

PROTOCOLS WHEN REFERRING CONSUMERS/CARERS

Name of organisation, agrees to respect the privacy, confidentiality and expressed wishes of anyone who uses our services.

It is understood that the collection of some personal details is necessary in order to provide a quality service in a safe manner, whether the service is to be provided directly, or if it is to be provided by another organisation.

Name of organisation, agrees to follow the protocols described below when referring personal information to another organisation:

As the referring organisation, we will seek to understand the nature of the organisations to which we refer consumers, their eligibility criteria and capacity to assist. Every effort will be made to reduce the incidence of inappropriate referrals including seeking feedback about the outcome and appropriateness of any referrals we make.

When making a referral to another organisation, we will only forward information that is necessary to ensure an appropriate, high quality, safe service. Information may include:

- details which help determine eligibility,
- details to enable collection of data required to meet funding and service agreement requirements,
- details about the service required, location of delivery, where it is to be delivered, consumer/carer preferences and desired frequency,
- any personal wishes or special needs of the consumer or their carer (s) to be considered when developing the most appropriate service response,
- any aspects relating to the consumer's or carer's environment, personal circumstances, conditions or behaviours which could reasonably be expected to impact anyone's safety.

Only information that is relevant to providing an appropriate, high quality, safe service will be forwarded to another organisation or contractor. No information will be forwarded without the consumer's permission except as described below. Permission will be obtained from each consumer and/or carer before the referral is made.

If the consumer is not willing to provide permission, we as the referring organisation will explain to them why the service may not be provided. If permission can not be negotiated prior to referral, we will discuss alternative options available to the consumer/carer.

There may be circumstances when personal information will be forwarded without the consumer's/carer's expressed permission. These circumstances, described below, will be explained to the consumer/carer at the commencement of a service.

In the event of an emergency which threatens the health or safety of either the consumer/carer or their worker, we as the referring organisation and you as the service provider will inform the consumer that information will be forwarded to a medical professional or law enforcement officer as appropriate. This may occur in the following circumstances:

- when the consumer/carer is unable to provide permission, due to a medical emergency, and no guardian or advocate is available,
- when the consumer/carer has expressed a desire or threatened to harm themselves, worker or other person, animal or property,
- when the consumer/carer is at risk of harm but appears unable to perceive that risk due to diagnosed or suspected mental or physical incapacity.

This document was developed by Aged and Community Services SA & NT Inc (ACS), Meals on Wheels (SA) Inc and Aged Rights Advocacy Service (ARAS) in consultation with members of the HACC Managers Group. Last reviewed 26 November 2009.