

# Carer Support Report 2020



**Banyule  
Community  
Health**



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## Executive Summary

This Carer Support Report is a requirement of the Commonwealth Carer's Recognition Act (2010). Banyule Community Health recognise the contribution of carers to the people that they care for and the community. We are committed to supporting their personal health and wellbeing as well as their care relationships.

Banyule Community Health have an obligation under the Act (2010) to ensure that staff and clients alike, understand the care relationship principles and that they are upheld in practice.

The Carer Support Report 2020 was accepted by the Clinical Governance Committee of the Board of Directors at Banyule Community Health at their meeting 25 February 2021.

Information is usually presented in the annual Quality Account. The Account, however, was not required in 2020 according to the Department of Health, due to COVID-19. This Carer Support Report 2020 was presented in the place of publication of information in the Quality Account for 2020.

### FINDINGS

- Policies and procedures related to carer support are up-to-date and development of the new *Identifying and Responding to Abuse of Older Persons Policy and Procedure*.
- It is anticipated that the *Carer Policy and Procedure* will be archived following development of a streamlined cluster of existing policies and procedures about Integrated and Coordinated Care.
- A Privacy Working Group addressed risks related to the shift to on-line service provision by the Carer Support Worker and other staff (eg. consent, telehealth, privacy) in the context of COVID-19.
- Education sessions on the principles of carer support were cancelled due to COVID-19, however, the Carer Support Worker partnered with the Banyule City Council and North East Healthy Communities to develop and deliver an on-line event during Carer's Week (October 2020).
- In 2020 the Carer Support Worker was contracted to provide 56 service hours per month (+/- 5%) and in the last 6 months was 98% on target.

## Aim of Report

This Carer Support Report is a requirement of the Commonwealth Carer's Recognition Act (2010). Banyule Community Health recognise the contribution of carers to the people that they care for and the community. We are committed to supporting their personal health and wellbeing as well as their care relationships.

Banyule Community Health have an obligation under the Act (2010) to ensure that staff and clients alike, understand the care relationship principles and that they are upheld in practice.

## Background

### The Report

This report about Carer Support is not on the Board reporting schedule because information is usually presented in the annual Quality Account. The Account, however, was not required in 2020 according to the Department of Health, due to COVID-19. Nonetheless, with a commitment to reporting to the community a revised Quality Account was developed to present 'Community stories' focussed on the reorientation of services in response to COVID-19. As a large community health service with a wide range of services aimed at diverse population groups, it was not possible to include all work carried out at Banyule Community Health in the revised report.

### Carer Support Worker

All staff at Banyule Community Health understand the carer role and that they may require their own service response. A Carer Support Worker is employed as part of the Allied Health Team (0.8EFT) through the commonwealth Home Support Program. The position is funded to provide assistance to carers of people over the age of 65 years and Aboriginal people over the age of 50 years. Referrals are made through My Aged Care.

### COVID-19 Pandemic

The year 2020 could be characterised as one of significant change brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. On 11 March 2020, WHO Director General declared the virus a pandemic. Australia responded accordingly and Banyule Community Health directed resources to meet unprecedented Commonwealth and State requirements for change to the provision of health services and the workplace. The impact on service delivery in carer support is addressed where relevant in the current report.

### Principles of Carer Support

The Commonwealth Cares Recognition Act (2010) sets out ten principles to guide the consideration and treatment of carers in policies, programs and service delivery (Appendix 1). The Victorian Carer's Recognition Act (2012), espouses similar principles (see Appendix 2).

The principles can be summed up as follows: Carers regardless of age, have the same rights to education, employment and social inclusion as everyone else and to live free from discrimination. Although the social and economic contribution that carers make to society

should be acknowledged, so too must their individual needs: They are to be supported so that they can fully participate in their own lives. Carers should be considered as partners with other care providers if their unique knowledge and experience of the client and caring role is to be truly valued. Support for carers should be timely, responsive, appropriate and accessible.<sup>1, 2</sup>

## Carer Support Worker

In 2020 the Carer Support Worker was contracted to provide 56 service hours per month (+/- 5%) and in the last 6 months was 98% on target.

## Policy and Procedure Update

- *Identifying and Responding to Abuse of Older Persons Policy and Procedure* - approved May 2020.  
(Related legislation Family Violence Protection Act, 2008, Vic and Accountability Principles 2014 made under the Aged Care Act, 1997, Commonwealth).

The Carer Support Worker contributed to the development of this new policy and procedure.

- *Carer's Policy and Procedure*

The policy and procedure have been reviewed with plans for it to be archived once the content has been integrated into complementary policies and procedures. As reported in the *November 2020 Communities Experience Report*, the *Carer's Policy and Procedure* are part of a project, currently underway, to consolidate a range of person centred, stand-alone policies and procedures into a cohesive cluster related to Integrated and Coordinated Care.

Work in policy and procedural development indicated that coordination and integration of person-centred services covered two broad areas;

1. the integration of population diversity and equity in all aspects of service access and delivery, and
2. the way that services are integrated and coordinated using a person centred approach.

- *Orientation for New Clients Policy and Procedure* – due for review November 2023
- *Orientation Information for New Clients Brochure*

Carers who are new to Banyule Community Health receive the *Client Orientation Information* brochure in addition to a brochure on Carer Support services and *The Victorian charter supporting people in care relationships* (Victorian Department of Health & Human Services, June 2016 Fact Sheet).

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<sup>1</sup> Department of Health & Human Services, (June 2016). *Information for people in care relationships, Fact Sheet; and What the Carer's Recognition Act (2012) Says, Fact Sheet*. ISBN 978-0-7311-6886-6 (online)

<sup>2</sup> Carer's Recognition Act (2010) Commonwealth Nos. 123. *Part 2. The Statement for Australian Carers*.

## Legislative Compliance

- Carer's Recognition Act (2010) Commonwealth
- Carer's Recognition Act (2012) Victoria

Although the current report is not part of the 2020 Quality Account, it is an annual report of carer practice at Banyule Community Health. The Commonwealth Carer's Recognition Act (2010) does stipulate that the report be included in the annual report, however, a Quality Account was not required in 2020. This Carer Support Report 2020 was presented in the place of publication of information in the Quality Account for 2020.

## Risk Review

There are no risks identified in the Banyule Community Health Risk Register that pertain specifically to people who care for the clients that use our services. Nevertheless, in supporting carer's in their personal health and wellbeing and to maintain their care relationships, all risks identified for client and services can be equally relevant to carers.

### Risk 4. Health related pandemic -acquired community transmission

- Risk Description: COVID - 19, Biological exposure, bird flu, swine flu, influenza A, whooping cough, resulting in service disruption and increased workload.

Starting in early 2020, ongoing review of governance and risk in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic indicated the need for a *Privacy Working Group* to transition services that were traditionally delivered face-to-face to on-line platforms.

From March 2020, staff at all levels of the agency focussed on redesign of services and the workplace. Carer Support Services continued to be provided but moved to a non face-to-face platform using technology such as video calls, telephone and email.

A Privacy Working Group at Banyule Community Health specifically addressed issues related to telehealth, video conferencing and safe provision of services through online platforms. The group met weekly and have addressed areas such as encrypted emails and consent protocols for video conferencing with clients. Procedures were developed to obtain consent for collection and use of personal information for contact tracing purposes. The group has produced a document about Informed Consent in the context of Providing Telehealth Services. The document was further developed in November 2020 and is the *Guide to Providing Telehealth Services*, due for review in November 2021.

## Education in Carer Principles

Education of internal and external services was limited in 2020 by the pandemic. Every year the capacity to carry out education sessions is impacted by service demand (waiting list), however, sessions booked in for 2020 were cancelled.

The Carer Support Worker partnered with the Banyule City Council and North East Healthy Communities to develop and deliver an on-line event in recognition of carers during Carer's Week in October 2020.



## Appendix 1. Australian Principles

### *Carers Recognition Act (2010)*

Commonwealth Carers Recognition Act (2010) sets out ten principles to guide the consideration and treatment of carers in policies, programs and service delivery.

#### **Schedule 1—The Statement for Australia’s Carers**

1. All carers should have the same rights, choices and opportunities as other Australians, regardless of age, race, sex, disability, sexuality, religious or political beliefs, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage, cultural or linguistic differences, socioeconomic status or locality.
2. Children and young people who are carers should have the same rights as all children and young people and should be supported to reach their full potential.
3. The valuable social and economic contribution that carers make to society should be recognised and supported.
4. Carers should be supported to enjoy optimum health and social wellbeing and to participate in family, social and community life.
5. Carers should be acknowledged as individuals with their own needs within and beyond the caring role.
6. The relationship between carers and the persons for whom they care should be recognised and respected.
7. Carers should be considered as partners with other care providers in the provision of care, acknowledging the unique knowledge and experience of carers.
8. Carers should be treated with dignity and respect.
9. Carers should be supported to achieve greater economic wellbeing and sustainability and, where appropriate, should have opportunities to participate in employment and education.
10. Support for carers should be timely, responsive, appropriate and accessible.

## Appendix 2. Victorian Care Relationship Principles

### *Victorian Carers Recognition Act (2012)*

Victorian Carers Recognition Act (2012) sets out ten principles to guide the consideration and treatment of carers in policies, programs and service delivery.

#### Principles relating to carers

A carer should:

- be respected and recognised:
  - as an individual with their own needs
  - as a carer
  - as someone with special knowledge of the person in their care
- be supported as an individual and as a carer, including during changes to the care relationship
- be recognised for their efforts and dedication as a carer and for the social and economic contribution to the community arising from their role as a carer
- if appropriate, have their views and cultural identity taken into account, together with the views, cultural identity, needs and best interests of the person for whom they care, in matters relating to the care relationship. This includes when decisions are made that impact on the carer and the care relationship
- have their social wellbeing and health recognised in matters relating to the care relationship
- have considered in decision making the effect of being a carer on their participation in employment and education.

#### Principles relating to people being cared for

A person being cared for in a care relationship should:

- be respected, recognised and supported as an individual and as a person in a care relationship, including during changes to the care relationship
- have their views taken into account, together with their needs, cultural identity and best interests, in how they are cared for
- have their changing needs considered and taken into account in how they are cared for.

#### Principles relating to care relationships

A person in a care relationship should:

- have their care relationship respected and honoured
- if appropriate, have their views considered in the assessment, planning, delivery, management and review of services affecting them and the care relationship.