of life of those residents.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Auspice Responsibilities

Cabonne Council, as the auspice body, is responsible for meeting all the conditions of the Community Visitors Scheme Grant as outlined in the CVS Grant Agreement and Guidelines. This includes ensuring that:

- a) Cabonne Council Community Visitors Scheme operates in line with:
- The CVS Grant Agreement
 - The CVS Guidelines
 - All Commonwealth requirements
- b) The Service Charter is upheld
- c) Audits and all financial procedures are carried out by qualified practitioners
- d) Reports are provided as required
- e) Unresolved problems relating to a visitor are referred to the Community Visitors Scheme Co-ordinator for advice
- f) Adequate insurance cover is provided for volunteer visitors and staff
- g) The best possible staff is recruited to the position of Co-ordinator
- h) The Co-ordinator Job Description is based on Section 3.2 of the Guidelines
- i) Staff is given support, direction, supervision and appropriate training to allow them to manage the Scheme in accordance with the Grant Conditions and Guidelines
- j) A Community Visitors Scheme policies and procedure manual, that is consistent with the Grant Conditions and Guidelines, is maintained
- k) Service issues and problems are dealt with as they arise and necessary support and assistance are provided.

Coordinator Responsibilities

The Community Visitors Scheme Co-ordinator has the general responsibilities are to:

- a) Ensure the Service Charter is followed
- b) Recruit, select, orientate and support Visitors
- c) Action a National Criminal History Record Check of all Visitors
- d) Liaise with residential aged care facilities regarding residents' needs, assisting with match, the progress of the current visitors, the matching process and to identify new referrals
- e) Inform residential aged care facilities of any change in status of visitors and/or Scheme
- f) Promote the Scheme through the Cabonne LGA
- g) Maintain a record of responses and rates of success of any promotional activity
- h) Undertake the day to day management of the Scheme consistent with the CVS Guidelines 2002 including the development and monitoring of policies and a "user friendly" complaints system
- i) Annually develop and monitor a budget and service plan

- j) Maintain links with the Department and provide reports as required
- k) Keep a waiting list of visitors and residents if necessary
- l) To network with other CVS Co-ordinators; locally, regionally and nationally
- m) Records of requests for Community Visitors are retained
- n) To oversee the administration officer when she/he is working for the scheme.

Visitor Responsibilities

Community Visitors have the following primary responsibilities:

- a) To allow a National Criminal History Record Check to be carried out on them
- b) To visit a designated resident in a residential aged care facility at least once per fortnight for the purpose of:
 - Offering companionship and friendship
 - Increasing resident involvement in social opportunities and community affairs
 - Providing assistance with small tasks that might be done by a friend or neighbour such as posting a letter or exchanging library books
 - To provide the Co-ordinator with a record of dates of visits
 - To respect the rights of residents including confidentiality and privacy
 - To exercise a duty of care at all times
 - To inform the Co-ordinator if they are experiencing any difficulties with visiting
 - To notify the Co-ordinator if there is any accident or incident that occurs while visiting
 - To notify the Co-ordinator if there is an intention to stop visiting on a temporary or permanent basis
 - To inform the Co-ordinator if they wish to stop visiting a particular resident.
- c) To work within the Memorandum of Understanding and the Service Charter
- d) A visitor may not:
 - Monitor standards provided at a residential aged care facility
 - Be involved in investigating or following up complaints
 - Displace existing relationships between the resident and their family, staff or other relationships
 - Have access to residents personal records
 - Become involved in the resident's financial affairs
 - Provide nursing or personal care to the resident
 - Interfere with or have any involvement in the day to day management of the residential aged care facility
 - Act as an activity programme volunteer in the residential aged care facility unless an activity is a component of the visit with the matched resident
 - Replace nursing, activities or therapy staff in the residential aged care facility.

Aged Care Facility Responsibilities

Residential aged care facilities have the primary responsibility to:

1. Inform themselves of the Community Visitors Scheme community-based Auspice organisations in their area
2. Identify residents who may benefit from receiving a Community Visitor and make referrals to the Co-ordinator
3. Provide appropriate information to the Co-ordinator
4. Assist with matching
5. Provide the Co-ordinator with information on policy and procedures that a Community Visitor needs to know
6. Provide the Co-ordinator and Visitors with relevant resident needs information to ensure Community Visitors are able to meet their duty of care
7. Inform staff of residents receiving Community Visitors and the names of the visitors and, if necessary, make introductions
8. Welcome, encourage and support Community Visitors
9. Notify the Co-ordinator and/or the visitor if a resident has died. (This requirement is of utmost importance and should be afforded a high priority by the residential aged care facility manager. Contact should be made with the visitor if the Co-ordinator is unavailable, and the Co-ordinator should be informed as soon as possible).

Consideration should be given to the appropriateness of notifying or not notifying the resident's family that their relative has a Community Visitor.

4. PROGRAMME PRACTICE

Eligibility of Visitors

Community Visitors are volunteers appointed under the Community Visitors Scheme for the purpose of friendly visiting and companionship with socially isolated residents of Commonwealth subsidised residential care facilities. Whilst there is no age restriction on visitors, visitors should be:

- Approved through a National Criminal History Record Check
- Mature and responsible
- Interested in providing friendly visiting to a socially isolated resident of an aged care facility
- Committed to sustaining a continuity of visiting over an extended period

The Co-ordinator may be a visitor within his or her own or another organisation providing that visits occur during the Co-ordinator's own time and not during paid work hours. This arrangement must be discussed with the State Programme Officer prior to commencement.

Other staff of Council may be a visitor in their own or another organisation providing that visits occur in their own time and not during paid work hours.

Visitors should not be employed staff of the facility they visit.

Involvement of Others

Children may accompany Community Visitors on visits at the discretion of the Community Visitor and with the agreement of the resident and the facility in which they reside. A duty of care must be exercised by the Coordinator if there are doubts about others being involved in the visits.

Pets may accompany a Community Visitor, provided they are accepted by the resident, the aged care facility management, are appropriately trained and offer no risk to other residents.

A staff member of an aged residential care facility is not eligible to be a Community Visitor in his or her own facility unless permission has been granted by the Department of Health and Ageing.

Community Visitor Rights

A Community Visitor has the right to:

- Be provided with information about the Community Visitors Scheme
- Receive a Job Description
- Know to whom they are accountable
- Receive clear and concise written and verbal instructions
- Receive information on a resident to enable duty of care requirements to be met
- Respect and Support
- Say no to unacceptable tasks
- Be valued as a team member
- Training and information sessions
- Not be exploited
- Information regarding changes of circumstances of the person they visit
- Have their complaints and concerns addressed
- Reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses
- A work environment that is safe and healthy
- Adequate insurance cover.

Confidentiality and Privacy

Community Visitors should be supported to understand and practice confidentiality and to respect privacy and dignity.

The scheme will ensure that:

1. Information sessions that address Confidentiality and Privacy issues will be held regularly
2. Written information on confidentiality and privacy will be part of the Visitor Orientation Pack
3. Visitors will be encouraged to support a resident's dignity by:
 - Undertaking all interactions in a manner the resident finds acceptable
 - Maintaining the resident's self esteem

- Only giving assistance if either requested to do so or after first asking the resident.

Duty of Care

Duty of Care is a duty to take reasonable care to avoid injury to another person or damage to property as a result of action or inaction. This is a duty of care not to be careless or negligent.

- a) Community Visitors and Staff will exercise common sense and reasonable caution in activities undertaken with a resident
- b) Occupation Health and Safety Issues will be addressed to support the safety and well being of staff and visitors
- c) Insurance will include as a minimum:
 - public liability for \$10,000,000
 - property- fire
 - contents- theft
 - volunteer insurance- personal accident (covering visitors while in performance of their duties)
 - vehicle insurance
 - professional indemnity.

Insurance Register

All insurance policies will be kept on file and recorded in an insurance register.

Involvement with the Resident's Family

Community Visitors will be made aware of the rights of the family and the need to not interfere with those relationships

Concerns about a Resident's Care

Community Visitors do not have an active role in complaints or the resolution of concerns regarding resident's care. If there is a concern, then the matter will be discussed with the co-ordinator who will exercise judgment as to any appropriate action

Receiving and Giving Gifts

Community Visitors will be made aware of Council's policy regarding receiving gifts. It may be appropriate to give gifts on occasion but care must be exercised not to offend family members and significant others. It is appropriate that gifts be limited to small items such as cards, flowers, etc.

Personal Care Service Provision

The provision of personal care services to a resident by a Community Visitor is not permitted.

Outings

Community Visitors may take a resident from the facility only with the permission of that facility and all policies regarding outings are strictly adhered to.

5.0 Securing of Information

The Securing of CVS Data

All current CVS visitor- resident records will be entered onto the data base;

The confidential CVS data stored in the computer will be protected with an access code;
A back up disk will be upgraded at least monthly;
The back up disk will be protected with an access code;
The back up disk will be kept in a fireproof container in the strong room;
All visitor hard copy information will be stored in a filing cabinet;
The filing cabinet room will be locked when not in use.

The Securing of CVS Policies

A hard copy of the policies and procedures will be kept in the workplace;
The policies and procedures will be stored in the computer;
A back up disk will be kept in a fire-proof container in the strong room;
Cabonne Council will hold a copy of the policies and procedures;
Facilities involved will hold a copy of the policies;
The building will be locked when staff vacate the premises.

Responsibilities

General Manager: responsible for the overall control and implementation of the policy.

Deputy General Managers and Leaders: responsible for the control of the policy and procedures within their area of responsibility.

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Cabonne Council Community Visitors Scheme operates in line with:

The CVS Grant Agreement

The CVS Guidelines

All Commonwealth requirements

The Service Charter is upheld

Audits and all financial procedures are carried out by qualified practitioners

Reports are provided as required

Unresolved problems relating to a visitor are referred to the Community Visitors Scheme Co-ordinator for advice

Adequate insurance cover is provided for volunteer visitors and staff

The best possible staff is recruited to the position of Co-ordinator

The Co-ordinator Job Description is based on Section 3.2 of the Guidelines

Staff is given support, direction, supervision and appropriate training to allow them to manage the Scheme in accordance with the Grant Conditions and Guidelines

A Community Visitors Scheme policies and procedure manual, that is consistent with the Grant Conditions and Guidelines, is maintained

Service issues and problems are dealt with as they arise and necessary support and assistance are provided.

Community Visitors Scheme Coordinator: has general responsibilities as follows:

- To ensure the Service Charter is followed
- To recruit, select, orientate, match and support Community Visitors

- To liaise with residential aged care facilities regarding residents' needs, the progress of the current visitors, the matching process and to identify new referrals
- To promote the Scheme through the Cabonne LGA
- To maintain a record of responses and rates of success of any promotional activity
- To undertake the day to day management of the Scheme consistent with the CVS Guidelines 2002 including the development and monitoring of policies and a "user friendly" complaints system
- To annually develop and monitor a budget and service plan
- To maintain links with the Department and provide reports as required
- To keep a waiting list of visitors and residents if necessary
- To network with other CVS Co-ordinators; locally, regionally and nationally
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- To oversee the administration officer when she/he is working for the scheme.

Community Visitors: have the following primary responsibilities:

- To visit a designated resident in a residential aged care facility at least once per fortnight for the purpose of:
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- Act as an activity programme volunteer in the residential aged care facility unless an activity is a component of the visit with the matched resident
- Replace nursing, activities or therapy staff in the residential aged care facility

Aged Care Facilities: Residential aged care facilities have the following primary responsibilities:

- To inform themselves of the Community Visitors Scheme community-based Auspice organisations in their area
- To identify residents who may benefit from receiving a Community Visitor and make referrals to the Co-ordinator
- To provide appropriate information to the Co-ordinator to assist with making a suitable match
- To provide the Co-ordinator with information on policy and procedures that a Community Visitor needs to know
- To provide the Co-ordinator with relevant resident needs information to ensure Community Visitors are able to meet their duty of care
- To inform staff of residents receiving Community Visitors and the names of the visitors and, if necessary, make introductions
- To welcome, encourage and support Community Visitors
- To notify the Co-ordinator or the visitor if a resident has died. This requirement is of utmost importance and should be afforded a high priority by the residential aged care facility manager. Contact should be made with the visitor if the Co-ordinator is unavailable, and the Co-ordinator should be informed as soon as possible.
- Consideration should be given to the appropriateness of notifying or not notifying the resident's family that their relative has a Community Visitor.

References

Aged Care Act 1997

Aged Care Quality Standards

Charter of Aged Care Rights

Aged Care Diversity Framework

History

Minute No.	Summary of Changes	New Version Date
		04/08/03
10/02/10 - CS4/10	Updated and adopted by Council	15 February 2010
13/09/30	Readopted as per s165(4)	17 September 2013
18/05/20	Readopted as per s165(4)	22 May 2018
22/11/15	Readopted as per s165(4)	22 November 2022