



**Sexual Health and Family Planning ACT Inc**

# **Client Charter of Rights**

**Sexual Health & Family Planning ACT**

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# CLIENT CHARTER OF RIGHTS

The purpose of this Charter is to set out at a high level SHFPACT's understanding and commitments regarding the rights and responsibilities for people who engage with the organisation and use its services, and to provide direction to, SHFPACT Council members, officers, employees, and volunteers, in relation to their obligations and responsibilities related to this Charter. Specific implementation of this policy in a particular program or service offered by SHFPACT may be set out in further detail in procedures and guidance materials specific to that program, service or activity.

This Policy document consists of two parts:

## **PART 1 – Policy and Policy Responsibility**

Establishes the policy goals, commitments and scope/limitations of the Organisation in relation to communication with clients and service users regarding their rights and responsibilities, the relationship of the Charter of Rights to the organisation's purpose (mission) and other policy frameworks, and describes the policy establishment, implementation and review responsibilities within the Organisation.

## **PART 2 – SHFPACT Client Charter of Rights**

Sets out the SHFPACT Client Charter of Rights, and the Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights.

Requirements of conduct for Council, staff and volunteers are outlined in the SHFPACT *Code of Conduct*, which should be read in conjunction with this document and other SHFPACT policy, and include the expectation that all SHFPACT employees, volunteers and Council members maintain a high standard of personal & professional conduct at all times. Employees are expected to always act in a way that is safe, fair and respectful of employees, volunteers, clients and other people associated with the organisation. Council members are expected to discharge their governance responsibilities with due diligence, impartially, fairly and in the best interests of the organisation, and to ensure a safe, fair and respectful environment is maintained in the organisation.

### *Definitions*

**Canberra community** means the community in Canberra, the ACT and the surrounding region.

**Organisation** means Sexual Health and Family Planning ACT Incorporated (SHFPACT)

**Council** means the SHFPACT Council, the governing body of the organisation elected by the membership, described as the 'management committee' in the *Associations Incorporations Act 1991* (ACT)

### **Version Control and Review Details**

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*Prior source/reference material: Client Rights and Responsibilities (clinical services) SHFPACT website; Client rights and responsibilities articulated in NDIS Service Agreements; Participant/Student rights and responsibilities (RTO activities)*

## **PART 1**

### **Policy**

#### **1. POLICY COMMITMENT**

- 1.1. SHFPACT is committed to delivering sexual and reproductive health services for the Canberra Community within a framework of human rights and social justice.
- 1.2. All people, regardless of age, sex, gender, religion, culture, ethnicity, ability (including cognitive ability), are entitled to request care or support services, to have safe, fair, respectful and non-discriminatory access, care and/or support provided to them, relevant to their needs when using SHFPACT services in a safe environment.
- 1.3. All clients/service users have the responsibility to inform and provide SHFPACT and its workers in a timely, accurate manner with all relevant information to enable appropriate, safe, and respectful care and/or support services to be provided to them.
- 1.4. The right to request, access, and use services and facilities may be limited by the availability of appropriate and suitable care/support services staff, and the ability of the Organisation to provide facilities and services in a manner that is safe and fair for other clients/service users at a particular point in time, or in a manner that is safe for workers.
- 1.5. SHFPACT commits to providing ad/or displaying information about Client Rights and Responsibilities in meaningful and accessible locations and formats.
- 1.6. SHFPACT commits to the principle of reasonable adjustment to ensure all clients are supported to understand their rights when accessing services. Client Rights and Responsibilities may be communicated using formats such as Easy English and/or pictorial representations to aid understanding.

## 2. POLICY CONTEXT

2.1. SHFPACT is a provider of healthcare, education, workforce development and training, counselling, and health information services in the Australian Capital Territory and region, subject to relevant laws, regulations and standards. SHFPACT service funding arrangements and contracts with ACT Government (and other funding or commissioning bodies) also impose expectations and requirements on compliance with relevant legislation, regulation and standards that govern and regulate these areas of service provision.

2.2. In its commitments and implementation, the SHFPACT Client Charter of Rights policy will not operate contrary to the requirements and protected attributes under anti-discrimination and other relevant legislation, including:

- *Age Discrimination Act 2004*
- *Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986*
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*
- *Discrimination Act 1991 (ACT)*
- *Health Records (Privacy & Access) Act 1997 (ACT)*
- *Human Rights Act 2004 (ACT)*
- *Privacy Act 1988*
- *Racial Discrimination Act 1975*
- *Sex Discrimination Act 1984*

2.3. In addition to the rights expressed in this policy document, SHFPACT affirms:

- Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights.
- The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- The International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) and World Association for Sexual Health (WAS) Declarations of Sexual Rights.

2.4. The SHFPACT Client Charter of Rights is specifically intended as a communication tool that articulates and integrates a range of policy objectives, including compliance with legislative, regulatory and accreditation standards and frameworks, primarily for people who engage with SHFPACT for:

- a) Reproductive and sexual health clinical care services
- b) Counselling services related to unplanned pregnancy
- c) Individual and group counselling services related to sexuality and relationships
- d) Individual and group education programs for people with disabilities related to social skills development, social safety and protective behaviours, and other needs related to sexuality and relationships, under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).
- e) Training and support for carers associated with c) and d) above.

*NOTE: These services listed above align most closely with the intent and audience for the Client Charter of Rights. Other services users - notably participants in workforce development and training activities, and participants in health education programs in schools and the community – are entitled to the same rights, respect, consideration, care and diligence, but engage with the organisation in different ways than an individual who is receiving a healthcare service, in a relationship that may be mediated by another body or organisation that contracts or engages directly with SHFPACT on behalf of the participant to provide education, training and information services (such as a school or employer). These activities may be subject to different and additional legislation, regulation and standards.*

### **3. POLICY RESPONSIBILITY**

- 3.1. The rights and responsibilities of clients when accessing services, supports and activities at SHFPACT must be consistent with high-level policy established by Council, including the SHFPACT Ends Statement, the organisation's Strategic Plan and objectives, and SHFPACT Governance Policy and Executive Limitations.
- 3.2. SHFPACT Council is responsible for managing its risk appetite in relation to service delivery policy and its implementation, and articulating this through the SHFPACT Governance Policy and Executive Limitations. SHFPACT Council monitors implementation through management compliance reporting and the operations of the Finance Audit & Risk Committee of the Council.
- 3.3. Executive Management is responsible for the design and implementation of policy governing provision of services.
- 3.4. SHFPACT management and staff are responsible for implementing the SHFPACT Charter of Client Rights consistently, equitably and without bias or prejudice. SHFPACT management may develop additional procedures and guidance to implement relevant policy in specific service programs or for specific priority populations or client groups, as required.

## PART 2 – SHFPACT CLIENT CHARTER OF RIGHTS

<p><b>When using SHFPACT services, I have the right to <b>SAFETY</b>, to be protected from harm, and from breaches of my individual human rights, including:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To receive safe, appropriate and high-quality services.</li> <li>• To be free from discrimination, and free from physical, sexual, emotional and verbal abuse.</li> <li>• To a safe and healthy environment within the Organisation and its facilities.</li> <li>• To choose not engage in an activity unless required to protect safety of myself or others.</li> </ul>
<p><b>When using SHFPACT services, I have the right to <b>RESPECT</b></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be treated with dignity and respect in all interactions with SHFPACT.</li> <li>• Respect for my civil and political rights, including freedom of expression, freedom of association.</li> <li>• To exercise my rights without it impacting the way I am treated.</li> </ul>
<p><b>When using SHFPACT services, I have the right <b>ACCESS</b>, including the right to be informed about and engaged in the services that are provided to me:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To have my needs, my goals and my best interests as the primary focus of the service or care I receive, within the limits of safety for myself and others.</li> <li>• To be given appropriate time and support to communicate my needs, wants and goals, for SHFPACT workers to make efforts to accurately understand these.</li> <li>• To request the use of an Interpreter when required, and have appropriate interpreting services provided where reasonably available.</li> </ul>
<p><b>When using SHFPACT services, I have the right to <b>PARTNERSHIP</b>, including reasonable adjustment and accommodation for my individual needs, including the right to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in identifying options and making decisions about my life.</li> <li>• Receive support appropriate to my communication needs to make decisions about my goals, the services I receive, and alternative options, and to exercise informed consent (supported decision making, exercising control and choice).</li> <li>• Ask for the services I receive, or the way they are provided, to be reviewed and changed to better suit my goals and needs.</li> <li>• To access an advocate (including an independent advocate) of my choice is supported.</li> </ul>
<p><b>When using SHFPACT services, I have the right to <b>INFORMATION</b>:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask questions about the service or health care I receive.</li> <li>• Receive sufficient information about the service and its terms of use.</li> <li>• Be given assistance, when I need, to help me understand provided information.</li> </ul>
<p><b>When using SHFPACT services, I have the right to <b>PRIVACY</b>:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Privacy and confidentiality of my personal and personal health information.</li> <li>• To know what Information held about me by SHFPACT, and to request access to this information in line with privacy and safety policies, and to have incorrect information updated or corrected.</li> <li>• Refuse the presence of anyone when receiving health care (students, workers not directly involved in care, researchers, family members/carer) within SHFPACT policies on work health and safety.</li> </ul>
<p><b>When using SHFPACT services, I have the right to provide <b>FEEDBACK</b>, request a change to how services or supports are provided to me, and to make a complaint about the care or support I received, including:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be informed about how to provide feedback or make a complaint about the service I receive, and have complaints dealt with promptly and fairly.</li> <li>• To make a complaint free from reprisal or discrimination.</li> <li>• To have my concerns addressed in a transparent and timely way.</li> </ul>
<p><b>When using SHFPACT services, I have <b>RESPONSIBILITIES</b> to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide all relevant information to enable the most appropriate care or service to be provided to me.</li> <li>• behave in a safe and respectful manner towards SHFPACT staff and property, and to other clients and service users.</li> <li>• inform SHFPACT about any changes that can have an impact on care and supports provided to me, including attending a book clinic consultation, session or appointment.</li> </ul>

# My healthcare rights

This is the second edition of the **Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights**.

These rights apply to all people in all places where health care is provided in Australia.

The Charter describes what you, or someone you care for, can expect when receiving health care.

## I have a right to:

### Access

- Healthcare services and treatment that meets my needs

### Safety

- Receive safe and high quality health care that meets national standards
- Be cared for in an environment that makes me feel safe

### Respect

- Be treated as an individual, and with dignity and respect
- Have my culture, identity, beliefs and choices recognised and respected

### Partnership

- Ask questions and be involved in open and honest communication
- Make decisions with my healthcare provider, to the extent that I choose and am able to
- Include the people that I want in planning and decision-making

### Information

- Clear information about my condition, the possible benefits and risks of different tests and treatments, so I can give my informed consent
- Receive information about services, waiting times and costs
- Be given assistance, when I need it, to help me to understand and use health information
- Request access to my health information
- Be told if something has gone wrong during my health care, how it happened, how it may affect me and what is being done to make care safe

### Privacy

- Have my personal privacy respected
- Have information about me and my health kept secure and confidential

### Give feedback

- Provide feedback or make a complaint without it affecting the way that I am treated
- Have my concerns addressed in a transparent and timely way
- Share my experience and participate to improve the quality of care and health services



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**AUSTRALIAN COMMISSION  
ON SAFETY AND QUALITY IN HEALTH CARE**

For more information,  
ask a member of staff or visit  
[safetyandquality.gov.au/your-rights](https://safetyandquality.gov.au/your-rights)

## What can I expect from the Australian health system?

MY RIGHTS	WHAT THIS MEANS
<p><b>Access</b> I have a right to health care.</p>	I can access services to address my healthcare needs.
<p><b>Safety</b> I have a right to receive safe and high quality care.</p>	I receive safe and high quality health services, provided with professional care, skill and competence.
<p><b>Respect</b> I have a right to be shown respect, dignity and consideration.</p>	The care provided shows respect to me and my culture, beliefs, values and personal characteristics.
<p><b>Communication</b> I have a right to be informed about services, treatment, options and costs in a clear and open way.</p>	I receive open, timely and appropriate communication about my health care in a way I can understand.
<p><b>Participation</b> I have a right to be included in decisions and choices about my care.</p>	I may join in making decisions and choices about my care and about health service planning.
<p><b>Privacy</b> I have a right to privacy and confidentiality of my personal information.</p>	My personal privacy is maintained and proper handling of my personal health and other information is assured.
<p><b>Comment</b> I have a right to comment on my care and to have my concerns addressed.</p>	I can comment on or complain about my care and have my concerns dealt with properly and promptly.