

## CHSP Co-Contribution Fee Increase effective from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### Background

The Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) is an entry level funded program to support the wellbeing and re-ablement of people over the age of 65, by working with them to remain active in community life and to continue to live independently at home. Services that can be provided by Southern Plus with a referral from My Aged Care include:

- Allied Health and Therapy Services
- Centre-based Respite
- Cottage Respite
- Domestic Assistance
- Flexible Respite
- Home Maintenance
- Meals
- Nursing
- Personal Care
- Social Support Group
- Social Support Individual
- Transport

All clients who have been referred for this type of support are required by the Commonwealth to pay a co-contribution towards the cost of the service. The Commonwealth Government pays the remainder of the invoiced service through the funding to Southern Cross Care (WA).

#### My Aged Care Assessment

Since 2015, services can only be delivered to clients who have been assessed by My Aged Care as *requiring* basic support to remain living independently at home in their community. This should not be confused with clients who would *like* to have a cleaner or gardening services.

The program is also designed to 'work with' as opposed to 'working for' the consumer and should not replace tasks that the client is able to do. The objective is for clients to retain their independence and ability to look after themselves with a small amount of support.



**Feel free to get in  
touch with us.**

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## Q: How are the fees set?

In October 2015, a principles-based Client Contribution Framework (the Framework) was introduced by the Australian Government for the Commonwealth Home Support Program. CHSP service providers must adhere to this principles-based approach to the charging, collecting, and reporting of client contributions.

The Framework outlines the principles service providers should adopt in setting and implementing their own client contribution policy, with a view to ensuring that those who can afford to contribute to the cost of their care do so, whilst protecting those most vulnerable. It is designed to support the financial sustainability of the CHSP whilst creating fairness and consistency in the way both new and existing clients contribute to the cost of their care. The client contribution principles are:

1. *Consistency:* All clients who can afford to contribute to the cost of their care should do so. Client contributions should not exceed the actual cost of service provision.
2. *Transparency:* Client contribution policies should include information in an accessible format and be publicly available, given to, and explained to, all new and existing clients.
3. *Hardship:* Individual policies should include arrangements for those who are unable to pay the requested contribution.
4. *Reporting:* Grant agreement obligations include a requirement for service providers to report the dollar amount collected from client contributions.
5. *Fairness:* The Client Contribution Framework should consider the client's capacity to pay and should not exceed the actual cost to deliver the services. In administering this, service providers need to consider partnered clients, clients in receipt of compensation payments and bundling of services.
6. *Sustainability:* Revenue from client contributions should be used to support ongoing service delivery and expand the services providers are currently funded to deliver.

CHSP services are subsidised by the Australian Government. The cost of the service is funded through the CHSP program.



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## **Q: Why have co-contributions increased?**

When My Aged Care was introduced in 2015, Southern Plus kept their existing co-contribution framework to minimise the impact of the changes to our clients. The co-contributions have not increased for more than five years.

## **Q: Why do I need to pay a co-contribution?**

It is a requirement within our funding agreement with the Australian Government that all clients that can afford to contribute to the cost of their care should do so. It is also a requirement that all co-contributions are put back into the funding to provide additional services to Southern Plus clients. All co-contributions go towards directly funding more services for more clients.

## **Q: I can't afford to pay the new co-contribution fee**

Safety net measures are in place to ensure that financial hardship is not a barrier to receiving services. Southern Plus have a confidential fee reduction/waiver form for clients to complete if they feel that this change will affect their ability to receive services. No one needs to miss out on receiving services based on their ability to contribute to the cost.

## **Q: I previously received a fee reduction/waiver due to financial hardship. What should I do?**

Clients who previously received a fee reduction/waiver should contact their Wellness Partner to discuss their current financial situation. Clients will need to complete a new fee reduction/waiver form for the reduction of fees to continue from 1 September 2023.

## **Q: My circumstances have changed; how do I get my co-contribution fee reviewed?**

We recognise that sometimes people experience challenging situations and may need to review their financial situation. We urge clients to contact us to discuss any concerns they may have. No one will be refused a service due to an inability to pay a fee.

Please note that individual financial circumstances are confidential and are never discussed or provided to third parties.



## **Q: Who can I speak to about financial hardship?**

If you would like to discuss this in more detail, please call 1300 669 189 and ask to speak to your Service Coordinator or Wellness Partner. All information is kept confidential.

In all cases:

- An assessment of a client's need for service precedes an assessment of the person's capacity to contribute to the cost of the service (the fee).
- No one will be refused a service due to an inability to pay a fee.
- A fee review process is in place to allow an assessed co-contribution fee to be reduced in individual circumstances.

## **Q: Why does my neighbour pay a different rate?**

We cannot disclose information about other Southern Plus CHSP recipients as their information is confidential and their individual circumstances may be different to yours. It is up to each client to provide us with correct information regarding their financial status or if their circumstances change.

All clients approved for CHSP services through Southern Plus pay a co-contribution unless they have already applied and been approved for a fee review due to their current situation.

It is also possible that your neighbour may:

- have a different financial circumstance to you.
- receive their service from another CHSP service provider who has a different fee structure.
- be on a home care package which incurs different fees.



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