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| Approved by: | Quality and Safety Advisory Board (QSAB) |
| Date developed: | September 2025 |
| Review date: | September 2026 |
| Policy aligns with: | Clinical Governance Framework and related policies |

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1 Policy

- 1.1 It is fundamental to the right of individuals accessing funded aged care services FACS (care and services) to stay connected with significant persons in their lives including through safe visitation by Visitors.
- 1.2 We encourage Visitors to attend individuals accessing care and services at our Residential Care Homes and while we deliver care and services in a Home or Community Setting.
- 1.3 This is fundamental to the right of individuals accessing care and services to stay connected with significant persons in their lives including through safe visitation by Visitors.
- 1.4 This policy and process has been implemented to ensure that:
 - (a) persons who are significant to the individuals accessing care and services, including carers, visitors and volunteers, are acknowledged and respected;
 - (b) all individuals accessing care and services have the opportunities, and assistance, to stay connected with significant persons in their lives including through safe visitation by family members, friends, volunteers or other visitors;
 - (c) we comply with our obligations under the Aged Care Act and Aged Care Rules in relation to allowing and facilitating access to visitors;
 - (d) appropriate protections are in place to ensure the health and safety of our Aged Care Workers, other staff and individuals accessing care and services.

2 Scope

- 2.1 This policy and process applies to:
 - (a) Visitors to our Residential Care Homes;
 - (b) all Aged Care Workers;
 - (c) all individuals accessing care and services in one of our Residential Care Homes; and
 - (d) all individuals accessing care and services in a Home or Community Setting.

3 Requirements under the Aged Care Act

3.1 Statement of Rights

Under the Statement of Rights in the Aged Care Act, individuals accessing care and services have a right to:

- (a) be supported by an advocate or other person of the individual's choice, including when exercising or seeking to understand the individual's rights, voicing the individual's opinions, making decisions that affect the individual's life and making complaints or giving feedback;
- (b) have the role of persons who are significant to the individual, including carers, visitors and volunteers, be acknowledged and respected;
- (c) opportunities, and assistance, to stay connected (if the individual so chooses) with:
 - (i) 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;
 - (ii) the individual's community, including by participating in public life and leisure, cultural, spiritual and lifestyle activities; and
- (d) access, at any time the individual chooses, a person designated by the individual, or a person designated by an appropriate authority.

As a condition of registration, we must demonstrate that we understand the rights of individuals under the Statement of Rights and have in place practices to ensure that we act compatibly with the Statement of Rights.

3.2 Access by Supporters

We must allow and facilitate access by the following persons to an individual accessing care and services (whether in a Home or Community Setting or in a Residential Care Home):

- (a) a Supporter of the individual;
- (b) a relevantly qualified person providing legal advice or another legal service to the individual;
- (c) an Independent Aged Care Advocate;
- (d) an Aged Care Volunteer Visitor.

This is a condition of registration.

The access which we must provide may be physical access, via electronic video link or other reasonable means requested by the individual but must be provided at any time requested, or consented to, by the individual.

In relation to the provision of care and services in a Home or Community Setting, we must allow and facilitate access by the above persons at times when the care and services are being delivered.

3.3 Access by Independent Aged Care Advocates

We must allow and facilitate access by Independent Aged Care Advocates to the settings in which we provide care and services at any time requested, or consented to, by the individual.

Where the individual is unable to request or consent to the access by an Independent Aged Care Advocate, the access must be provided at any time.

4 Residential Care Homes

4.1 Visitors' conduct when attending a Residential Care Home

While we encourage Visitors at our Residential Care Homes, we must balance the rights of individuals accessing care and services to have Visitors with the rights of other individuals, including those accessing care and services and the health and safety of our Aged Care Workers.

Visitors attending our Residential Care Homes must be made aware of their rights and responsibilities in respect of their health and safety and the health and safety of our Aged Care Workers and individuals accessing care and services.

Visitors must:

- (a) take reasonable care of their own health and safety;
- (b) treat other individuals accessing care and services at the Residential Care Home, their Visitors and any Aged Care Workers or other staff; with respect;
- (c) not engage in any form of behaviour which may have an impact upon the health and safety of any individuals accessing care and services at the Residential Care Home, their Visitors or any Aged Care Workers or other staff;
- (d) not threaten, intimidate or harass any Aged Care Workers or other staff;
- (e) wear and use all safety equipment and clothing provided and directed by us;
- (f) report any health and safety incidents, whether actual or suspected, to the manager on site;
- (g) comply with any reasonable direction or instruction given by us.

4.2 Refusal of Entry to Residential Care Homes

We may refuse entry to Visitors of our Residential Care Homes where a Visitor:

- (a) is violent, intoxicated, disorderly or exhibiting threatening or intimidating behaviour;
- (b) does not follow our entry protocols, including completing the signing register or signing in electronically, refusal to acknowledge the Visitor Code of Conduct, or compliance with infection control protocols (which may be in place during peak infection periods).
- (c) is in the possession of, or appears to be in the possession of, Prohibited Items;
- (d) refuses to comply with the reasonable directions or instructions provided by us.

We reserve the right to refuse entry to Visitors or require that they leave a Residential Care Home if they breach any of the obligations in this policy.

4.3 Fire and Emergency Procedures

In the event of a fire or other emergency, Visitors must follow the instructions given by designated fire wardens.

Residential Care Homes must make available materials which show the location of exit doors in our Residential Care Homes and the relevant emergency evacuation points so that Visitors may make themselves aware of this information.

4.4 Reporting Incidents

Visitors must notify our Aged Care Workers immediately of any:

- (a) hazards or safety risks;

- (b) accidents, injuries or near misses which occur in relation to any of our Aged Care Workers or any individual accessing care and services so as to enable us to determine whether this is a Reportable Incident for the purposes of the Aged Care Act and make any necessary reports.

4.5 CCTV Surveillance

We may install CCTV devices at our Residential Care Homes (for example in the common, administrative and external areas) and Visitors may be filmed by these CCTV devices.

Where a Visitor is filmed by a CCTV device, any recording will be managed in accordance with our Privacy Policy.

4.6 Visitors' own risk

- (a) Visitors assume all risk of any damage or loss, including all forms of personal injury and property damage, arising out of their attendance at the Residential Care Home (except to the extent this is caused or contributed to by us).
- (b) Visitors who bring any personal property to a Residential Care Home do so at their own risk and we will not be responsible for any damage or loss to a Visitor's property.
- (c) Visitors who park their vehicles on any part of a Residential Care Home, including any visitor or guest parking, do so at their own risk and we will not be responsible for any loss or damage to a Visitor's vehicle, or any accessories or contents of the vehicle (except to the extent this is caused or contributed to by us).

5 Visitors in a Home Care Setting

5.1 Visitors' conduct when visiting the residence of an individual receiving care and services

Individuals receiving care and services in a Home or Community Setting must ensure that Visitors who attend the residence of the individual while care and services are being delivered are aware of their below obligations.

Visitors to the residence of an individual receiving care and services (while those services are being delivered) must:

- (a) treat individuals accessing care and services and any Aged Care Workers or other staff with respect;
- (b) not engage in any form of behaviour which may have an impact upon the health and safety of any individuals accessing care and services or any Aged Care Workers or other staff;
- (c) not threaten, intimidate or harass any Aged Care Workers or any other staff;
- (d) wear and use all safety equipment and clothing provided and directed by us;
- (e) comply with any reasonable direction or instruction given by us.

Where individuals receive care and services in a setting other than their residence (e.g. GP clinic or respite), and Visitors are in attendance, paragraph 5.1 will apply to any Visitors or persons accompanying individuals receiving the care and services.

6 Procedures

| Step/action required | Accountability |
|---|------------------------------------|
| 1 Visitors' Code of Conduct for Residential Care Homes | Organisational Development Manager |

| Step/action required | Accountability |
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| <p>Develop and implement a Visitors' code of conduct for use in each Residential Care Home which includes the information in paragraph 4.</p> <p>The Visitors' Code of Conduct should be placed in positions of prominence in each Residential Care Home so that Visitors are aware of their obligations.</p> <p>Upon completion of the entry processes at the Residential Care Home, Visitors should agree to comply with the Visitors' Code of Conduct on sign-in.</p> <p>The Visitors' Code of Conduct should be reviewed on each occasion this policy is reviewed.</p> | |
| <p>2 Visitors' code of conduct for Home Care Services</p> <p>Develop and implement a Visitors' Code of Conduct for use in a home care setting for care and services delivered in residence and in other settings as described in paragraph 5. The Code of Conduct will include information contained in paragraph 5.</p> <p>The Visitors' Code of Conduct will be provided to all home care clients and their families upon acceptance of services and during completion of consumer surveys and / or reassessments, so that Visitors are aware of their obligations.</p> <p>The Visitors' Code of Conduct should be reviewed on each occasion this policy is reviewed.</p> | Organisational Development Manager |
| <p>3 Support at Home Agreement</p> <p>Provisions should be included in the Support at Home Agreement which require individuals receiving care and services to ensure their Visitors comply with the requirements in paragraph 5.</p> <p>These requirements should be reviewed on each occasion this policy is reviewed and in response to any incidents or risks identified in the delivery of care and services.</p> | Admissions Manager/ Home Care Manager |
| <p>4 Residential Care Homes – Processes to allow and facilitate access</p> <p>Develop and implement processes to allow and facilitate access to the persons listed in paragraph 4 at any time requested, or consented to, by the individual receiving care and services whether physically, electronic video link or any other reasonable means, including:</p> <p>(a) processes allowing and facilitating access outside of ordinary visiting hours of the Residential Care Home;</p> | Facility Managers/IT Manager |

| Step/action required | Accountability |
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| <p>(b) capability to facilitate electronic video link at the request of individuals receiving care and services.</p> <p>These processes should be reviewed on each occasion this policy is reviewed and in response to any issues identified in allowing access to Visitors.</p> | |
| <p>5 Home Care Services – Processes to allow and facilitate access</p> <p>Develop and implement processes to allow and facilitate access to the persons listed in paragraph 3. and at any time requested, or consented to, by the individual receiving care and services whether physically, electronic video link or any other reasonable means, including:</p> <p>(a) processes for allowing and facilitating access during the delivery of care and services;</p> <p>(b) capability to facilitate electronic video link at the request of individuals receiving care and services when they are being delivered.</p> <p>These processes should be reviewed on each occasion this policy is reviewed and in response to any issues identified in allowing access to Visitors.</p> | Home Care Manager |
| <p>6 Access by Independent Aged Care Advocates and Aged Care Volunteer Visitors</p> <p>Develop and implement processes to arrange for access to individuals receiving care and services by Independent Aged Care Advocates and Aged Care Volunteer Visitors:</p> <p>(a) at the request of individuals;</p> <p>(b) in accordance with any requirements of the Aged Care Act; or</p> <p>(c) in accordance with the needs of individuals accessing care and services (i.e. where individuals are socially isolated or at risk of social isolation).</p> | Facility Managers |

7 Regulatory obligations and guidance material

This policy and process has been developed with reference to the following regulatory obligations, Quality Standards and guidance material:

- (a) the Aged Care Act;
- (b) the Aged Care Rules;
- (c) the Quality Standards;
- (d) Work Health and Safety Laws.

8 Supporting Documents

This policy and process is supported by the following documents:

- (a) Privacy Policy;
- (b) Visitor Code of Conduct RAC;
- (c) Visitor Code of Conduct Home Care.

9 Dictionary

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| Aged Care Act | means the <i>Aged Care Act 2024</i> (Cth). |
| Aged Care Rules | means the <i>Aged Care Rules 2025</i> (Cth). |
| Aged Care Volunteer Visitor | means a person who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) volunteers for or is otherwise engaged by a person or body that receives financial assistance under the Aged Care Act for the purpose of supporting and upholding the rights and entitlements of individuals accessing services in the aged care system; and (b) implements that purpose by visiting individuals accessing care and services to provide companionship, social support or friendship to those individuals who are socially isolated or are at risk of social isolation. |
| Aged Care Worker | means: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) an individual employed or otherwise engaged (including as a volunteer) by us to deliver care and services; or (b) an individual who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) is employed or otherwise engaged (including as a volunteer) by an associated provider; and (ii) is engaging in conduct under the associated provider's arrangement with us relating to the delivery of care and services; or (c) an individual who is a registered provider. |
| Commission (ACQSC) | means the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission. |
| FACS | means funded aged care services as defined in section 9 of the Aged Care Act. |
| Home or Community Setting | means a place in a home, or in the community, where funded aged care services are delivered |
| Independent Aged Care Advocate | means a person who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) is independent of the System Governor, the Commission and any registered providers; and (b) is employed or otherwise engaged by a person or body that receives financial assistance under the Aged Care Act; and |

Visitor Policy and Procedures

- (c) provides either or both of the following to individuals accessing, or seeking to access, care and services:
 - (i) free, independent and confidential support, information and advocacy;
 - (ii) education about the rights of individuals under the Statement of Rights; and
- (d) where providing free, independent and confidential support, information or advocacy, acts at the direction of the individual, reflecting the individual's expressed wishes, will, preferences, interests and rights.

Prohibited Items

means any weapons or items which have the potential to cause injury to any individual or property at the Residential Care Home including, without limitation:

- (a) sharp objects or cutting implements such as knives, box cutters, letter openers, scissors;
- (b) any kind of firearm;
- (c) tradesmen's tools such as screwdrivers;
- (d) lighters, including butane, battery powered or novelty lighters;
- (e) flammable liquids;
- (f) illegal drugs or substances.

Quality Standards

means the standards set out in Chapter 1, Part 6, Division 2 of the Aged Care Rules.

Reportable Incident

has the meaning given in the Aged Care Act.

Residential Care Home

means a place that:

- (a) is the place of residence of individuals who, by reason of sickness, have a continuing need for aged care services, including nursing services;
- (b) is fitted, furnished and staffed for the purpose of providing those services; and
- (c) is approved as a residential care home under the Aged Care Act.

Statement of Rights

means the statement of rights set out in section 23 of the Aged Care Act.

Supporter

of an individual, means a person registered as a supporter of the individual under section 37 of the Aged Care Act.

Visitor

means, in relation to an individual accessing care and services, that individual's Supporter, family, friends, relatives and any other person visiting the individual, including without limitation:

- (a) any qualified person providing legal advice or legal service to the individual;
- (b) an Independent Aged Care Advocate;
- (c) an Aged Care Volunteer Visitor.



Visitor Policy and Procedures

Work Health and Safety Laws

means the:

- (a) *Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Cth);*
- (b) *Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW).*