HOME CARE INFORMATION

Proudly part of UnitingCare

ARRCS AUSTRALIAN REGIONAL & REMOTE COMMUNITY SERVICES

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Australian Regional and Remote Community Services acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land on which we work, live and connect to Australia's First Nations People. We draw on a rich history of compassion and empathy for those who are most in need. While we work to affirm the rights of all people, ARRCS as an organisation and its employees, ensures proactive leadership and action to help repair the harm caused to many generations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples through past injustices, government policies and social attitudes. We understand the importance of belonging, particularly for those with ancestral connections to this country.

Cultural Notice:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are advised that this handbook may contain images of people who have died since publication.

Independence, freedom and maintaining relationships are important to all of us. That's why at ARRCS everything we do is focused on supporting you and your family to live life your way.

WELCOME TO ARRCS

Australian Regional and Remote Community Services (ARRCS) provides care and support to people in regional and urban communities, throughout the Northern Territory and South Australia.

At ARRCS, we understand that everyone has different goals, preferences and support needs. Our Support at Home services are designed to help you continue living independently, safely and comfortably in the place you call home.

From the beginning, you'll be supported by a local team who take the time to get to know you, understand what's important to you, and work alongside you to provide the support that's right for you. We believe the best support is built on trust, respect and genuine relationships.

Your services will be tailored to your individual needs, choices and interests, with support coordinated locally by people who know your community. Together, we'll develop a plan that supports your wellbeing, independence and quality of life.

Whether you need a little extra help around the home, support to stay connected with your community, or more complex care, we're here to help you live life your way.

IN THIS BOOK YOU WILL FIND INFORMATION ON:

- How we'll work with you to support your goals and wellbeing
- Your rights and responsibilities
- How we protect your privacy and personal information
- Useful contacts and information about accessing additional support

If you or a family member need help with translation, or have vision or hearing difficulties, please let us know and we'll arrange assistance.

If you have questions at any time, please contact ARRCS on **08 8985 5200** or **homecareprograms@arrcs.org.au**

ABOUT US

Australian Regional and Remote Community Services (ARRCS) is a not-for-profit provider of aged care services, supporting older people to live independently and stay connected to their communities across the Northern Territory and the APY Lands of South Australia.

Established in 2014, ARRCS continues the Uniting Church in Australia's long history of serving regional and remote communities. Today, we provide residential aged care and Support at Home services, as well as school nutrition programs in Alice Springs and Mutitjulu.

Our teams work across urban, regional and remote communities, delivering services that reflect local needs, cultures and priorities. We work alongside clients, families and communities to provide personalised support that promotes independence, dignity, choice and connection.

ARRCS is an expression of the Uniting Church in Australia and welcomes people of all backgrounds, cultures, beliefs and identities. We recognise and honour the unique cultures, histories and strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and are committed to walking alongside communities through partnership, respect and reconciliation.

Inspired by our vision that every person should have the opportunity to live life in all its fullness, we remain dedicated to ensuring people can access quality care and support close to home, delivered by people they know and trust.

WHAT WE DO

Building partnerships is central to what we do.

We work respectfully alongside the people, families and communities we support, recognising that everyone brings their own experiences, culture and strengths. By working together, we build stronger connections and better outcomes.

Across all our services, we support people to make informed decisions about their care and wellbeing. To help achieve this, we work closely with communities, government departments, regional support providers, health clinics, Aboriginal Medical Services and local GPs.

Our staff and volunteers are compassionate and knowledgeable members of the communities we serve. They are committed to providing personalised care and support that reflects individual needs, choices and goals.

As an important part of regional and remote communities, we recognise our responsibility to foster connections between people, places and cultures, and to support meaningful participation in community life.

OUR VISION

ARRCS is a recognised and trusted organisation providing excellent care to our community, our elders and future generations.

OUR PURPOSE

We are dedicated to enhancing quality of life through provision of compassionate, high-quality care and support for elders in need.

OUR VALUES

At ARRCS, we believe that our values demonstrate the principles, standards and qualities that are fundamental and characterise the way in which we do our work.

Compassion	Through our understanding and empathy for others we bring holistic care, hope and inspiration.
Respect	We accept and honour diversity, uniqueness, and the contribution of others.
Justice	We commit to focus on the needs of the people we serve and to work for a fair, just and sustainable society.
Working together	We value and appreciate the richness of individual contributions, partnerships, and teamwork.
Leading through learning	Our culture encourages innovation and supports learning.

YOUR CARE, YOUR WAY

Because every person is unique, the support you receive should be too.

We recognise and respect every person as an individual. It is from this philosophy that our Your Care, Your Way approach was developed.

This approach guides the way we work together to choose the services that best suit your needs and goals. It recognises that:

- Everyone's uniqueness is to be appreciated
- There is an equal partnership between you and ARRCS
- Your family, friends and/or a representative of your choice are an important part of this partnership
- The focus is on your skills and capabilities, wishes and needs

Together, through open and respectful conversations, we'll tailor your care and services to support what matters most to you.

OUR COMMITMENT TO QUALITY CARE

We are proud to deliver care and services in line with the Strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards.

These standards are designed to ensure older people receive safe, respectful and high-quality care that is centred on their individual needs, preferences and rights.

As part of our obligations, ARRCS is regularly assessed by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission. These assessments help ensure we meet the standards and continue to improve the care and services we provide.

Our ARRCS quality system supports continuous improvement across all services. We regularly monitor and review our practices to ensure care is safe, effective and responsive, and we value feedback from clients, families and carers to help improve the services we provide.

Each service maintains a continuous quality improvement action plan. This ensures we adapt and improve our services in response to feedback, changing needs and best practice, so we can continue to deliver care that supports people to live with dignity, choice and independence.

OUR SERVICES

Whether you need support for a short time or on an ongoing basis, our experienced team will work with you, your family and carers to create a personalised care plan that reflects your individual needs, goals and lifestyle.

We offer a wide range of services to help you maintain your independence, health and wellbeing at home.

Clinical supports

Specialised services to help maintain or regain functional and/or cognitive capabilities.

Services include nursing care, personal care, allied health and other therapeutic services, nutrition support, care management, and restorative care management.

Independence Supports

Support to help older people manage daily activities and maintain the skills needed to live independently at home.

Services include social support and community engagement, therapeutic services for independent living, respite care, direct and indirect transport, assistive technology, and home modifications.

Everyday Living Supports

Support to help keep your home safe, comfortable and liveable, enabling you to remain independent in your own home.

Services include domestic assistance, home maintenance and repairs, and meals.

OUR TEAM

At ARRCS, we believe great care starts with strong relationships.

From the beginning, you'll be supported by a dedicated local team who take the time to get to know you, understand what matters most to you, and work alongside you to achieve your goals.

We strive to provide consistency in your care, helping you build trusted relationships with the people who support you. Our team works closely together to ensure your services are coordinated, responsive and tailored to your individual needs and preferences.

By working together and getting to know what matters most to you, we can coordinate a combination of services and supports that help you live safely, independently and confidently at home

SUPPORT AT HOME

As your needs change over time, the right support can help you remain independent, connected and living comfortably in your own home.

As your needs change over time, the right support can help you remain independent, connected and living comfortably in your own home.

Plan Ahead
THINKING AHEAD

Learn about your options and plan ahead to help you remain independent and living well at home for as long as possible.

First Steps
GETTING STARTED

Whether your needs have changed suddenly or over time, here's how to get started with accessing support at home.

Navigate Support at Home
THE STEPS TO CARE AT HOME

Understanding the aged care system can feel overwhelming. Here's how to access support and services one step at a time.

Choose My Care
FIND SERVICES THAT SUIT YOU

Learn how to choose a Support at Home provider that understands your goals, preferences and support needs.

Receiving Care
MAKING CHANGES

Find information about managing your services, making changes to your support, pricing and helpful resources.

ARRCS AUSTRALIAN REGIONAL & REMOTE COMMUNITY SERVICES

Available services may vary depending on your location. If you would like to discuss your support options or find services that suit your needs and goals, our team is here to help.

HOW ARRCS SERVICES CAN ASSIST YOU

We work alongside you to develop services and supports that reflect your goals, preferences and individual needs, helping you live as independently as possible.

Together we will:

- Design services that suit your individual needs
- Develop a care plan that reflects your goals, preferences and choices
- Help you stay connected to your community and the people who matter to you
- Support you to achieve your goals and maintain your independence
- Build on your strengths, skills and abilities
- Promote your health, wellbeing and quality of life

If you'd like more information about our services, visit our website at **ARRCS.org.au** or call **08 8982 5200**

ADVANCED CARE PLANNING

WHAT IS ADVANCED CARE PLANNING?

Advance personal planning is a process where a person discusses what is important to them and their decisions about future healthcare with their family, friends, and their healthcare team.

It allows you to make some decisions now about the health care you would or would not like to receive if you were to become seriously ill and unable to communicate your preferences or make treatment decisions. It also allows you to appoint a substitute decision maker to speak on your behalf if you are unable to do so.

WHO NEEDS ADVANCE PERSONAL PLANNING?

Everyone should consider advance personal planning, regardless of your age or health. Ideally, you should start planning when you're healthy - before there's an urgent need for a plan.

It is particularly important if you:

- are older
- have a chronic illness
- have multiple diseases
- have an early cognitive impairment
- are approaching the end of your life.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Advance personal planning helps to ensure your loved ones and health providers know what matters most to you and respect your treatment preferences. It helps to ensure you receive the care you want.

- It improves ongoing and end-of-life care, along with personal and family satisfaction
- Families of people who have undertaken advance care planning have less anxiety, depression, stress and are more satisfied with care
- For healthcare professionals and organisations, it reduces unnecessary transfers to acute care and unwanted treatment.

If you haven't documented your preferences or identified a substitute decision-maker, and you become seriously ill or injured, doctors will make treatment decisions based on their assessment of your best interests. This may include treatments that you would not want.

WHAT IS THE PROCESS?

Advance personal planning doesn't need to be complicated, but it does require careful consideration. It involves thinking about your values and preferences for care and acceptable outcomes, talking about them with your family friends and documenting your wishes.

An **Advance Personal Plan (APP)** does not need to be decided all at once. You can take your time to think about your wishes and talk with family before making decisions. An APP can be changed at any time if your wishes or choices change.

THE NORTHERN TERRITORY ADVANCE PERSONAL PLAN

Through the Northern Territory Department of the Attorney-General and Justice, you can record your choices for future health care, as well as financial and lifestyle matters in an Advance Personal Plan. This is a legal document also known as a living will. It will only take effect when you lose decision making capacity while you are still alive. It does not replace your will.

In your Advance Personal Plan, you can:

- write an instructional directive with legally binding instructions about future medical treatment you consent to or refuse. (Includes treatment for physical and mental health conditions)
- write a values directive which documents your values and preferences for your decision-maker to consider when making decisions for you
- appoint a decision-maker.

CREATE YOUR PLAN

Fill in the Advance Personal Plan Form, which can be found at:
nt.gov.au/law/rights/advance-personal-plan

The form has specific instructions which need to be followed. It also needs to be witnessed by an authorised witness. Options for who can be a witness are stated on the form.

STORING YOUR DOCUMENTS

Once any advance personal planning documents are completed, it is helpful if a copy of it is included in the person's health record (e.g., at the GP or health clinic, and/or on MyHealth Record).

Or register your APP with the Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee. To do this, fill in the Application to Register an Advance Personal Plan form:

nt.gov.au/law/rights/advance-personal-plan

and submit this to the Public Trustee at:

AGD.PublicTrustee@nt.gov.au

Family members, including the person's substitute decision-maker if they have one, and the person's lawyer should also have copies.

ARRCS Residential and Community Services request a copy of your Advance Personal Planning documents on admission. If you have not completed an APP prior to or on admission to ARRCS Services (Residential or Community Services and would like to complete one, please discuss with your family, GP and /or Aged Care Facility manager.

Resources

Advance Care Planning Australia
advancecareplanning.org.au

Public Trustee

nt.gov.au/law/processes/about-public-trustee

HOW WE PREVENT AND CONTROL INFECTION

Infection prevention and control practices help keep you safe and stop the spread of infection.

Because there are many common infections, including the common cold, influenza (or flu), COVID-19, norovirus, and rotavirus (or gastro), infection prevention and control is essential to help keep everyone safe.

ARRCS practices include:

- Performing hand hygiene
- Maintaining cough etiquette
- Use personal protective equipment (PPE) including masks for respiratory infections
- Safely using and disposing of sharps when in use
- Routinely cleaning the environment as well as cleaning and sanitising reusable equipment.

To help keep everyone safe, we encourage reporting of acute respiratory infections, gastrointestinal symptoms, bacterial infections or rashes being experienced by anyone residing in your home. Please ensure you let us know as soon as you can prior to a home visit by our staff so that we can determine what infection control precautions they'll need.

BEING PREPARED FOR NATURAL DISASTERS

We can help you be prepared to respond better and recover faster from natural disasters.

In Australia every year we experience heatwaves, bushfires, floods, storms, cyclones and earthquakes. Heatwaves are Australia's deadliest natural disaster as humidity makes it harder to stay cool and extreme heat worsens other medical conditions.

In an emergency caused by natural hazards, being prepared can help to reduce risk, which increases your safety.

ARRCS can assist you to prepare for emergencies by having all your important details together in the one place so you can access it quickly. Our staff will offer information to you regarding completion of an Emergency Plan. In your plan you can include information about the care you receive, your support network, and important phone numbers to call in the event of an emergency.

Your plan can help you to act together with your support network before, during, and after an emergency or disaster. Further information on natural disasters and emergency preparation is available online at Secure NT:

securent.nt.gov.au

STAYING SAFE DURING HEATWAVES

As we age, our bodies cannot regulate our temperature as efficiently, meaning it's much easier to overheat and become seriously dehydrated. Go to

securent.nt.gov.au/prepare-for-an-emergency/weather-events/heatwave

for resources and simple tips to stay cool, safe and reduce the impact of a heatwave.

COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT COSTS

ARRCS services can be funded in many ways, with clients most often making a contribution.

The Australian Federal and State Governments subsidise our services, and fees are determined in accordance with Government guidelines and by agreement with you or your representative. The amount you pay depends on whether your care is regulated and subsidised by the Government, by another funding source, or if you're paying privately.

Both ARRCS and Government policies ensure a fair and equitable approach to the charging of fees. If you have any questions, our Customer Service Centre will be pleased to assist you.

How much will I pay?

Your fees depend on the type of service, the funding body, your needs and duration of the service provided. For detailed information on our charges, and a schedule of fees based on your needs, please contact your Support Coordinator.

What if I'm unable to pay?

Should circumstances mean you're not able to pay your fees (e.g. high medical or pharmaceutical costs), there are several avenues open to you.

If you are facing financial hardship, you can discuss your situation with your support coordinator for support options. Please call **08 8982 5200** or email **Homecareprograms@arrcs.org.au**

How do I pay my fees?

You can pay your fees by direct debit, credit card or via BPay. For general information about fee payment, please contact our Customer Service Centre on **08 8982 5200**. All payment options are explained at:

ARRCS.org.au/pay-my-account

Will my fees change in the future?

The cost of our services may change from time to time, usually in line with Government indexation/ reviews. You will always be advised of any fee changes before they come into effect.

Can I give my ARRCS team member a gift?

While we understand that you may become very close with our staff, they are not allowed to accept any gifts of money or items of value.

STATEMENT OF RIGHTS

Your safety, wellbeing, human and legal rights are very important to us. They are outlined in the Australian Government's Statement of Rights - a copy of which is provided to you on admission to our service. Below is the full Statement of Rights from section 23 of the new Act.

1. An individual has a right to:

(a) exercise choice and make decisions that affect the individual's life, including in relation to the following:

(i) the funded aged care services the individual has been approved to access;

(ii) how, when and by whom those services are delivered to the individual;

(iii) the individual's financial affairs and personal possessions; and

(b) be supported (if necessary) to make those decisions, and have those decisions respected; and

(c) take personal risks, including in pursuit of the individual's quality of life, social participation and intimate and sexual relationships.

Equitable access

2. An individual has a right to equitable access to:

(a) have the individual's need for funded aged care services assessed, or reassessed, in a manner which is:

(i) culturally safe, culturally appropriate, trauma-aware and healing-informed; and

(ii) accessible and suitable for individuals living with dementia or other cognitive impairment; and

(b) palliative care and end-of-life care when required.

Quality and safe funded aged care services

3. An individual has a right to:

(a) be treated with dignity and respect; and

(b) safe, fair, equitable and non-discriminatory treatment; and

(c) have the individual's identity, culture, spirituality and diversity valued and supported; and

(d) funded aged care services being delivered to the individual:

(i) in a way that is culturally safe, culturally appropriate, trauma-aware and healing-informed; and

(ii) in an accessible manner; and

(iii) by aged care workers of registered providers who have appropriate qualifications, skills and experience.

4. An individual has a right to:

(a) be free from all forms of violence, degrading or inhumane treatment, exploitation, neglect, coercion, abuse or sexual misconduct; and

(b) have quality and safe funded aged care services delivered consistently with the requirements imposed on registered providers under this Act.

Note: *Division 1 of Part 4 of Chapter 3 deals with conditions on registered providers, including requirements in relation to the use of restrictive practices and management of incidents.*

Respect for privacy and information

5. An individual has a right to have the individual's:

(a) personal privacy respected; and

(b) personal information protected.

6. An individual has a right to seek, and be provided with, records and information about the individual's rights under this section and the funded aged care services the individual accesses, including the costs of those services.

Person-centred communication and ability to raise issues without reprisal

7. An individual has a right to:

(a) be informed, in a way the individual understands, about the funded aged care services the individual accesses; and

(b) express opinions about the funded aged care services the individual accesses and be heard.

8. An individual has a right to communicate in the

individual's preferred language or method of communication, with access to interpreters and communication aids as required.

9. An individual has a right to:

(a) open communication and support from registered providers when issues arise in the delivery of funded aged care services; and

(b) make complaints using an accessible mechanism, without fear of reprisal, about the delivery of funded aged care services to the individual; and

(c) have the individual's complaints dealt with fairly and promptly.

Advocates, significant persons and social connections

10. An individual has a right to be supported by an advocate or other person of the individual's choice, including when exercising or seeking to understand the individual's rights in this section, voicing the individual's opinions, making decisions that affect the individual's life and making complaints or giving feedback.

11. An individual has a right to have the role of persons who are significant to the individual, including carers, visitors and volunteers, be acknowledged and respected.

12. An individual has a right to opportunities, and assistance, to stay connected (if the individual so chooses) with:

(a) significant persons in the individual's life and pets, including through safe visitation by family members, friends, volunteers or other visitors where the individual lives and visits to family members or friends; and

(b) the individual's community, including by participating in public life and leisure, cultural, spiritual and lifestyle activities; and

(c) if the individual is an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person—community, Country and Island Home.

13. An individual has a right to access, at any time the individual chooses, a person designated by the individual, or a person designated by an appropriate authority.

AGED CARE CODE OF CONDUCT

We make it our priority to ensure you will be treated well and feel safe.

The Australian Government has created a Code of Conduct to ensure the people providing your care act in a way that is respectful, kind and consistent with the behaviours set out in the Code. We take this code very seriously. The Code includes the 8 elements below.

Respect your rights to express yourself and make your own decisions about how you want to live

Treat you with dignity and respect and value your diversity

Respect your privacy

Provide high quality care in a safe and competent manner

Act with integrity, honesty and transparency

Take action promptly about matters that may impact on the safety and quality of your care

Provide safe care free from all forms of violence and abuse

Prevent and respond to all forms of violence and abuse

For more information visit
https://www.agedcarequality.gov.au/sites/default/files/media/code-of-conduct-for-aged-care-consumer-fact-sheet.pdf

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

As a valued ARRCS client, you have a responsibility to:

Treat others with respect

You, your family members, visitors and staff are expected to be respectful and considerate, making sure your behaviour does not adversely affect others. Any kind of violence, harassment or abuse towards staff or others is not acceptable.

Respect the rights of staff to work in a safe environment

You are expected to maintain a safe environment for staff members when you are receiving services in your home. Please ensure you keep any pets away from staff and refrain from smoking near staff.

Assist us by providing relevant information

It is important that you share information about yourself so we can provide you with safe, quality care. This may include up-to-date information and any problems you have with your care or services.

Pay fees on time

You are expected to pay any agreed fees on time. If you are experiencing difficulty paying your fees or are facing financial hardship, please speak with your Support Coordinator. We will work with you to explore the support options available. Please call **08 8982 5200** or email **homecareprograms@arrcs.org.au**

Notify us if you're going to be away

If you are going on holidays, into hospital or don't require care for a period for any reason, please notify your ARRCS team member or service.

Personal items and valuables

If there are any personal items or valuables you do not want out during your service, please ensure these are stored away and secure before our staff arrive.

EVERYONE BELONGS

At ARRCS, everyone belongs. Here's how we are making our care welcoming, accessible and equitable for all.

- We recognise and celebrate all forms of diversity, including diversity of religion, spirituality, sexuality, gender identity, culture, and heritage
- We foster inclusive practices and environments across all of our services
- By understanding what's important to you, we can better support you to continue to live your best life. We want you to feel that you can be yourself with our staff. We encourage you to talk to us about what's meaningful to you, your preferences and anything that will make your experience with us better.

CULTURAL, SPIRITUAL AND HERITAGE DIVERSITY

We'll work with you to understand your culture, beliefs, traditions and preferences so we can provide support and care that respects what matters most to you.

The more we understand about your background, values and way of life, the better we can tailor our services to meet your individual needs and preferences.

We may ask about the language you speak at home, cultural traditions that are important to you, and any spiritual or religious beliefs, practices or celebrations you would like us to support.

If you would like to access key documents in your preferred language, or need an interpreter, please let us know and we'll be happy to assist.

LGBTQIA+ SUPPORT

ARRCS is committed to providing welcoming, inclusive and respectful services for people of all sexual orientations, gender identities and intersex variations.

We recognise that every person's experiences, relationships and support networks are unique. We want you to feel comfortable sharing information that is important to you, so we can better understand your preferences and provide care that respects your identity and individuality.

Sharing information about your sexual orientation, gender identity or relationships is always your choice. However, understanding what matters to you can help us provide more personalised support and ensure your care reflects your wishes and preferences.

We recognise that many people have important relationships and support networks beyond traditional family structures, including families of choice. We will work with you to understand the people who are important in your life and how you would like them involved in your care and support.

We are committed to creating an environment where everyone feels safe, respected and valued. If you have any concerns about your experience with ARRCS, we encourage you to speak with us.

Any personal information you share with us will be handled in accordance with our Privacy Policy.

PRIVACY AND CONSENT

The Australian Privacy Principles under the Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988 sets out how organisations like ARRCS may collect, store, use, disclose and protect your personal information.

ARRCS has strict policies in place about who can access our Client's information. The information we gather is used to help us determine the best possible care and assistance required, which is tailored to your individual needs and goals.

We recognise the importance of protecting this information and are committed to ensuring that all personal information we collect is handled with respect, sensitivity, and confidentiality.

ARRCS uses the latest computer technology to ensure our Client's information is stored in a professional and secure manner, with our dedicated staff, volunteers and contractors always maintaining strict confidentiality and respect for our client's privacy.

Details that ARRCS will collect

- Your name and contact details
- Contact details including next of kin or legal guardians
- Doctor/Health Care Professional contact details
- Care and support services delivered by us
- Health information including images and scans
- Bank account details
- Pension, Medicare or Department of Veterans Affairs numbers.

Sharing information about you

ARRCS may need to share information about you and your care with other health care professionals, government agencies or companies and individuals who perform activities on our behalf.

This may include:

- Commonwealth Government agencies such as the Department of Veterans Affairs, Services Australia, and the Department of Health
- Advice from lawyers or under legal authority of a court such as a subpoena, warrant, or through the Adult Guardian
- IT service providers or data support specialist
- Authorised accreditation agencies and other Aged Care specialists who ARRCS engage to improve efficiency may view Client records for service quality
- Research partners engaged by ARRCS to undertake research to improve the quality of our case and services (this is strictly controlled by ethical principles).

If you do not wish for any of these agencies or partners to share your information, you must speak to your care team who will assist you.

You can request access to all your personal information held by ARRCS by contacting your care team. This request will be evaluated as per the requirements and conditions of the Privacy Act 1988. There may be instances where we can't give access to certain records or aspects of records in accordance with the Australian Privacy Principles (for example if sharing the information with you impacts on the privacy of others or poses a serious threat to you or others).

We will ensure the request is handled in a timely manner.

PRIVACY - MORE INFORMATION

For information about privacy issues associated with your care or to change your consent details, contact your care team.

WHEN SOMETHING GOES WRONG

Everyone in aged care has the right to feel safe. Despite our best efforts, sometimes things go wrong or not as expected. We call this an 'incident'.

This might be a fall, a mistake with medication, or a wound like a skin tear.

When something happens, we first make sure you are safe and okay, we talk to you about what happened and we work with you to sort out the issue.

At ARRCS, we follow these steps:

Step 1 Safety

We make sure you're okay and get the immediate attention you need.

Depending on what has happened, this might be giving you first aid, calling a doctor or sending you to hospital. We will notify your family or nominated contact person that something has happened as soon as possible. We will support you while we work through what's happened.

Step 2 Record

Our staff must record the incident in our ARRCS incident management system. We use a centralised system to help us identify and understand where and when things go wrong, what we can learn from these incidents and how we can improve our practices.

Step 3 Manage

We'll then talk to you about what happened. We want to understand:

- What happened?
- How and why it happened?
- How do we reduce the risk of it happening again and make care safer?

We will talk to staff, talk to you or your family member, and review your care plan.

Step 4 Resolve

Depending on the findings, we will work with you to put a plan in place to reduce the chances of it happening again. It's important we learn from every incident and improve our practices.

Step 5 Report

Some incidents need to be reported to the Serious Incident Response Scheme (SIRS) or even the police. We are required by law to make these reports and will tell you if we have done so.

WHAT IS THE SIRS?

You have the right to safe and quality care and to live without abuse or neglect. The Serious Incident Response Scheme (SIRS) is a government initiative to help reduce the risk of abuse and neglect for people receiving aged care services. The scheme requires aged care providers to identify, record, manage, resolve and report all serious incidents that occur, or are alleged or suspected to have occurred.

Reportable incidents include:

- Unreasonable use of force
- Unlawful sexual contact or inappropriate sexual conduct
- Psychological or emotional abuse
- Missing customer (unexplained absence)
- Stealing or financial coercion by a staff member
- Neglect
- Inappropriate use of restrictive practices
- Unexpected death.

More information about SIRS

agedcarequality.gov.au/consumers/serious-incidentresponse-scheme

NEED TO KNOW MORE?

If you have any questions, or would like to know more about our policies, please ask your ARRCS team for more information.

OPEN DISCLOSURE

Open disclosure is the open discussion that ARRCS has with you when something goes wrong, has harmed you, or has the potential to harm you while receiving services from us. It also applies in situations when your expectations have not been met.

At its heart, open disclosure is about open and honest communication. This starts from the time of the incident or complaint and may later involve your family, carers or support persons.

Open disclosure is part of our everyday approach to communicating respectfully and meaningfully with you. By talking openly about situations where things go wrong or where our service could be improved, you become a valued part of our efforts to continually improve the services we provide.

The information we gather from you in our incident management system helps us to:

- Identify when and where incidents may happen
- Understand how they happen
- Learn how to prevent incidents

Improve our practices to keep everyone safe.

TRANSLATION SERVICES

If you require translation services, please phone the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on **131 450** or go to **tisnational.gov.au**

Source: What is the SIRS? Consumer summary agedcarequality.gov.au/sites/default/files/media/what-is-the-sirs-consumer-summary_3.pdf

WE WELCOME YOUR FEEDBACK

What you and your family or carer think about our services is very important to us. It gives us the opportunity to learn more about your needs and helps us improve the quality of care and services we provide.

We want to hear from you if you are pleased with our service or think we do something particularly well. On the other hand, if you are unhappy with an aspect of your care or service it's also very important that we hear your concerns and suggestions for improvement.

From time to time, we may ask you to complete a satisfaction survey or a feedback form. When you provide information, your rights to confidentiality will be respected at all times in accordance with our privacy policy.

HOW DO YOU GIVE FEEDBACK?

We encourage you to speak with your care team first as they are usually best placed to achieve a fast and suitable outcome to your satisfaction. However, there may be some things you're not prepared to discuss with the care team or perhaps the resolution reached was not to your satisfaction, in which case you can pursue the matter further as detailed in the box to the right.

WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT?

Your complaint will be handled by us fairly and as quickly as possible. We will treat your complaint in confidence and respect your privacy. Also, we will work with you to assess how best to resolve your complaint and advise when action may be expected. Please consider the outcome you'd like and we will strive to provide it.

CONTACTS TO PURSUE A MATTER FURTHER

- **08 8982 5200**
- **Send an email or write** to your Care Team
- arrcs.org.au/about-us/feedback-and-complaints
- Complete the feedback form in the attachments at the end of this book and either:
  - Provide it to your ARRCS team
  - Post it back to us

If you do not feel comfortable raising a complaint directly with us or continue to be dissatisfied after raising your complaint, external assistance is available.

You can speak to the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission to lodge a complaint online:

- **1800 951 822**
- agedcarequality.gov.au/making-complaint

SUPPORTER ROLE

A new registered supporter role in aged care

The new Aged Care Act includes a registered supporter role to strengthen older people's right to make their own decisions, with support if they choose.

A registered supporter is someone an older person trusts, such as a family member or friend. An older person may choose to have one or more registered supporters.

The role of a registered supporter is to help an older person understand information, consider their options, and communicate their own decisions about their aged care. The focus is always on supporting the older person to make choices that reflect their wishes, values and preferences.

Becoming a registered supporter does not give someone decision-making authority. Registered supporters do not make decisions on behalf of the older person. They support the older person to make their own decisions.

Some people may also hold a legal role, such as guardianship or enduring power of attorney. These roles are different. Appointed decision-makers can only make decisions on behalf of an older person when they have the legal authority to do so under relevant state or territory laws.

Having a registered supporter does not limit an older person's ability to:

- receive information directly
- make their own decisions
- communicate with aged care providers, My Aged Care, or assessors

Supporting older people to make decisions

The Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety highlighted the importance of supported decision-making, recognising that people should have choice, control and dignity in their own lives and care.

The new Aged Care Act places the rights of older people at the centre of aged care. It recognises that everyone has the right to make decisions about their life, including the services and supports they receive.

Under the Act, every older person is presumed to have the ability to make decisions. Some people may choose, or need, support to help them understand information or communicate their choices.

Supported decision-making means providing the right support, at the right time, so older people can:

- understand their options
- express their wishes
- remain in control of their care

Older people can choose who supports them if they wish. This may include appointing one or more registered supporters.

Not everyone will want or need a registered supporter. Many older people already feel well supported by carers, family members, friends or others in their lives. These important relationships can continue, whether or not someone becomes a registered supporter.

At ARRCS, we are committed to respecting your choices, supporting your independence, and working with the people you trust, always guided by what matters most to you.

WHISTLEBLOWER POLICY

1. If you have reasonable grounds to suspect that we have breached a provision of the Aged Care Act, you can make a Whistleblower disclosure in writing or verbally, anonymously if you choose.
2. To make a Whistleblower disclosure, you should promptly contact our designated Whistleblower officer. You can access the Whistleblower officer through our dedicated Whistleblower portal – STOPline.

Access to **STOPline** can be made via:

Phone
1300 30 45 50

Email
arrcs@stopline.com.au

Mail
ARRCS, c/o STOPline, PO Box 403,
Diamond Creek, Vic 3089

Online
https://sldisclosures.typeform.com/to/LD3ce4q4

3. You can also inform one of our staff, who is a Responsible person or Aged care worker, and they will inform the Whistleblower officer.
4. We will take appropriate action as soon as practicable to respond to your Whistleblower disclosure in accordance with our Whistleblower procedure. This may include:
   (a) Assessing whether your Disclosure qualifies as a Whistleblower disclosure.
   (b) Investigating qualifying Whistleblower disclosures. Where necessary, this may include discussing it with you and/or anyone else involved.
   (c) Reviewing our policies, practices and procedures in light of the Disclosure.
5. We will provide support for you and anyone associated with you to whom detriment may be caused because of the Disclosure. We will also ensure that fair treatment is provided for any person mentioned in the Disclosure or to whom the Disclosure relates.
6. You may instead choose to make a Whistleblower disclosure to the following external parties: The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commissioner; the Complaints Commissioner; the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission's staff; the System Governor; an official of the Department of Health and Aged Care; a police officer; or an independent aged care advocate.
7. If you make a Whistleblower disclosure, we are required by law to provide you with the following protections:
   (a) Protection from civil, criminal or administrative liability; and from contractual or other remedies.
   (b) If you request that your name, or any other individual named in the Disclosure, remains anonymous, we will take such steps as is reasonable in the circumstances to preserve anonymity.
   (c) We will keep your identity or any other information that may identify you confidential.
   (d) We will not cause or threaten to cause detriment to you or anybody else if you make a Whistleblower disclosure.
8. You may elect to have your Disclosure dealt with as a Complaint or Feedback instead. Should you do so, your Disclosure will be dealt with in accordance with our Complaints and Feedback system. A Disclosure that does not qualify as a Whistleblower disclosure will be treated as a Complaint or Feedback. The Whistleblower protections mentioned above do not apply to Complaints and Feedback.
9. Whistleblowers who suspect there has been a breach of the protections that should be provided to them can report it to the Whistleblower officer, or any of the external parties in paragraph (6).

If you need more information on our Whistleblower Policy, or how to make a complaint or give Feedback, please let us know.

ADVOCACY

If you're concerned about the quality of your care and services, and want to speak to someone about this, or you need assistance in making informed decisions, an advocate or advocacy service may be able to help.

What is an advocate?

Sometimes it can be hard making a complaint, or to ask for what you want, without the help of an advocate. An advocate is someone who will stick up for you and make sure your voice is heard. An advocate can be a family member, friend or someone from an advocacy service. An advocate can:

- Provide you with information about your rights and responsibilities
- Listen to your concerns
- Help you resolve problems or complaints
- Speak with us on your behalf
- Refer you to other agencies when needed.

Who to contact about advocacy

Advocacy services are free, confidential and independent of ARRCS. Older Persons Advocacy Network line is **1800 700 600**. For alternative contacts, please refer to the Directory in the attachments of this booklet.

For people with hearing or speech loss

TTY:
1800 555 677

Speak and Listen:
1800 555 727

Internet relay:
infrastructure.gov.au/mediacommunications-arts/phone/services-peopledisability/accesshub/national-relay-service

ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT ONE USEFUL INFORMATION

ARRCS CONTACTS

Customer Service Centre

08 8982 5200

ARRCS NT Regional Office

1 Willeroo Street, Tiwi NT 0810

PO Box 43021 Casuarina NT 0811

Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission

1800 951 822

agedcarequality.gov.au

Aged Care Quality and Safety Commissioner
GPO BOX 9819
Darwin NT 0800

A LITTLE YARN GOES A LONG WAY

It's OK to talk about things you're worried about. This is a good way of improving how older people are looked after, and the best way to fix any problems.

agedcarequality.gov.au/resources/little-yarn-goes-long-way-fact-sheetPDF

agedcarequality.gov.au/sites/default/files/media/a_little_yarn_english.pdf

HOW AGED CARE ADVOCACY CAN HELP YOU

If you are concerned about the quality of the aged care service you or the person you represent is receiving, an advocacy service may be able to help.

Right to Seek Review of Complaint Decision or Commission's Process

To be able to ask for a review of the Aged Care Quality and Safety Common's decision in relation to your complaint, or to complain about our service. Resolving Concerns about Aged Care Explaining the ways, the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission may try to resolve your concerns and the possible outcome.

OTHER USEFUL CONTACTS

Advance Personal Plan

Plan for a future where your health, financial and lifestyle wishes, and options are heard and respected. Please see the Advanced Personal Plan section of this handbook or visit below.

nt.gov.au/law/rights/advance-personal-plan

Cancer Council Helpline

13 11 20
9:00am – 5:00pm Mon - Fri

cancer.org.au/nt

Carer Gateway

Carer Gateway is an Australian Government program providing free services and support for carers. If you care for a family member or friend with disability, a medical condition, mental illness, or who is frail due to age, then Carer Gateway can help you.

1800 422 737

carergateway.gov.au

Carers NT Australia

Aged Care Services Carers NT Australia is dedicated to improving the lives of unpaid carers living in the NT. Carers NT values and supports all carers.

1800 422 737 or (08) 8944 4888

carersnt@carersnt.asn.au

carersnt.asn.au

Darwin Community Legal Services

Advocacy and Support for seniors, people with disabilities, and their representatives.

1800 812 953 *or* **(08) 8982 1111**

info@dcls.org.au

dcld.org.au

Dementia Australia

Supports people with dementia, their family and carers, providers practical information and advice as well as up to date information about dementia and other support services.

1800 100 500

dementia.org.au

Department of Veterans' Affairs

Including Veterans Support at Home

133 254

1800 555 254 *(regional callers)*

GeneralEnquiries@dva.gov.au

dva.gov.au

My Aged Care

It's never too early to talk about getting some extra help. Knowing what services are available before you need them will help you be prepared to make decisions about your future.

1800 200 422

myagedcare.gov.au

National Continence Helpline

Provides information, education and advice to callers with incontinence or who are caring for someone with incontinence.

1800 330 066 (freecall)
8am - 8pm Mon – Fri

helpline@continence.org.au

continence.org.au

National Elder Abuse Phone Line

1800 353 374

NT Legal Aid Commission - Alice Springs

The NT Legal Aid Commission provides free legal advice to people in the Northern Territory.

1800 019 343

legalaid.nt.gov.au

77 Hartley Street, Alice Springs NT 0870
8:00am - 4:30pm Mon - Fri

Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN)

1800 700 600

opan.com.au

Services Australia

132 300 Centerlink Older Australians Line

1800 227 475 Services Australia Aged Care Line

servicesaustralia.gov.au/ageing

Territory Palliative Care (TPC) services

Palliative care is a special type of care for a person who is terminally ill and approaching the end of their life.

nt.gov.au/wellbeing/allied-health/palliative-care

Emergency Services Police, Fire and Ambulance

000

Police Assistance (Non Emergency)

131 444

NT Fire and Rescue Service (Non Emergency)

General enquiries in the northern NT
08 8946 4107

General enquiries in the southern NT
08 8951 6688

For after-hours enquiries
08 8922 1555

Crime Stoppers

1800 333 000

Power and Water

1800 245 090

Jacana

1800 522 262

Storm Assistance

132 500

TeleHealth

1800 000 254

ATTACHMENT TWO HELP US HELP YOU - FEEDBACK FORM

ARRCS AUSTRALIAN REGIONAL & REMOTE COMMUNITY SERVICES

- This form can be used by anyone, to provide a compliment, complaint, or suggestion.
- If you need help to fill in this form, we can arrange this for you.
- If you choose to give your name and contact details, we can talk to you about your feedback.

If required please complete the feedback form and either:

- give it to your BlueCare Service Manager
- post it back to us using the reply paid option.
- These forms are also available from your ARRCS team or from the front office at ARRCS facilities.

Date		Name of ARRCS Service	

Your relationship to ARRCS		
☐ Customer/Resident	☐ Family/EPOA	☐ Staff/volunteer/student
☐ External Agency	☐ Other (please state)	

What type of feedback are you providing?		
☐ Compliment	☐ Complaint	☐ Improvement suggestion

Do you wish to remain anonymous?	
☐ Yes	☐ No. Please provide contact details below.
Surname:	
First name:	
Phone:	
Email:	
Postal address:	
Preferred contact:	☐ Phone ☐ In person ☐ Email ☐ Post

What is your feedback?

Thank you for sharing your thoughts and comments.

NOTES

ARRCS AUSTRALIAN REGIONAL & REMOTE COMMUNITY SERVICES

For more information about this handbook please contact:

ARRCS

1 Willeroo Street
Tiwi NT 0811

PO Box 43021
Casuarina NT 0811

Phone: 08 8982 5200
Email:

www.arrcs.org.au

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