

# The Paraplegic and Quadriplegic Association of SA Inc



## Support Worker Training Policy

### STATEMENT

The Paraplegic and Association of South Australia Incorporated (PQSA) is committed to the provision of the highest standard of support to people with specialised needs to ensure their ability to facilitate optimum quality of life in the community. PQSA supports individual learning and skill development to ensure a culture of quality service delivery and continuous improvement. HomeCare+ (HC+) a division of PQSA, will deliver quality service provision through Support Workers who are qualified, competent and confident to provide the highest level of client service.

Approved by:

Date: June 2015

**The Paraplegic and Quadriplegic Association of SA Inc.(PQSA) is incorporated under the *Association Incorporation Act 1985 (SA)* and conducts its business through operating Divisions, namely Support Services and HomeCare+.**

## **SCOPE**

This policy covers all HC+ Support Workers both new and existing.

## **DEFINITIONS**

**Accredited Training** – Training that has been deemed to meet official vocational training quality standards and, as such, is recognised as “accredited” by state or national accreditation bodies.

**Competency** – The application of knowledge and skill to a required standard in a given context and across a range of different situations.

**Certificate of Completion** – For the purpose of this policy is a document issued to individuals who have satisfactorily completed HC+ training.

**Support Worker** – Is a person who provides personal care assistance, activities of daily living assistance, community access support and/or aspects of health support.

**Training** - A systematic development of the knowledge and skill behaviour patterns (competencies) required by an individual in order to perform a given or future job or task.

## **POLICY**

HC+ aims to ensure all Support Workers have training in core competencies that will enable them to perform their duties safely and competently in line with HC+ Policies and government legislation and policy. HC+ training is approved by the Human Resource Department (HR) to ensure consistency and mobility of skills throughout all HC+ regions.

HC+ training reflects the need for knowledge of the complex inter-relationship of duty of care, ethical behaviour, personal values, personal safety, service delivery standards and methodologies. Training is designed to ensure work practices include strategies to empower individuals and groups, promote individual independence, person-centred support and to respect the rights and dignity of clients and colleagues.

HC+ training will be free from any cost to the Support Worker and will ensure Support Workers have the required knowledge to meet accepted industry standards of ethical practice and personal safety, including those relating to:

- ◆ Client relationships;
- ◆ Professional conduct;
- ◆ Financial management;
- ◆ Privacy - Information collection, storage and dissemination;
- ◆ Specific client service delivery;
- ◆ Medication;
- ◆ Manual Handling;
- ◆ Work, Health and Safety;

HC+ will facilitate additional training where a need is highlighted by clients, Management or Support Workers in areas relevant to each client group, such as but not limited to child care, aged care and mental health.

### **Certificate III Qualification**

To ensure compliance with South Australian State Government Policy all new Support Workers will be required to hold a minimum accredited training qualification at a Certificate III level compliant with the Community Service Training Package in Disability, Home and Community Care or Aged Care.

Where it is reasonably practicable, existing HC+ employees who support Level 2 and 3 Clients and in accordance with the Classification of Client Levels Policy and Procedure, will be offered a traineeship to undertake studies in Certificate III in Disabilities or Home and Community Care.

## **PROCEDURE**

### **Traineeship**

Support Workers undertaking a traineeship will be known as trainees for the duration of the traineeship. A trainee will enter into a Contract of Employment with PQSA/HC+ and a Training Contract with a Traineeship, Apprenticeship Services (TAS). Under these contracts, a trainee is obliged to:

- ◆ Commit to work the minimum required hours for that traineeship;
- ◆ Work toward obtaining the qualification in the prescribed traineeship time frame;
- ◆ Undertake any training and assessment as agreed in the training plan;
- ◆ Attend all scheduled training sessions, unless they are unable to attend due to the need for personal or compassionate leave; a sick certificate or Statutory Declaration needs to be submitted to their supervisor as soon as possible.

Upon the successful completion of the traineeship, the trainee will be guaranteed ongoing employment with HC+ as a Casual Support Worker, employed under the current Employee Collective Agreement.

### **Existing Workers**

All Support Workers working with Level 2 and 3 clients are required to have a minimum qualification of a Certificate III in Disability, Aged Care or Home and Community Care or be working towards such a qualification.

As an interim measure and in accordance with the Direct Health Support of People with a Disability Guidelines 2011 (s10.2), existing workers employed prior to June 2008 must have or be willing to undertake Certificate III level subjects as per Section 10 of the Direct Health Support of People with a Disability.

### **Mandatory Training**

As per state legislation, it is a requirement of employment with HC+ that all Support Workers maintain competency in the following areas of training; in order to help workers comply with their legal obligations, HC+ will facilitate free annual training in:

- ◆ Manual Handling
- ◆ Medication

In addition, HC+ will facilitate bi-annual training in:

- ◆ Work, Health and Safety including Infection Control
- ◆ Mandatory Reporting for Children and Vulnerable Adults

Support Workers must ensure their Manual Handling, Medication and Work, Health and Safety training is current. The Human Resource Department (HR) will generate a quarterly Training Calendar for both the metropolitan and regional areas, offering training in the legislatively required subjects. Letters or SMS messages will be circulated to Support Workers who require the training during this period. It is the responsibility of the Support Worker to enroll in training four (4) weeks prior to the training date. If a Support Worker chooses to complete their training through another training provider (at their own cost), it is their responsibility to provide HR with a copy of the appropriate Certificate.

Exception to Manual Handling and Medication training will be given were a Support Worker is not undertaking the task, it is the responsibility of the Support Workers supervisor to;

- ◆ Sign a Letter of Exemption issued by the training department

- ◆ Apply the appropriate level of security is placed on the Roster System to ensure the Support Worker is not sent to a shift requiring the competencies.

Where a Support Worker is absent from shifts for a period of six (6) months or more, they will be required to undertake refresher training prior to returning to shifts in Manual Handling, Medication, Work, Health and Safety/Infection control or hold current training certificates acquired through another recognized organization or Registered Training Organisation.

***Support Workers in the Metropolitan area will be removed from shifts six (6) weeks after training expires if they fail to update their mandatory training.***

***PQSA acknowledges that there are restrictions for Support Workers in regional areas where mandatory training opportunities are limited (NB Regional staff can attend training in Adelaide or via external agencies if they choose). To help accommodate regional Support Workers and ensure they can plan training in advance, they will;***

- ***Be provided a copy of the yearly training plan at the commencement of each calendar year.***
- ***Have access to the training program on the HomeCare Plus website.***
- ***Be advised to check the website on a regular basis to check that training dates have not changed.***
- ***Receive training reminder letters and SMS messages which detail upcoming training dates.***

***At regional training sessions, numbers will be capped with priority given to those workers whose training has expired, then those whose training expires within the next two months.***

***Workers who do not update and are more than six months overdue for training will be removed from shifts.***

Competency Assessments or further training may be required for Support Workers in response to changing client needs or under direction from Management; this training will be paid.

*HR will issue Certificates of Completion for all in-house HC+ training.*

### **First Aid**

Support Workers must ensure their First Aid Certificate is current. It is the responsibility of the Support Worker to provide HC+ with a copy of their current First Aid Certificate.

HR will issue a letter of First Aid Expiration reminders a minimum of four (4) weeks prior to accreditation expiring.

***Failure to maintain a current First Aid Qualification will result in removal from shifts six (6) weeks after certificate expires.***

**It is the responsibility of the Support Worker to ensure their shifts are covered while they attend training.**

### **RELATED LEGISLATION**

- ◆ National Standards for Disability Services sec 6.
- ◆ Government of South Australia Direct Health Support of People with a Disability Policy 2014
- ◆ United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2007
- ◆ Work, Health and Safety Regulations 2012
- ◆ Training and Skills Development Act 2008.

## **SUPPORTING PQSA DOCUMENTATION**

- ◆ Classification of Client Levels Policy and Procedures
- ◆ Support Worker Recruitment Policy
- ◆ Equal Opportunity Policy
- ◆ Work, Health and Safety Management System Policy
- ◆ Support Worker Job Description

## **BREACHES OF THIS POLICY**

A **breach** of this policy is grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Ignorance of these procedures will not generally be accepted as an excuse for non-compliance. Only in extreme circumstances and where such ignorance can be demonstrated to have occurred through no fault of the individual concerned will PQSA accept such an argument.

## **DISTRIBUTION AND REVIEW**

PQSA will ensure all persons engaged to provide services either paid or unpaid will be aware of this policy and will have easy access to it in an appropriate format. All policies are to be reviewed on a periodic basis or when legislation or government policy determines.