

# Know Your Rights

A guide to the HCSCC Charter of Health and  
Community Services Rights in South Australia



The information is written in an easy to read way. We use pictures to explain some ideas. Some words are written in **blue**. We explain what these words mean.

## About this document



All children and adults have **rights**.

Our rights explain the way we can expect to be treated.

Everyone has the right to be treated fairly and to be safe.



This brochure explains your rights when you are using South Australian Health and Community Services like those from:

- doctors, nurses and other health workers;
- hospitals and health centres;
- mental health services;
- disability services;
- in home support; and
- counselling.



Rights are mostly based on the **law**.

The law is the set of rules that we must all live by.

The law about health and community services complaints is the *South Australian Health and Community Services Complaints Act (2004)*.



We call this the Act.



The Act sets out the role of the Health and Community Services Complaints Commissioner (HCSCC).

If you have a problem with a health or community service, you can complain to HCSCC.

The HCSCC will:

- help you to know your rights;
- listen
- give you information and talk about the options
- help you to get answers if you have a complaint.



## Your rights are important



HCSCC wants to make sure that everyone understands their rights when using health and community services in South Australia.

The HCSCC has a list of rights called the HCSCC Charter of Rights.



A copy of the Charter starts on page 5.

The Charter includes the following important ideas:

- Everyone has rights when using health and community services.
- Some people need help to understand their rights and to make decisions.
- Services are better when the people who use them have a say.
- Good communication is important. It helps to sort out problems before they become complaints.
- Sometimes other laws can affect your rights.



## HCSCC Charter of Rights

These are your rights when you are wanting to, or are using, health or community services in South Australia.



### Access

You have the right to:

- find out what services are available
- use the services that suit you best.



### Safety

You have the right to be safe while using health and community services.

You should not be hurt or abused.



### Quality

Health and Community Services must:

- do a good job
- meet your needs.

The people working in these areas must be trained and good at their jobs.

If they make mistakes they must tell you:

- what happened
- what will be done to stop the same mistake happening again.



## Respect

Health and community services must treat you with respect.

They must be polite and care about you.

They must understand how your beliefs and experience affect you.

This might include respecting:

- your family background
- your religion
- how old you are
- whether you are a man or woman
- how you choose to live your life.

All of these things are an important part of who you are.



## Information

You have the right to find out about:

- what services there are
- how the services work
- how you can get services
- how much services cost.

You should have an interpreter if you need one. You have a right to get information you can understand and you can ask for more information if you need it.



## Taking Part

You have a right to:

- ask for help or advice
- be a part of all the decisions that are made about you
- make choices and decide what to do
- say that you don't want something to happen
- have a friend, family member, carer or person you trust help you or make decisions for you.



## Privacy

Your information is private and generally information about you can only be shared with other people if you say it is okay.

Sometimes information is required by law and in these cases, it can be shared without your permission.

Information about you must be kept in a safe place.

You can ask to see any information that is kept about you.

You can choose to share information about yourself.

You can ask that health and community services share your information with a friend, family member, carer, person you trust, or another support person.





## Comment

You have the right to comment or complain.

You are allowed to tell the service:

- when something goes well or
- if there is a problem.

You should not be punished for telling someone there is a problem.

Health and Community Services should try to fix your problem as soon as possible and they should let you know what is being done about your complaint.

You have a right to ask for help to make a complaint.

You can have a friend, family member, carer, person you trust, or another support person help you with a complaint.

You have a right to know how your complaint has helped improve the service for yourself and others.



## Speak with the HCSCC

You can contact HCSCC by:



### Telephone

HCSCC Enquiry Service on **8226 8666**.  
Or phone **1800 232 007** (Country SA landline).

HCSCC Enquiry Service is open Monday to Friday, 9 am to 5 pm. If you get the answering machine, please leave a message and we'll get back to you as soon as possible.



### Interpreter service

Please tell us which language you prefer and we'll organise an interpreter.

It's okay to have a friend, family member, carer, or a person you trust, to contact HCSCC for you.



### Telephone Typewriter (TTY)

Call **133 677**.  
Or call **1800 555 677** (Country SA landline).



### Email

**info@hcsccl.sa.gov.au**



## Address

Level 4, East Wing  
50 Grenfell Street  
Adelaide SA 5000



## Mail

**HCSCC**  
PO Box 199  
RUNDLE MALL SA 5000



## Website

**[www.hcsccl.sa.gov.au](http://www.hcsccl.sa.gov.au)**



## Fax

**8226 8620**



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