



## VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

As a member of the National Network of Carer Associations, Carers Victoria values:

- Respect and dignity
- Equity and diversity
- Courage and fortitude
- Empathy and compassion
- Honesty and confidentiality
- Integrity and accountability

## WHO ARE WE?

Carers Victoria provides services to support carers and caring families. These services include direct support such as respite coordination, education and training, counselling, advice, referral and information provision. We also represent the interests of caring families to government bodies and in the community, raise funds to support our work and contribute to research about caring. Carers Victoria is a not for profit membership organisation.

## WHAT INFORMATION DO WE COLLECT ABOUT YOU?

If you are our client, the representative of another agency, or subscriber to our magazine or e-bulletins we keep your name and contact details on your contact record.

As a client, other details such as your support plan and information about your caring situation are recorded or updated each time you contact us.

If you are a member of Carers Victoria, your information is also recorded on the Membership Register and is subject to the requirements of the Law under which we are incorporated. You can request that your contact details do not appear on this register by contacting our Membership Officer on the contacts given below.

The information we collect is personal information and, in some cases, sensitive information. We will always ask your consent to collect sensitive information.

## WHY DO WE COLLECT YOUR INFORMATION?

The information we collect helps us to keep up to date details about your needs so we can support you in the best possible way.

We use this information, along with surveys and feedback, to better manage and plan our services and also to add to the body of knowledge about caring and represent the interests of caring families.

Government departments that provide us with funding to deliver carer services also require that we provide data about the people who access our services. This data is de-identified and your anonymity is assured. Sometimes we may publish summaries of surveys or a research report. These never identify you as an individual without your consent.

## HOW WILL YOUR INFORMATION BE PROTECTED?

We are committed to protecting the privacy of your record. The privacy of your information is also protected by law. We treat your information in the strictest confidence and store it securely. If you send us information electronically, we don't track it or reuse it in any way. We are required by law to retain your record for certain periods of time and therefore it cannot be deleted.

## DIRECT MARKETING

Carers Victoria may send you direct mail for donations or to advertise our fundraising events. You may opt out of receiving these requests by contacting our Membership Officer on the contact given below or clicking the 'unsubscribe from this list' link on electronic mail.

## WHO ELSE SEES YOUR INFORMATION?

Your information can only be seen by the professionals in this service who are involved in your support, or in specified one-off projects. Otherwise, we only release information about you with your consent or if required by law, such as in a medical emergency. Carers Victoria does not share any collected information or mailing lists with overseas entities.

## WHAT SAY DO YOU HAVE IN WHAT HAPPENS TO YOUR INFORMATION?

You have a say in what happens to your information. We rely on the information you give us to help provide the right support and information for you. If you decide not to share some of your information or restrict access to your records this is your right, but it may affect our ability to provide you with the best possible services. Talk to us if you wish to change or cancel your consent.

## CAN YOU ACCESS YOUR INFORMATION?

Yes, you have a right to request access to your information and to ask for it to be corrected if necessary. To do this you need to contact our Privacy Officer by mail or by phone as given below.

## CARER RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Your rights:

- To choose the services that might benefit you
- To dignity and respect as an individual
- To fair and non-discriminatory treatment
- To freedom from physical, emotional, sexual and financial abuse
- To accurate information about the range of available services in culturally appropriate ways that will enable you to make informed choices
- To confidentiality, privacy and safety in all dealings with the service
- To access information held about you
- To exit and re-enter the service when needed
- To participate in decision making and processes impacting on you
- To make a complaint

Your responsibilities:

- To respect the rights, privacy and dignity of workers and other clients
- To ensure as far as practicable, that our staff have a smoke-free and safe working environment when they visit your home
- To take responsibility for the outcome of any decision you make.

## **GIVING FEEDBACK - COMPLIMENTS, CONCERNS OR COMPLAINTS**

Carers Victoria is committed to raising awareness of caring and carers' issues, and to take a leadership role in listening to what carers tell us needs to change (Strategic Plan 2015-18). Carers Victoria's Feedback Policy is clear that all service users or stakeholders have the right to make a complaint either in writing or verbally and, that all complaints will be dealt with:

- fairly
- in a timely manner
- confidentially
- according to a transparent and accountable process
- seriously.

Carers Victoria will use the feedback obtained to improve our services and to inform our advocacy on behalf of carers. All complaints will be responded to systematically according to our complaints handling procedure.

### **WHO CAN PROVIDE FEEDBACK?**

Any person or group of persons can provide feedback (carer, friend, spouse, relative, professional person, service provider, member of the public). You may ask someone to assist you if you have difficulty providing feedback.

### **WHAT SORT OF FEEDBACK CAN I GIVE?**

Feedback can consist of any expression of an opinion about our organisation/staff/volunteers/partners/contracted service providers, or anyone else acting on our behalf. Feedback can be a compliment, concern, suggestion or complaint. It may be about information, actions, decisions or conduct of our staff/contracted service provider/member/volunteer.

### **WHAT WILL CARERS VICTORIA DO?**

Carers Victoria will assist you with all matters pertaining to our organisation and those we subcontract or refer to and seek to find a suitable resolution. We cannot help with matters outside our govern such as complaints about other authorities (e.g. Centrelink), or matters beyond our authority. However, if we are unable to deal with your complaint, we will try to advise you of other appropriate avenues to resolve your concerns.

### **HOW DO I MAKE A COMPLAINT**

Complaints to Carers Victoria can be made in writing, by post, email, fax or by using the online client feedback form. You can contact us by email or telephone if you have concerns about submitting your complaint in writing.

### **WHAT INFORMATION SHOULD I GIVE?**

Focus on the main problems and facts. Provide enough details for us to understand and resolve the problem but no more. Be brief and concise. If it is an issue with another person or service provider, explain

what happened and why you are not satisfied with the outcome. Tell us what outcome you are seeking.

### **DO I HAVE TO GIVE MY NAME?**

No. However, if you do not give us your name, we may not be able to inform you about any actions we have taken to improve or clarify the situation.

### **WHAT HAPPENS AFTER I MAKE THE COMPLAINT?**

We will acknowledge receipt of your complaint promptly and consider it carefully. In some cases, we will contact the person/s involved by telephone or in writing to seek comments or an explanation. Many complaints are resolved in this way. We may also decide to investigate, and discuss further with the complainant and any witnesses, as well as staff.

### **HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE?**

Some complaints can be resolved quickly, within a day or two, often with just one telephone call. Other more complex matters can take longer to resolve. If we decide to undertake formal enquiries or an investigation, gathering evidence and finding a solution may take time. We will keep you informed of the progress of our enquiries or investigation.

### **WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE INVESTIGATION IS COMPLETED?**

We will inform you of the outcome of our enquiries or investigation. If your complaint is upheld, we will advise you of what steps will be taken to resolve the problem. If your complaint is not upheld or if it appears that there is no prospect of resolution, we will explain why this opinion is formed and what other action you may be able to take.

### **WILL MY COMPLAINT MAKE A DIFFERENCE?**

Yes. Even if it is a matter of clarifying information, or a change in a policy or a procedure, it may lead to improvements of our service.

### **WHAT DO I DO IF I WANT TO COMPLAIN ABOUT THE WAY CARERS VICTORIA HANDLED MY COMPLAINT?**

If you do not believe that your complaint has been handled appropriately, you can ask the CEO for an internal review of the matter.

Complaints may also be made to the State or Commonwealth Ombudsman offices depending on the subject of your complaint. See overleaf for details.

### **CONTACT**

Carer Advisory Line 1800 242 636  
privacyofficer@carersvictoria.org.au  
membership@carersvictoria.org.au

## COMPLAINT AGENCIES

### Aged Carer Complaints Commissioner

P 1800 550 552 [www.agedcarecomplaints.gov.au](http://www.agedcarecomplaints.gov.au)

### Disability Services Commissioner

P 1800 677 342 TTY 1300 726 563 [www.odsc.vic.gov.au](http://www.odsc.vic.gov.au)

### Mental Health Complaints Commissioner

P 1800 246 054 [www.mhcc.vic.gov.au](http://www.mhcc.vic.gov.au)

### Office of the Health Services Commissioner

P 1300 582 113 [www.health.vic.gov.au](http://www.health.vic.gov.au)

### Office of the Public Advocate

P 1300 309 337 TTY 1300 305 612 [www.publicadvocate.vic.gov.au](http://www.publicadvocate.vic.gov.au)

### Victorian Equal Opportunity & Human Rights Commission

P 1300 292 153 TTY 1300 289 621 [www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au](http://www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au)

### Victorian Ombudsman

P 03 9613 6222 TTY 133 677 [www.ombudsman.vic.gov.au](http://www.ombudsman.vic.gov.au)

## CARERS VICTORIA

Level 1, 37 Albert Street,

PO Box 2204

Footscray VIC 3011

P 03 9396 9500

F 03 9396 9555

Carer Advisory Line: 1800 242 636

E [reception@carersvictoria.org.au](mailto:reception@carersvictoria.org.au)

[www.carersvictoria.org.au](http://www.carersvictoria.org.au)

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