



Policy Title	Access to Services
Policy Category	Operational
Number & Version	SVC-MSO-PO-093-01
Policy Owner	Manager Community Services
Approval by	CEO
Effective date	
Date for review	September 2021

1. STRATEGIC PURPOSE

Snowy Valleys Council (Council) will allocate resources for the provision of community services for the elderly and promote diversity and inclusion when providing these support services.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

The Council will endeavour to ensure that community services are available to frail elderly people and people with disabilities and their carers living within the Local Government Area (LGA), without discrimination. People cannot be excluded from access to the service on the grounds of gender, marital status, religious or cultural beliefs, political affiliation, particular disability, ethnic background, age, a sexual preference, inability to pay, geographical location or employment circumstances.

3. DEFINITIONS

Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) - a joint initiative of the State and Commonwealth Governments aimed at preventing premature or inappropriate admission to residential care facilities.

Target Group - people from a culturally and linguistically diverse background; Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders; people with Dementia; financially disadvantaged people; and frail aged and younger people with disabilities living in remote or isolated areas.

Discrimination – the unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people, especially on the grounds of race, age, or sex.

Disability – a physical or mental condition that limits a person's movements, senses, or activities.

Community Health - health services located in the community and provided by the state government.

Community Transport - a low-cost, accessible service for those in the community who may otherwise not be able to access transport services.

4. CONTENT

The following principles apply:

- The community services provided by Council will be promoted in a manner which ensures equity of access
- Promotional material will be developed by Council in plain English
- Material will be distributed through all major health and welfare agencies in the region
- Services will be monitored to meet the changing needs of the target population and to ensure that the services are relevant and non-discriminatory

If resources of the Council are not sufficient to meet the needs of all those people who request assistance, the following factors will be used to determine relative need.

Clients:

- Living in a home that is physically unsafe
- With a family support structure that is at risk of breaking down
- With a need for medical or nursing help
- Living alone, or with a carer who is also frail, aged or has a disability
- Experiencing difficulty with tasks of daily living
- With limited or non-existent social contacts
- Who are socially or geographically isolated
- Who are financially disadvantaged

Priority is given to persons whose circumstances meet one or more of the above factors.

Carers who are:

- Caring for a person with a severe disability
- A sole carer, with limited support networks or dependent children
- Frail, ill, distressed or have a disability
- Have an extensive commitment which may include employment
- Socially or geographically isolated
- Financially disadvantaged

Other Factors

- The difference the service will make to the persons circumstances
- The cost of providing the service

Should a client need the services of an interpreter in their dealings with Council's community services, it can be organized through the service Coordinator. An interpreter service appropriate to the needs of the client will be used. A free call number (1800 247 272) will be printed in the Council's *Client Information Brochure* and should there be a need for brochures printed in other languages, access to these will be available through Community Health.

Council's Community Services are not currently funded to provide services to people exiting the Criminal Justice System. However if someone exiting the Criminal Justice System has a disability and meets MSO criteria, they, like anyone else in the community, will be eligible to receive the services provided through the MSO and Community Transport program.

5. ASSOCIATED LEGISLATION

Racial Discrimination Act (1975)

Racial Hatred Act (1995) - an extension of the Racial Discrimination Act

Anti-Discrimination Act (1977) - NSW

Disability Discrimination Act (1992)

Department of Social Services Access and Equity Policy

6. ASSOCIATED COUNCIL DOCUMENT

Community Services Policy - SVC-ComServ-PO-069

MSO - Client Information Brochure

7. HISTORY

Date	Action	Name	Policy Number	Resolution Date	Resolution Number
	Superseded	Access to Services Policy	TSC-MSO-PO-005-0 (Former Tumbarumba Shire Policy)		
	Superseded	Interpreter Policy	TSC-MSO-PO-007-0 (Former Tumbarumba Shire Policy)		
	Superseded	Priority of Access Policy	TSC-MSO-PO-013-0 (Former Tumbarumba Shire Policy)		