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Government of Western Australia
Department of Health

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A JOINT COMMONWEALTH AND STATE/TERRITORY PROGRAM PROVIDING FUNDING AND ASSISTANCE FOR AUSTRALIANS IN NEED

WA HACC FEES POLICY

GUIDELINES FOR CLIENT FEE REDUCTION – July 2013

These *Guidelines for Client Fee Reduction* provide information that service providers of HACC support services should follow in discussing the fee reduction process with clients.

Under the WA HACC Fees Policy, clients requesting a fee reduction for support funded through the HACC Program are required to complete a Confidential Client Fee Reduction Form.

All service providers are required to have a WA HACC Standard Fees Schedule. This fees schedule should be provided to the client with the Confidential Client Fee Reduction Form.

A client can choose not to complete this form. If so, the service provider can charge the maximum fee for a unit of service in an income level from the HACC Standard Fees Schedule.

Steps in Completing a Fee Reduction:

- A client should not complete a Confidential Client Fee Reduction Form until their need for support is assessed and the quantity and mix of support they will receive is determined in their support plan.
- The client can complete the Confidential Client Fee Reduction Form in whatever way they choose. The form can be left with the client to complete within a specified period and be returned to the service provider, or completed with the assistance of the service provider. If the client is unable to provide the required financial information, or cannot complete the form, the person who is their authorised financial representative should complete the form, or the service provider can assist the client.
- After the form has been completed the client, or their authorised financial representative, retains a copy. This avoids the need for the client to complete another form if they receive support services from another service provider.

Essential Information for Clients

The fee reduction process and the HACC Standard Fees Schedule need to be explained to the client in simple terms. Important points for service providers to cover are:

1. Clients should be advised whose income details (single or couple) are to be recorded on the form. This advice should be identified in the space provided on page 2 of the Confidential Client Fee Reduction Form.

The following guidelines apply:

a) Where a person who is a HACC client is living alone, that person's income is assessed.

b) Where there is a couple who are both HACC clients, the couple's income is assessed.

c) Where one member of a couple is a HACC client, the couple's income would generally be assessed. Service providers should, however, apply this guideline flexibly depending on individual circumstances.

d) Where an older person who is a HACC client is living with a family or a carer (other then their spouse), the older person's income should be assessed.

e) Where there is a family with a child or children with disability, aged 16 years or under, who is a HACC client, the parental income is assessed.

f) Where there is a family with an adolescent or adult with a disability aged over 16 years, who is a HACC client, the individual client's income is assessed.

g) Where there is a household of unrelated people, one or more who is a HACC client, the income of the HACC client is assessed and the support should be provided only to support that person.

2. Clients should be assisted by service providers to correctly identify their income level.

3. All service providers have a WA HACC Standard Fees Schedule for the support they provide.

4. Service Providers are required to adhere to the HACC Fees Cap. This may apply to clients receiving multiple support services from one or several service providers.

5. To assist in applying a Fees Cap, clients should advise of other HACC support they receive from other service providers.

6. If a client's financial circumstances change their assessed fee may need to be adjusted. Clients should contact their HACC service provider if this is the case. A Confidential Client Fee Reduction Form may need to be completed.

7. Information obtained about a client's income is treated as private and confidential. Written records will be stored securely. Access will be in accordance with the client's expressed permission.

8. If a client is concerned about any aspect of fees, an appeal can be lodged, either with the HACC service provider or through an advocacy service. Clients should be advised of the appeals process.