

1. RATIONALE

Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) service providers must adhere to the Governments recommendation of charging, collecting and reporting of client fees. While the Australian Government contributes a significant proportion of funding towards the cost of care for older Australians, fees collected will allow the expansion of service delivery and meeting the growing demand.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

The policy demonstrates Council's commitment to ensure:

- **Consistency:** All clients who can afford to contribute to the cost of their care should do so.
- **Transparency:** New and existing clients will be provided with information and supported to understand the Fee Policy.
- **Hardship:** Individual arrangements be made for those who are unable to pay the requested contribution.
- **Reporting:** Grant agreement obligations include a requirement for service providers to report the dollar amount collected from client contributions.
- **Fairness:** The Client Contribution Framework will take into account the client's capacity to pay and will not exceed the actual cost to deliver the services.
- **Sustainability:** Revenue from client contributions to be used to support ongoing service delivery and expand services.

3. OBJECTIVES

To ensure fairness and consistency in the way both new and existing clients contribute to the cost of their care. This policy ensures those who can afford to contribute to the cost of their care do so, whilst protecting those most vulnerable. It is designed to support financial sustainability of the CHSP.

4. POLICY SCOPE AND IMPLEMENTATION

The CHSP service providers are required to have a documented and publicly available client contribution policy in place that aligns to the funding requirements. It is expected that contributions towards the cost of care will move towards a nationally consistent approach, improve the sustainability of CHSP and a framework that provides appropriate safeguards for financially disadvantaged clients. The intent of the policy is :

- Fee Framework transparency
- Fair and affordable service fees
- Safeguard financially disadvantaged clients
- Consistent approach to fee reduction across all programs
- Fees not to exceed cost of service delivery
- Improve sustainability of program
- Ensure timely reporting through Data Exchange platform

Service fees can be reduced to assist clients experiencing financial disadvantage. The Fee reduction may also be in the form of concessional levels of full price fees for individuals or groups according to a recognised inability to pay the full price. The Reduction Framework will be based on current individual circumstances and can be applied across various service types and may be in the form of:

- Subsidy towards Health, Safety & Security service type
- Payment plan that is affordable
- Percentage reduction to the full fee as identified in the Fee Reduction Assessment

Council or its delegates may also reserve the right to reduce or cancel a discretionary fee to an individual or group on a case-by-case basis arising from extraordinary circumstances.

5. DEFINITIONS

<i>Term</i>	<i>Definition</i>
<i>Fees</i>	A price payable for a service, admission, usage, etc.
<i>CHSP</i>	Commonwealth Home Support Programme
<i>Subsidy</i>	Contribution towards the full cost of items related to health, safety & security work undertaken
<i>Data Exchange Platform</i>	Electronic reporting system

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This policy applies to the Positive Ageing & Inclusion team, contractors and volunteers.

7. REFERENCES

- Aged Care Quality Standards
- CHSP Good Practice Guide
- CHSP Manual
- Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Act 1986
- Freedom of Information Act 1982
- Equity Access and Social Inclusion policy
- Fee Reduction Assessment
- Positive Ageing & Inclusion Procedure - Fees- Commonwealth Home Support Programme

8. REVIEW AND EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed in 2026 by the Positive Ageing & Inclusion Team (or earlier as required).