

TOWN of EAST FREMANTLE

Neighbourhood Link

Social Connections. *Quality of Life.*



Consumer handbook.
Your guide to our services.



TOWN of
EAST FREMANTLE



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Welcome to Neighbourhood Link.

Social connections. *Quality of life.*



The connections in our lives matter. Connections with our loved ones. With old friends and new acquaintances. With our neighbours, community, nature and the things we love to see and do. And that's why we're here – to help you build and maintain the connections that matter to you.

From going to the shops and running errands, to taking a day trip and enjoying a change of scenery. From meeting with like-minded people for a cuppa and a chat, to trying a new hobby. From home visits to help you with everyday chores, to respite support providing a much-needed break for carers.

We provide the personalised support you need to get the most out of life and stay active, independent and connected.

About us... and how it's all about you.

Welcome to our network and services. We look forward to working with and supporting you, so you can continue to live your best life.



Contacting us

We're here to listen and help you, so if you have a question or need to get in touch, please call or email us.

Contact person	Phone number	Email
Administration	(08) 9339 9381	neighbourhoodlink@eastfremantle.wa.gov.au
CHSP coordinator	(08) 9339 9380	nlcoordinator@eastfremantle.wa.gov.au
Social Support Group Activities coordinator	(08) 9339 9382	nlactivity@eastfremantle.wa.gov.au
Community bus mobile	0407 193 751	

If you have any concerns about our services, please contact our team. We value your ideas and input and welcome your feedback.





Our vision

In everything we do, we aspire to deliver high-quality support services that enable clients to live in their own homes and actively participate within our community.

Our objectives

We aim to:

- support clients so they can live in their own homes for as long as they can and wish to do so
- support family or other primary caregivers in their role
- operate in an effective, efficient and accountable manner in partnership with our clients and team members.

Our philosophy

At Neighbourhood Link, we believe you have the right to:

- make informed choices and maintain your independence
- dignity, respect, privacy and confidentiality
- be valued as an individual
- access services without discrimination.

We also believe our community has the right to expect and receive accountable and responsive services.



Our services

We provide support under the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP), which funds basic support services to help you maintain your independence.

If you have a Home Care Package, we can also provide support through a brokerage agreement with your Home Care Package provider. See page 12 for more information or contact us for more details.

The care and support we provide

Our services generally operate Monday to Friday and fall into five categories:



Social Support

Our individual social support assists you in your own home, as well as out in the community. In addition to social visits in your own home, our trained staff can help you with a range of everyday tasks. This includes running errands such as shopping, banking and paying your bills, or helping you attend social events or activities.



Social Support (Group)

This is where our dedicated team works with you to organise fun and stimulating activities in a group setting and group outings. Outings can include scenic drives and visits to parks, gardens and a range of recreational venues. Our door-to-door transport service is available, if required.



Flexible Respite

Flexible respite support helps caregivers and care receivers maintain healthy relationships. Our respite care allows caregivers to take a break from their caring role. We can deliver this service in your home, so your caregiver can get out and about, or in the community, so your caregiver can enjoy a break at home.



Centre-Based Respite

With our centre-based respite care, our highly trained team works with you to organise fun activities in a group setting at our Day Respite Centre, giving you an enjoyable opportunity to get out and about, and giving your carer some downtime. Our door-to-door transport service is available, if required.

Assessment and reviews

Before you can use our services, you'll need to be assessed by My Aged Care. We'll review your *My Aged Care* assessment at your Service Commencement Meeting and develop a Support Plan with you, which we'll review or reassess at least once every 12 months, or whenever you or our team feel it's necessary.

Reviews and reassessments enable us to understand your changing support requirements and goals, so we can ensure you receive the care and support you need. If your needs change significantly, we may refer you back to *My Aged Care* for a new assessment.

We're very aware that every person is different, and we encourage you and/or your representatives to tell us about your specific needs, goals and preferences.

We welcome and encourage you to tell us, at any time, about anything you're unhappy with or any changes you'd like to make.



“It gives you a bit of confidence back.”



Maintaining your independence

We work with you

As part of our personalised approach, we work in partnership with you to meet your changing needs and maintain your independence. Sometimes, this may mean providing more support so you can achieve your goals. Other times, it may mean reducing your support to ensure that you don't lose your independence. Either way, we'll discuss any alterations or adjustments with you before we change anything.

Similarly, if your support requirements escalate and we're unable to meet your needs, we'll discuss this with you and arrange a referral to *My Aged Care*. The *My Aged Care* team can then organise another service provider with the services you require.

How you can help: keeping well

We're here to help you maintain your independence. You can help us to help you by keeping well. This means:

- ensuring you stay hydrated
- eating healthy and nourishing foods
- taking your medications as per your doctor's instructions
- speaking to your doctor or health professional about continence, if necessary
- getting regular check-ups on your vision, hearing and teeth
- avoiding people with infections
- maintaining good hand hygiene
- asking your doctor for relevant vaccinations
- learning fall prevention strategies: adequate lighting and footwear, non-slip flooring, using walking aids and asking for support from others for maintenance tasks

- using a personal alarm to notify others if you fall or you're worried about your health or safety
- protecting your skin by washing and drying thoroughly, moisturising your skin twice a day and seeking advice when you have a skin tear
- keeping as mobile as you can and staying active
- keeping alert through learning and doing new things
- maintaining your social connections and making new ones
- relaxing, pampering yourself and doing the things you like to do
- getting plenty of sleep.

We can give you information and ideas on how to do these things and more. Just ask our friendly team.

Choice and risk

Our team will support you so you can live the life you choose and do the things you want to do. If these things involve a risk to your health or safety, we'll discuss the risks with you, the potential consequences (for you and others) and ways we can manage or mitigate the risks so you can still do the things you want.

If your choices present an unacceptable risk to others, including our team, and you're unwilling to alter your plans and help us manage the risk, we reserve the right to withhold or modify our support.

If you choose to take the risk, we'll ask you to sign a letter acknowledging that we discussed the risk and potential consequences with you and that you choose to accept the risk and potential consequences.

Abuse and neglect

You have a right to feel safe and live in an environment where you're protected from abuse or neglect. Abuse can be in the form of:

- financial or material abuse
- neglect
- emotional or psychological abuse
- social abuse
- physical abuse
- sexual abuse.

People can be at risk of abuse from family, friends, our staff, clients or other people. While we're aware that we cannot control all risks, we're committed to making sure you are safe in our service and with our team. We may also be able to assist if you experience abuse or neglect outside of our service.

If you have any concerns about your safety, either here at Neighbourhood Link or outside, please talk to us as soon as possible. As far as reasonably possible, we'll maintain your confidentiality and we'll only provide assistance or take action with your approval.

The national 1800ELDER helpline (1800 353 374) is available if you want to talk to someone about elder abuse. This service provides information on how to get help, support and referrals.

Advance health directive/planning

We encourage you to speak with your medical practitioner or health professional to develop an Advance Health Directive/Plan. This ensures everyone – especially your family – understands your care and treatment preferences in the event that, for whatever reason, you're unable to explain your preferences. If you require more information or assistance with this, please speak to a member of our team.



“It gives me peace of mind and more freedom, without having to rely on my family.”



Your Support Plan

When you start using our services, we'll develop a Support Plan for you. While it will be based on the assessment and support needs identified by *My Aged Care*, we'll create it with you, taking on board what you tell us about your needs and preferences.

Your Support Plan will clearly outline:

- the services you will receive
- the days and times we'll deliver your services
- your preferences regarding how we deliver your services
- your goals for each service
- any special requirements you may have.

Your Support Plan is important. It ensures you and our team know what support we're providing for you. As your needs or preferences change, we'll update your plan, ensuring you always have a copy of, or access to, your current plan.

If you feel your needs have changed, please tell a member of our team or contact our CHSP Coordinator.



Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP)



About CHSP¹

The CHSP is designed to provide small amounts of support services in a timely manner to older people who have difficulty carrying out everyday activities due to functional limitations.

In delivering care and services to you, we follow the CHSP principles identified by the Australian Government. These include:

- making sure you consent to receive services before we provide them
- promoting opportunities for you to maximise your independence, autonomy and quality of life by:
 - providing opportunities for you to be actively involved in addressing your goals
 - working with you to retain or regain your functional and psychosocial independence
 - working with you to build on your strengths, capacity and goals
- providing services tailored to your unique circumstances and preferences
- making sure you have maximum choice and flexibility by providing and explaining information to you and involving you in decisions about your care and services
- inviting you to tell us about your service-delivery preferences and, where possible, adhering to your preferences
- making sure our services are delivered in line with your agreed support plan and that we meet the needs identified in your *My Aged Care* assessment

- delivering responsive services to you for an agreed time period and with agreed review points
- supporting you to participate in community and social opportunities that provide a sense of purpose and confidence
- developing and promoting strong partnerships and good working relationships between you, your carers and family, support workers and the *My Aged Care* assessment service
- working with other agencies to make sure you can access other support services
- having a clear fees policy and making you aware of any contributions you have to pay before delivering services to you.

If you feel that we are not meeting these principles, please let us know so that we can do better.

Changing your CHSP provider²

To change your CHSP provider, you simply need to arrange a new provider and tell us the date for your last service with Neighbourhood Link.

You're welcome to take a copy of your Support Plan to your new provider and they're welcome to contact us, with your written consent, for any additional information.

¹ Australian Government Department of Health Commonwealth Home Support Programme – CHSP Manual 2018-2020 p 2

² Australian Government Department of Health Commonwealth Home Support Programme – CHSP Manual 2018-2020 p 9

Client contributions and charges

Home Care Package (HCP) clients

If you have a Home Care Package, you may access our support services through a brokerage agreement between Neighbourhood Link and your HCP provider.

We'll charge our fees at full cost to your HCP provider.

Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP)

If you're a CHSP client, we'll give you a Commencement of Service Letter that specifies the services we'll provide, the costs and this Client Handbook. You'll find detailed information about the days and times of your services in your copy of your Support Plan, which we'll append to your Commencement of Service letter.

Your contributions

If you're a CHSP client, We'll ask you to make a small client contribution to the support you receive from Neighbourhood Link, if you can afford to. We'll provide a schedule of the fees at your Commencement Meeting.

We revise our fees annually and we take into account your ability to pay. We'll advise you of any changes and you can ask us for an up-to-date schedule of fees at any time.

Please feel free to discuss your contribution level, or any changes to it, with our team.

Contribution reduction

We recognise that circumstances change and that some clients may find themselves unable to contribute financially to their support. If you're experiencing difficulties, you can request a contribution reduction by completing a Contribution Reduction Form.

We'll assess your request, considering your income, household circumstances and any other special circumstances or hardships that make it difficult for you to pay. You'll be advised of the result of your request within 15 working days.

Paying your fees

CHSP clients:

- You'll be invoiced fortnightly for your services (in arrears). All payments must be made via direct debit from your nominated bank account, so you'll need to complete a direct debit form before your first service. You will only be charged for the services you have received.

HCP clients:

- If you're a HCP client, you may access our services through a brokerage agreement between Neighbourhood Link and your HCP provider. We'll bill your HCP provider for the full cost of your services (in arrears). Any changes in service delivery will need to be negotiated with your HCP provider prior to any change.

Equipment

All equipment that we purchase to provide your support services remains our property and is recorded on an equipment register and maintained as per our maintenance schedule.

Delivering support

Keeping appointments

Our support workers work to a tight schedule, which makes it difficult to accommodate short-notice changes to appointments. Except in the case of emergencies, we require a week's notice for any changes to your planned services. If we're unable to schedule a new appointment, you may have to wait for your next scheduled visit.

If you're not home when your support worker arrives, we may require payment for that visit – we still need to pay your support worker for their time.

We'll talk with you about what you want us to do if you do not respond to a scheduled visit (e.g. contact your next of kin). Your preferences will be recorded on your Support Plan, so our team know what action to take.

If you're unable to keep an appointment, please ring our office. The more notice you give us, the better the chance of rescheduling your appointment.

Rescheduling support visits

On rare occasions, we may need to reschedule or cancel a support visit due to unforeseen staff shortages. If this happens, we'll telephone you as soon as possible to let you know and will endeavour to arrange a new time for your visit.

Smoking

Our staff and volunteers are not permitted to smoke in clients' homes or while accompanying our clients in public places or outdoor spaces.

We also request that you do not smoke when a member of our team is in your home and that you do not smoke in our day centre or team members' vehicles.

Dogs

The behaviour of dogs can be unpredictable. If you have a dog and it isn't an assistance dog, we ask you to make sure your pet is restrained or confined to another room while your support worker is in your home. Our team members are instructed to leave homes where dogs are not restrained.

Chemicals in the home

Our support workers are not permitted to use hazardous chemicals in your home. This includes products containing bleach or corrosive chemicals, such as oven cleaners. Simple detergents and non-hazardous chemicals are fine.

All cleaning products come with instructions that highlight whether the product is hazardous or not. Please purchase non-hazardous chemicals for your support workers to use. Our support workers will use the appropriate personal protective equipment (eg. gloves) when using certain products.



Rights and responsibilities

As a consumer, you have both rights and responsibilities.

Consumer rights under the Aged Care Act³

Consumers have the right to:

1. Safe and high-quality care and services;
2. Be treated with dignity and respect;
3. Have their identity, culture and diversity valued and supported;
4. Live without abuse and neglect;
5. Be informed about their care and services in a way they understand;
6. Access all information about themselves, including information about their rights, care and services;
7. Have control over and make choices about their care, and personal and social life, including where the choices involve personal risk;
8. Have control over, and make decisions about, the personal aspects of their daily life, financial affairs and possessions;
9. Their independence;
10. Be listened to and understood;
11. Have a person of their choice, including an aged care advocate, support them or speak on their behalf;
12. Complain free from reprisal and have their complaints dealt with fairly and promptly;
13. Personal privacy and have their personal information protected;
14. Exercise their rights without it adversely affecting the way they are treated.

Consumer responsibilities⁴

We value consumer input and participation in determining the services we provide and how they are provided. We also believe that all people involved in aged care, including consumers, their families, carers, visitors and the aged care workforce, must respect and be considerate of each other. To support this principle, consumers are expected to:

1. Provide us with the information we need to deliver care and our services
2. Comply with the conditions of your Agreement and pay the fees outlined in the agreement on time
3. Respect the rights of our workers to work in a safe environment. Any kind of violence, harassment or abuse towards team members or others is not acceptable.

Consumer rights under Consumer Law⁵

In addition to your rights under the *Aged Care Act 1997* and other relevant legislation, we ensure the following under Australian Consumer Law:

You have a right to:

- clear, honest and complete information about the services provided to you, including information displayed on the *My Aged Care* website
- time to make your decisions and ask for help if you need to
- no pressure-selling of services
- terms in your agreements that are fair for all parties
- a clear and easy dispute resolution process.

³ Australian Government Department of Health Charter of Aged Care Rights (Effective 1 July 2019)

⁴ Australian Government Department of Health *Home Care Packages Program Operational Manual A Guide for Home Care Providers Version 1 March 2020* p 15 (Click on link for latest version)

⁵ Australian Government Competition and Consumer Act 2010

Privacy and confidentiality



At Neighbourhood Link, we're committed to protecting your privacy and confidentiality. We comply with the *Privacy Act 1988, Privacy Amendment (Enhancing Privacy Protection) Act 2012* and the Australian Privacy Principles.

To ensure your privacy:

- Your files and other information are securely stored.
- We only collect information about you that is relevant to the provision of support and we explain to you why we collect the information and what we use it for.
- We seek consent from you to, in an emergency, disclose personal information to other health service providers to provide emergency care or services.
- We seek consent from you to provide access to your records to government officials (or their delegates) for quality reviews or the investigation of complaints. We advise you that these individuals are required to keep all information accessed through this process confidential.
- Information provided to government bodies regarding service provision does not identify you. If any information is provided to outside government agencies for data purposes, we ensure that the information is de-identified and we make a note in your record of what information was shared and with whom.
- You can withdraw consent to share personal information at any time.
- You can ask to see the information that we keep about you and we'll help you access this information, if requested. Information will be provided in an accessible format within 30 days of the request. You can nominate a representative to access your records held by Neighbourhood Link.
- All information relating to you is confidential and is not disclosed to any other person or organisation without your permission.
- We only share information when it is necessary to ensure appropriate support is delivered and only with your permission/ consent beforehand.
- The provision of information to people outside the service is authorised by the CHSP coordinator.
- We do not discuss you or your support with people not directly involved in supporting you.
- We take steps to correct information where appropriate and regularly review your information to ensure it is accurate and up to date.
- Reviews are always conducted in private with you and a staff member, unless you consent to your carer, advocate or another person being present.
- During your reviews our staff member will ask you about any particular privacy requirements you have. These are noted on your assessment form and support plan.
- Any discussions between staff about you are held in a closed office.
- You are supported by us should you have a complaint or dispute regarding our privacy policy or the management of your personal information.
- Any references to you in meeting minutes refer to you by initials only or another unique identifier, such as your consumer number.
- We confidentially destroy any personal information held about you when it is no longer necessary to provide support.

Complaints and feedback

We encourage you to provide feedback on the support we provide. This helps us to better meet your needs and plan for the future.

If you're unhappy with any of the services you receive, please let us know. If you do not feel comfortable with your support worker, please let our CHSP coordinator know and a change of staff can be arranged, if necessary. We have continuous improvement processes in place that use your feedback to improve our services.

Similarly, we enjoy hearing when we do things well. Feel free to provide compliments about our service.

All complaints and feedback are treated in confidence and will not affect the quality of support you receive or any other dealings you have with Neighbourhood Link.

Our complaints procedure

- You are encouraged to raise your complaint with the team member concerned if you feel comfortable doing so.
- If you're not happy discussing the issue with the team member in question or are not satisfied with the outcome, you can contact another team member or the appropriate management representative. Our CHSP coordinator will liaise with our team to resolve your complaint.
- Key staff phone numbers are listed above in *1.1 Contacting us*.

- Remember that you can use an advocate to assist you. This can be a family member, friend or one of the agencies listed in *17.5 Advocacy and External Complaints Contacts*.
- If the issue is not satisfactorily resolved, you can submit your complaint in writing to our CHSP coordinator: PO Box 1097, Fremantle, WA 6959. We're happy to assist you with this if you phone our office.
- If you're unhappy with our CHSP coordinator's decision, you may wish to contact one of the advocacy and external complaints contacts listed below. Again, we can help you with this.
- Once your complaint has been finalised, a member from our team will be in touch to make sure you still feel comfortable accessing our support services and to ask for your feedback on the complaint process.

Remember, you can use an advocate to assist you with your complaint.

Open disclosure

All complaints are dealt with using an open disclosure approach. This involves open and honest discussion/s and sharing of information between you and relevant team members, including senior management.

We participate in open disclosure to ensure we improve and prevent any recurrence of incidents.

"If you're unhappy with any of the services you receive, please let us know."





Continuous improvement

We pride ourselves on working with our clients to improve our services. We have a range of mechanisms to foster improvement, including welcoming feedback from all stakeholders, reviewing our performance through monitoring and measuring outcomes, conducting audits and surveys, and participating in external reviews of our performance against the Aged Care Quality Standards. Let us know if you would like to be further involved in our continuous improvement.

Advocacy

Your right to an advocate

You have the right to use an advocate of your choice to negotiate on your behalf with Neighbourhood Link. This may be a family member, friend or advocacy service. A list of advocacy services is provided below. We can help you contact a service.

What is an advocate?

An advocate is a person who, with your authority, represents your interests. Advocates may be used during assessments, reviews and complaints or for any other communication between you and Neighbourhood Link.

Appointing an advocate

If you wish to appoint an advocate, let us know in writing the name of the person you wish to be your advocate. You can use the *Authority to Act as an Advocate* form. You can also change your advocate at any time using this form.

Guidelines for advocates

Guidelines for advocates are included with the *Authority to Act as an Advocate* form for you to pass on to your advocate.

Advocacy and external complaints contacts

Advocacy and external complaints contacts include:

Agency	Contact details
Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission GPO Box 9819 In your Capital City 9.00 am-5.00 pm weekdays	Ph: 1800 951 822 Email: info@agedcarequality.gov.au Online complaint form: www.agedcarequality.gov.au
Advocare Unit 1, Byblos House, 190 Abernethy Road, Belmont WA 6104	Freecall:1800 655 566 (Country Callers) Ph: (08) 9479 7566 (Metro) Fax: (08) 9479 7599 Email: rights@advocare.org.au www.advocare.org.au
Carers WA 182 Lord Street, Perth WA 6000	Ph: (08) 9444 5922 Fax: (08) 9444 8966 Freecall:1800 242 636 (24 Hour) 1300 CARERS (227377) Web: www.carerswa.asn.au
National Aged Care Advocacy Line Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN)	Ph: 1800 700 600 Web: https://opan.com.au/about/
Ombudsman Western Australia Level 2, Albert Facey House, 469 Wellington Street, Perth WA 6000	Freecall: 1800 117 000 (Country Callers) Ph: (08) 9220 7555 Fax: (08) 9325 1107 Email: mail@ombudsman.wa.gov.au

(The Ombudsman WA only has jurisdiction to consider matters relating to CHSP services provided under the management/sponsorship of a local authority or another State Government body).



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Neighbourhood Link

Social Connections. *Quality of Life.*

Contact us

Call us on **(08) 9339 9381** or email us at
neighbourhoodlink@eastfremantle.wa.gov.au
for more information.

Neighbourhood Link

5 Wauhop Road, East Fremantle WA 6158

Office Hours: Monday to Friday 8.00am to 3.30pm

www.eastfremantle.wa.gov.au



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