



# Service User Handbook

The purpose of CVHMMS is to provide modification and maintenance work for frail aged, people with a disability and their carers who are at risk of premature or inappropriate institutionalisation, making it possible for them to remain in their own homes.

## *Philosophy and principles of service delivery of CVHMMS:*

- service users are the focus; the agency exists solely to meet the needs of service users
- each service user is an individual and has different needs determined by their age, gender, cultural background and life circumstances
- service users have a right to make choices in their lives
- service users have a right to dignity, respect, privacy and confidentiality
- service users have a right to access services on a non-discriminatory basis
- the community has a right to expect CVHMMS to be an accountable service.

CVHMMS is located at **3/137 Prince Street GRAFTON**. The service opening hours are Monday to Friday, 9am to 4.30pm. Contact may also be made by **phone 6643 1831, fax 6643 5867** or email: [mail@cvhmms.com.au](mailto:mail@cvhmms.com.au).

**Referral Process:** You may contact CVHMMS yourself, or you may ask a friend, relative, or another Service Provider, e.g. Aged Care Assessment Team (phone 6640 2298), to make a referral on your behalf. All modification work is completed using a prescription written by an Occupational Therapist.

Specifically, for all clients aged 65 years and over, or 50 years and over for Aboriginal and Torres Strait (ATSI) clients, all referrals must be made to [www.myagedcare.gov.au](http://www.myagedcare.gov.au), or phone: 1800 200 422. For modifications, please request an Occupational Therapist assessment.

For clients aged under 65 years (or ATSI under 50 years), to arrange a free Occupational Therapist assessment, please phone CVHMMS (6643 1831), Grafton Base Hospital Occupational Therapy department (6641 8738) or Maclean Community Health (6640 0123) for lower Clarence residents.

After a referral is made, contact will be made with you to provide a quotation for the cost of the proposed work. Once the quote is accepted, contact will be made to arrange a time to provide the work required.

Refusal of service would only be due to the following:

- the type of work you request is not done by this agency
- you live outside the area covered by this agency, that is, the Clarence Valley Council area
- you decide you do not wish to receive this service.

Referral to another agency would happen when we are unable to carry out work required, or it is necessary to involve an Occupational Therapist or another agency. You must agree to this referral, or it will not proceed. You may be placed on a waiting list if you have been referred to this agency and existing work load means a short period may lapse prior to you receiving your modification or maintenance work. It does not mean that service will not be provided. You will not be placed on a waiting list if your referral indicates that work is urgently required.

The following factors will be used as a tool to prioritise service delivery:

- the service user lives alone, or with a carer who is also frail aged and/or with a disability, and their physical mobility is compromised or their safety threatened
- the modifications required are for personal care purposes
- the home is physically unsafe
- the family support structure is at risk of breaking down
- the service user needs medical or nursing assistance
- the service user has trouble with a range of the tasks of daily living
- the service user is financially disadvantaged
- the service user is Aboriginal or from a non-English speaking background
- the service user is geographically isolated.

Priority is given to persons whose circumstances meet one or more of the above factors. The difference that the provision of service will make to the service user's circumstances will also be taken into consideration.

**Service Evaluations:** CVHMMS conducts service evaluations on an ongoing basis to gain feedback from service users about the quality of the service they receive and for possible avenues of improving the service. Questionnaires, which can remain anonymous, are mailed to you with your service invoice to complete and return to this office in a reply-paid envelope. This is not compulsory; however, we do appreciate your comments.

**Service user Data Collection:** In order to support our communities, the government (both state and federal) provides funding to many community services. To ensure these services, operate most effectively and are providing the services to service users and their communities, certain information is requested from each service user. For this purpose, only, the following is required: gender, postcode, town, state, age and birthdate, identification as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, whether an unpaid person helps you, whether you own your home, pay rent or board, whether you receive a pension, the service you received, language spoken at home and country of birth. Your name and address will not be passed on. You will not be refused service if you choose not to answer any of these questions.

**Equity and diversity:** CVHMMS is committed to providing services which are provided equitably and for all members of our diverse community. In all instances, the CVHMMS team will not condone any form of discrimination, vilification or unreasonable behavior which relates to a service user's gender, disability, ethnicity, sexuality, beliefs or criminal record. CVHMMS aims to provide responsive, effective and accountable service to all members of the community.

**Cultural diversity:** CVHMMS is committed to providing services which are culturally appropriate and responsive to all cultural groups throughout the Clarence Valley. All CVHMMS team members receive cultural awareness training upon employment. Please advise the Service if you have any suggestions if you believe any aspect of service delivery could more appropriately reflect the CVHMMS commitment to cultural diversity.

**Service user rights and responsibilities:** Service users are the focus of CVHMMS operations and it is important that your rights are acknowledged and promoted at every opportunity.

- the service user, or carer (with their permission), has access to all information about themselves held by CVHMMS
- in cases where a service user has a legal guardian or advocate appointed to act on their behalf, the rights of the guardian or advocate are to be acknowledged and respected to the extent stipulated in the guardianship or advocacy arrangements
- the service user, and carer (with their permission), will be involved in decisions about their modifications. They will be aware of all options available and a service user contribution to be charged

- a service user will be made aware of the standard of service they can expect. Services will be provided in a safe manner, with respect, dignity and maintaining independence of the service user, being responsible to the social, cultural and physical needs of the service user and needs of their carer
- a service user's access to services will be decided only based on need and the capacity of the service to meet that need. Service users have the right to refuse a service and refusal will not prejudice future access to service
- the service user has a right to complain about the service they are receiving without fear of retribution
- complaints by service users will be dealt with fairly, promptly and without retribution. The service user may involve an advocate of their choice to represent their interests
- service users' views will be considered in the planning and evaluation of the service
- service users' rights to privacy and confidentiality will be respected.

### Service user responsibilities:

- service users are to advise the service if they are not going to be at home when a staff member is due to visit
- service users will be respectful to the rights of other service users and CVHMMS staff
- service users will accept responsibility for the results of any decisions they make
- service users are to cooperate with CVHMMS in providing them with this service, e.g. Occupational Health and Safety issues.

**Service contracts:** Contracts shall be entered between the service user and CVHMMS. These contracts will consist of an agreement with the service user in relation to work to be carried out and an agreement to pay on invoice, either the total of that invoice, or to settle the account in full by installments arranged with the Builder/ Manager or Administrator. This contract will be acknowledged by the signature of the service user, the worker providing the service, and will be dated.

**Service user Complaints:** Feedback from service users is important in ensuring that services are continuing to meet service user needs and for planning appropriate services. An important source of feedback is service user complaints and these are welcomed and encouraged by CVHMMS. All service users have a right to complain about the service they are receiving without fear of retribution and can expect complaints to be dealt with promptly. The service user has the right to use an advocate of their choice to negotiate on their behalf with the staff and/or management of CVHMMS. This may be a family member, friend or someone from another agency.

**Complaints Procedure:** Service users are encouraged to raise their complaint with the Builder/ Coordinator in the first instance. A response will either be immediate or received within five (5) working days. If the service user is not satisfied with the outcome, or the issue is not satisfactorily resolved, the service user can raise the issue with the management committee by contacting the Secretary (3/137 Prince Street, GRAFTON NSW 2460) and expect a response within thirty (30) days. If the issue is still not resolved, the service user can complain to the **NSW Ombudsman, Community Services Division, Level 24, 580 George Street SYDNEY NSW 2000, or phone (02) 9283 2911 or toll-free 1800 451 524**. The service user will be informed of the outcome of their complaint and asked for their feedback on the complaint procedure. The fact that a service user has lodged a complaint and details of that complaint will be kept confidential amongst staff directly concerned with its resolution. The service user's permission will be obtained prior to any information being given to other parties, which it may be involved to satisfactorily resolve the complaint.

**Service user Advocates:** An advocate is a person who, with the authority of the service user, represents the service user's interests. Service users may use an advocate of their choice to negotiate on their behalf. This may be a family member, friend or advocacy service. CVHMMS will accept advocates as representing the interests of the service user. Advocates may be used during assessments, complaints or for any other communication between the service user and CVHMMS. Service users wishing to use an advocate will inform CVHMMS in writing of the name of

the person they wish to nominate to negotiate on their behalf using an Authority to Act as an Advocate form. The service user has the right to change their advocate at any time and will inform CVHMMS in writing of any change.

**Service Fees:** Fees charged for services provided by CVHMMS are determined by the fee structure introduced by Ageing, Disability and Home Care (NSW) in July 2012. Any revenue from fees is used to enhance and expand the provision of services to enable more service users to have access to them. The service user will be issued with an invoice using the CVHMMS computerized invoicing system. Invoices are payable within 30 days, or in exceptional circumstances, by installments arranged with the Builder/ Manager. If you are requesting payment by installment, please notify CVHMMS prior to commencement of the works requested. You may be required to complete an income assessment document to determine your need to pay by installment.

**Appeals mechanism:** the service user contacts the Builder/ Manager, in writing to 3/137 Prince Street GRAFTON NSW 2460, or by telephoning 6643 1831 about their concerns with fees. The Builder/ Manager responds within five (5) working days and meets with the service user to discuss the situation and negotiate the payment of fees. If the service user is not satisfied with the result of the Administrator's response, they may write to the Chairperson of the Management Committee, 3/137 Prince Street GRAFTON NSW 2460, to have their situation reviewed again. In such instances, the Chairperson, or a nominated management committee member, will review the Builder/ Manager's decision and advise the service user of the result within thirty (30) days of the receipt of the appeal. The service user who appeals about the level or extent of fees charged will receive a written statement of the outcome of their appeal and advise of possible action if they are still not satisfied. No service user will be disadvantaged or penalised because of lodging an appeal.

### *Advocates and External Complaints contacts:*

<b>Aged Care Complaints Commission:</b> a free service available to anyone who wishes to provide information or raise a complaint or concern about an Australian government funded aged care service (residential or CHSP)	Phone: 1800 550 552 Post: Aged Care Complaints Commission c/- Department of Health GPO Box 9848 In your capital city
<b>Council on the Ageing (COTA) NSW:</b> Level 6, 280 Pitt Street SYDNEY NSW 2000	Phone: 02 9286 3680 or 1800 449 102 Fax: 02 9286 3872
<b>Combined Pensioners and Superannuants Association NSW:</b> Level 9, 28 Foveaux Street SURRY HILLS NSW 2010	Phone: 02 9281 3588 or 1800 451 488 Fax: 02 9281 9716 Email: <a href="mailto:cpsa@cpsa.org.au">cpsa@cpsa.org.au</a>
<b>Carers NSW:</b> for carer information, support and counseling. Roden Cutler House, Level 18, 24 Campbell Street SYDNEY NSW 2000 (PO Box 20156 WORLD SQUARE NSW 2002)	Phone: 02 9280 4744 or 1800 242 636 Fax: 02 9280 4755 Email: <a href="mailto:contact@carersnsw.asn.au">contact@carersnsw.asn.au</a>
<b>NSW Ombudsman:</b> available to investigate complaints about ADHC funded services or an employee of the service. They can also inquire into major issues affecting clients and services.	Phone: 02 9286 1000 or 1800 451 524 <a href="http://www.ombo.nsw.gov.au">www.ombo.nsw.gov.au</a>
<b>NSW Office of Fair Trading</b>	General enquiries: phone 13 32 20 Specialised services: phone 13 14 50 TTY: 02 9338 4943
<b>National Aged Care Advocacy Program (Seniors Rights Service)</b>	Phone: 1800 700 600

**CVHMMS... prescription builders**  
**...enhancing peoples' lives in a very practical way**



Australian Government

## AUTHORITY TO ACT AS AN ADVOCATE

### Service User Details:

Name (in full): .....

Address: .....

.....

Phone: .....

I authorise the person named below to act as an advocate on my behalf and represent my interests in relation to my involvement with Clarence Valley Home Modification and Maintenance Service Inc. I understand that Clarence Valley Home Modification and Maintenance Service Inc. may discuss details of my Service Plan and the services it provides with my advocate if the need arises.

This authority takes effect from \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ and replaces any previously advised arrangements. I understand that I can change my choice of advocate at anytime and undertake to advise Clarence Valley Home Modification and Maintenance Service Inc. of any such change in writing.

Signed: ..... Date: .....

### Advocate's Details:

Name (in full): .....

Address: .....

.....

Phone: .....

As an advocate of the abovementioned person I undertake to ensure that:

- The service user has provided written authority for you to act as their advocate.
- You always act in the best interests of the service user.
- The service user is aware of any issues and developments in relation to the support they receive and which you, as their advocate, may be involved.
- You be familiar with contents of the consumer's Support Plan and Fees Schedule.
- You are familiar with the service user's 'Rights and Responsibilities'.
- You advise Clarence Valley Home Modification and Maintenance Service Inc. about any changes in service user's circumstances and any concerns about their changing needs.
- Be prepared to relinquish the role of advocate should the service user wish this.

Signed: ..... Date: .....