

**National Disability Insurance Scheme Programme**

**Young Carers Respite and Information Services Activity – Information, Advice and Referral Component - Operational Guidelines**

**June 2016**

Table of Contents

[1. Programme Overview 3](#_Toc416257741)

[1.1 Programme Outcomes 3](#_Toc416257742)

[1.2 Programme Objectives 3](#_Toc416257743)

[2 Activity Overview 3](#_Toc416257744)

[2.1 Aims and objectives 3](#_Toc416257745)

[2.2 Applicant eligibility 4](#_Toc416257746)

[2.3 Participants/clients/recipients/target group 4](#_Toc416257747)

[2.4 Funding for the activity 4](#_Toc416257748)

[2.5 Eligible and in-eligible activities 5](#_Toc416257749)

[2.6 Activity links and working with other agencies and services 5](#_Toc416257750)

[2.7 Specialist requirements (e.g. Legislative requirements) 6](#_Toc416257753)

[2.8 Information technology 6](#_Toc416257754)

[2.9 Activity performance and reporting 6](#_Toc416257755)

[2.10 Financial Reporting 7](#_Toc416257757)

[2.11 DSS responsibilities and accountabilities under the activity 7](#_Toc416257758)

[2.12 Grant recipients’ responsibilities and accountabilities under the activity 7](#_Toc416257759)

[2.13 Risk management strategy 7](#_Toc416257760)

[2.14 Special conditions applying to this activity 8](#_Toc416257761)

[3 Application Process 8](#_Toc416257762)

[3.1 Overview of the application process 8](#_Toc416257763)

[4 Terms and conditions applying to Direct Selection 8](#_Toc416257764)

[4.1 Liability issues 8](#_Toc416257765)

[4.2 DSS rights 8](#_Toc416257766)

[4.3 Disclaimer 8](#_Toc416257767)

[4.4 Fraud 9](#_Toc416257768)

[4.5 Personal Information 9](#_Toc416257769)

[4.6 Freedom of Information 9](#_Toc416257770)

[5 Financial and Other Arrangements 10](#_Toc416257771)

[5.1 Financial arrangements 10](#_Toc416257772)

[6 Complaints 10](#_Toc416257773)

[6.1 Applicants/Grant Recipients 10](#_Toc416257774)

[6.2 Client/Customer 11](#_Toc416257775)

[7 Contact information 11](#_Toc416257776)

# 1. Programme Overview

## 1.1 Programme Outcomes

The Department of Social Services (DSS) works to provide improved independence, participation and lifetime wellbeing for people with disability, people with a mental illness and their carers.

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) intends to ensure people with disability are supported to participate in and contribute to social and economic life to the extent of their abilities. People with disability and their carers will have certainty that they will receive the individualised care and support they need over their lifetime.

## 1.2 Programme Objectives

To improve the wellbeing and social and economic participation of people with disability, and their families and carers, by building a National Disability Insurance Scheme that delivers individualised support through an insurance approach. This Programme also includes existing supports that are transitioning in to the NDIS in a phased approach as well as services to support the market, sector and workforce to adjust to the NDIS environment.

# 2 Activity Overview

The Young Carers Respite and Information Services activity assists young students who need support to complete their secondary education or the vocational equivalent due to the demands of their caring role. This activity has two components:

The *Young Carers Respite and Information Services* *(Young Carers)* activity assists students with a significant caring role who need support to complete their secondary education or the vocational equivalent due to the demands of their caring role.

The *Young Carers* activity is a targeted measure and seeks to supplement existing programmes and services, not replace them.

The activity has two components:

* Respite and Education support services – assists students under 18 years of age with a significant caring ole to access respite and age appropriate educational support. These services are delivered by the national network of 54 Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centres (CRCCs).
* Information, referral and advice services – supports students with a significant caring role up to and including 25 years of age with information, advice and referral services, including referral to counselling. These services are delivered by Carers Australia and the network of state and territory Carers Associations.

These Operational Guidelines relate to the information, referral and advice services component of the Young Carers activity.

## 2.1 Aims and objectives

The information, referral and advice services component of this activity provides information, advice and referral services to young carers nationally by:

* providing a clearly identifiable and accessible point of contact for young carers seeking information, referral and advice services;
* identifying each young carer’s needs and referring them to appropriate support services;
* undertaking activities to raise awareness of young carers and their issues within the community;
* undertaking activities that increase the rate of identification of young carers seeking assistance and support;
* maintaining the Australian National Young Carer Action Team (ANYCAT);
* providing each young carer member of ANYCAT with opportunities to develop skills to enable them to raise awareness of young carer issues; and
* providing website administration to maintain the Young Carers Website and ensure the website has sufficient information and appropriately reflects all components of the Young Carers Respite and Information Services activity.

## 2.2 Applicant eligibility

The following entity types meet the eligibility requirements to be invited to apply for a grant for this activity:

1. Incorporated Associations (incorporated under State/Territory legislation, commonly have 'Association' or 'Incorporated' or 'Inc.' in their legal name);
2. Incorporated Cooperatives (also incorporated under State/Territory legislation, commonly have ‘Cooperative' in their legal name);
3. Companies (incorporated under the Corporations Act 2001 – may be a not-for-profit or for-profit proprietary company (limited by shares or by guarantee) or public companies);
4. Aboriginal Corporations (incorporated under the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006);
5. Organisations established through a specific piece of Commonwealth or state/territory legislation (public benevolent institutions, churches, universities, unions etc.;
6. Partnerships;
7. Trustees on behalf of a Trust;

The following entity types may be invited in special circumstances:

1. State and territory Governments; and
2. Local Governments.

## 2.3 Participants/clients/recipients/target group

The Information, referral and advice services component of the Young Carers activity targets all young carers.

A young carer is defined as a person, up to and including 25 years of age, who provides regular and sustained care and assistance to another person without payment for their caring role (a pension or benefit is not considered to be payment for the caring role).

## 2.4 Funding for the activity

For the period 1 July 2016-30 June 2019, $1.836 million will be provided to deliver the Young Carers *information, referral and advice services* component.

In accordance with the Fair Work Australia decision of 1 February 2012 to increase wages in the Social and Community Services (SACS) sector, the Department of Social Services will provide supplementation funding to organisations employing SACS workers delivering Specialist Services.  To be eligible for supplementation funding organisations must have employed staff under the Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award 2010 (SACS Modern Award), specifically under one of the following Schedules:

* Schedule B – Classification Definitions - Social and Community Services Employees; or
* Schedule C – Classification Definitions - Crisis Accommodation Employees.
* Organisations affected by the Western Australia Industrial Relation Commission (WAIRC) SACS Decision of 29 August 2013 may also be entitled to SACS supplementation.

## 2.5 Eligible and in-eligible activities

The grant may be used for the following purposes, provided they are directly related to the implementation and management of the Information, referral and advice services component of the Young Carers activity:

* staff salaries and on-costs;
* staff training;
* venue hire;
* insurance;
* materials and equipment;
* operating expenses such as office materials, utilities, telephones, insurances, travel, book keeping, auditing etc.;
* travel within Australia; and
* expenses involved in conducting formal and informal evaluation.

The grant may not be used for:

* costs that are not directly and specifically related to the Programme e.g. ongoing staff wages, rent, overheads and administrative costs of existing operations;
* international travel;
* relocation costs; and
* retrospective costs.

For advice on any activity not provided in the list, Carers Australia should contact its Grant Agreement Manager in the DSS New South Wales State Office.

## 2.6 Activity links and working with other agencies and services

Carers Australia is encouraged to develop links with other agencies and services that complement services provided under the information, referral and advice services component of the Young Carers Activity. Where appropriate, Carers Australia is encouraged to refer young carers to their local Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centre to gain maximum outcomes for young carers.

Young carers care recipients who are under 65 years of age and need direct respite support should be encouraged to test their eligibility with the NDIS.

Carers Australia is also encouraged to develop partnerships with local organisations and services to develop broader expertise and connections with a range of programs.

### Employment for Carers

Job Services Australia and Disability Employment Services (DES) provide employment support for carers.

Job Services Australia provides support for carers who wish to enter or re-enter the paid workforce and for people returning to the workforce after their caring role ends. It provides opportunities for training, skills development and work experience and provides tailored assistance to ensure responsiveness to individual circumstances. Further information about Job Services Australia is available on the [Australian Government Department of Employment’s website](http://employment.gov.au/job-services-australia-jsa).

Disability Employment Services (DES) provide job seekers (including carers who wish to enter or re-enter the paid workforce) with disability, injury or a health condition with assistance to prepare for, find and keep a job. Further information is available on the [DSS Website](https://www.dss.gov.au/DES).

## 2.7 Specialist requirements (e.g. Legislative requirements)

Carers Australia must comply with obligations under Clause 19 – Vulnerable Persons, Police Checks and Criminal Offences of the Grant Agreement Terms and Conditions regarding working with vulnerable persons. The Terms and Conditions explain the requirements and obligations on Carers Australia and their on-funded providers regarding Police Checks for any person, including contractors, prior to their engaging with young carers. Carers Australia should contact their Grant Agreement Manager in the DSS New South Wales State Office if they need further clarification regarding their Grant Agreement obligations.

## 2.8 Information technology

Not applicable

## 2.9 Activity performance and reporting

DSS focuses on outcomes; however, other information, not related to outcomes includes information that can be used to monitor ongoing operation of the grant recipient’s service delivery/project; and track issues that may affect the operation of the grant recipient’s service delivery/project.

DSS’s Performance Indicators focus on three key questions:

1) Are we achieving what we expected?

2) How well is it being done?

3) How much is being done?

Performance Indicators based on these questions may be included in the grant agreement for the grant recipient.

Performance against agreed targets for the indicators, and additional information needed to evaluate service delivery/project performance, must be reported in progress reports and a final report as outlined in the grant agreement with DSS.

Full details of reporting requirements will be listed in the grant agreement for Carers Australia.

### Activity Performance Indicators

As outlined in the Grant Agreement, Carers Australia has a target for the following PIs. Achievement against the target must be reported in progress reports.

* PI1 – Number of new and ongoing young carers assisted in the twelve month period

Target: Number of young carers assisted as reported in the previous financial year; and

* PI 2 – Proportion of young carers assisted from Indigenous and culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds

Target: 2% Indigenous and 8-10% CALD. Where the upper limit of the range has been achieved and/or exceeded in the previous year, this percentage is the target.

## 2.10 Financial Reporting

The activity will be managed to ensure the efficient and effective use of public monies. This will be consistent with best value in social services principles; the DSS Grant Agreement and will aim to maintain viable services and act to prevent fraud upon the Commonwealth.

Funding must only be used for the purposes for which it was provided.

## 2.11 DSS responsibilities and accountabilities under the activity

DSS will:

* Meet the Government’s terms and conditions of the grant agreement established with organisations;
* Ensure that services provided under the Programme are accountable to the Australian Government under the terms and conditions agreed in the grant Agreement;
* Administer the operation of the Programme in a timely manner;
* Identify suitable providers to deliver the activities required as per the Grant agreement;
* Work in partnership with the provider to ensure the Programme is implemented and will provide the service provider with constructive feedback; and
* Ensure that the outcomes contained within the Programme Guidelines are being met and evaluate the provider’s performance against the Programme outcomes.

## 2.12 Grant recipients’ responsibilities and accountabilities under the activity

In entering into a Grant Agreement with DSS, the grant recipient must comply with all requirements outlined in the suite of documents that comprise the Agreement including these Programme Guidelines, the Grant Agreement and the Standard Agreement Terms and Conditions (available at the [DSS website](http://www.dss.gov.au/grants-funding/general-information-on-funding/terms-and-conditions-standard-funding-agreement)).

Grant recipients are responsible for ensuring:

* the terms and conditions of the grant agreement are met;
* service provision is effective, efficient, and appropriately targeted;
* highest standards of duty of care are applied;
* services are operated in line with, and comply with the requirements as set out within all state and territory and Commonwealth legislation and regulations.
* ensuring Indigenous Australians have equal and equitable access to services;
* working collaboratively to deliver the Programme; and
* contributing to the overall development and improvement of the Programme such as sharing best practice.

## 2.13 Risk management strategy

The service provider(s) will be subject to a risk management assessment prior to negotiating a grant agreement with DSS.

Monitoring of service delivery will focus on addressing areas of risk that have the most impact on the Program outcome.

As part of the overall risk management strategy for the Program, DSS requires the service provider to:

* Identify and document risks in delivering services related to the program;
* Identify and document treatments to manage identified risk;
* Implement adequate and effective policies and procedures to manage risks through the grant period.

As part of DSS’s Common Business Model, funding agreements are managed according to a risk management approach.  Grant recipients are assessed by the Grant Agreement Manager and appropriate treatments identified.  Risks are assessed in regard to governance, financial management, viability, performance management and issues management.

## 2.14 Special conditions applying to this activity

Not applicable

# 3 Application Process

## 3.1 Overview of the application process

DSS is conducting a direct selection process for 1 grant recipient (Carers Australia) who manages the Information, referral and advice services component of the Young Carers Activity nationally. This grant recipient is meeting their grant agreement obligations and will recieve a grant agreement for the period 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2019.

The overall grant being distributed in this direct selection process is $1.836 million from 1 July 2016 until 30 June 2019.

# 4 Terms and conditions applying to Direct Selection

## 4.1 Liability issues

DSS is not liable to the applicant in relation to the selection process, including without limitation, when DSS:

* varies or terminates all or any part of the selection process or any negotiations with the applicant;
* decides not to acquire any or all of the services sought through the selection process
* varies the selection process; and/or
* exercises or fails to exercise any of its other rights under, or in relation to the Programme guidelines.

## 4.2 DSS rights

DSS reserves the right to amend the Programme guidelines by whatever means it may determine in its absolute discretion and will provide reasonable notice of these amendments.

## 4.3 Disclaimer

DSS, its officers, agents and advisors:

* are not, and will not be, responsible or liable for the accuracy or completeness of any information in or provided in connection with the Programme guidelines;
* make no express or implied representation or warranty that any statement as to future matters will prove correct;
* disclaim any and all liability arising from any information provided to the applicant, including, without limitation, errors in, or omissions contained in, that information;
* except so far as liability under any statute applies, accept no responsibility arising from errors or omissions contained in any information in this document and the application form; and
* accept no liability for any loss or damage suffered by any person as a result of that person, or any other person, placing reliance on the contents of these documents, or any other information provided by DSS.

## 4.4 Fraud

DSS is committed to the Commonwealth Fraud Control Policy and Guidelines. Applicants should familiarise themselves with the [DSS Fraud Control Policy Statement](http://www.dss.gov.au/grants-funding/fahcsia-fraud-policy-statement). The Fraud Control Policy Statement also underpins an Applicant’s respective fraud and risk minimisation responsibilities when dealing with the department.

One key responsibility outlined in the DSS Fraud Control Policy Statement is to report all fraud concerns by:

* leaving an anonymous voicemail message on the DSS Fraud Hotline (**1800 133 611)**; or
* emailing fraud@DSS.gov.au.

## 4.5 Personal Information

Any personal information you provide is protected under the *Privacy Act 1988*. It can only be disclosed to someone else if you have been given reasonable notice of the disclosure; where disclosure is authorised or required by law or is reasonably necessary for the enforcement of the criminal law; if it will prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to a person’s life or health; or if you have consented to the disclosure.

If you have questions or concerns about how your personal information is handled you can contact the Privacy Officer at DSS on 02 6244 1449, the Privacy Commissioner on 1300 363 992 (local call cost, but calls from mobile and pay phones may incur higher charges) or the Australian Government Privacy Officer by emailing: privacy@privacy.gov.au.

## 4.6 Freedom of Information

All documents in the possession of DSS including those in relation to the Programme are subject to the Freedom of Information Act 1982 (FOI Act).

The FOI Act creates a general right of access to documents in the possession of DSS and this right of access is limited only by the exceptions and exemptions necessary for the protection of essential public interests and private and business affairs of persons in respect of whom the information relates.

Decisions regarding requests for access under the FOI Act will be made by an authorised decision‐maker in accordance with the requirements of the FOI Act.

All FOI requests are to be referred to the FOI Coordinator, Public Law Branch, in DSS.

By mail:

FOI Coordinator

The Department of Social Services

Public Law Branch,

PO Box 7576

CANBERRA BUSINESS CENTRE

ACT 2610

By email:

foi@DSS.gov.au

For more information on making a request for access to documents in the possession of DSS under the FOI Act, visit the [DSS Website](http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/contact/freedom-of-information).

# 5 Financial and Other Arrangements

## 5.1 Financial arrangements

The Department uses standard grant agreements. Funding will only be provided in accordance with an executed grant agreement. The terms and conditions of DSS’s grant agreements cannot be changed.

The grant agreement will contain the entire agreement between the parties. There is no binding agreement on any parties until the grant agreement is agreed to and signed by the delegate and the applicant’s authorised representative.

The grant agreement is the legal agreement between DSS and the grant recipient over the grant period. In managing funding provided, the grant recipient must comply with all the requirements of the grant agreement.

*Grant recipients are responsible for ensuring that:*

* the terms and conditions of the grant agreement are met;
* service provision is effective, efficient, and appropriately targeted;
* highest standards of duty of care are applied; and
* services are operated in line with, and comply with the requirements as set out within all State and Territory and Commonwealth legislation and regulations.

Grant recipients should also be aware of any case based law that may apply or affect their service delivery.

The Terms and Conditions of the grant agreement are available on the [DSS website](http://www.dss.gov.au/grants-funding/general-information-on-funding/terms-and-conditions-standard-funding-agreement).

# 6 Complaints

## 6.1 Applicants/Grant Recipients

Applicants and grant recipients can contact the complaints service with complaints about DSS’s service(s), the selection process or the service of another of DSS grant recipients.

Details of what constitutes an eligible complaint can be provided upon request by DSS. Applicants and grant recipients can lodge complaints through the following channels:

* Telephone: **1800 634 035**
* Fax: (02) 6133 8442
* Email: complaints@dss.gov.au (link sends e-mail)
* Mail: DSS Feedback, GPO Box 9820, Canberra ACT, 2601

If an applicant or grant recipient is at any time dissatisfied with DSS’s handling of a complaint, they can contact the Commonwealth Ombudsman on 1300 362 072. Further information is also available from the [Ombudsman website](http://www.ombudsman.gov.au).

## 6.2 Client/Customer

It is a requirement of your grant agreement to have a **transparent and accessible** complaints handling policy. This policy should acknowledge the complainant’s right to complain directly to you, outline the process for dealing with the complaint and provide options for escalation both within your organisation and to DSS if necessary. Ensure that you provide information about your complaints handling policy and processes in all correspondence to guarantee it is readily available to the public.

# 7 Contact information

The primary contact for the Information, referral and advice services component of the *Young Carers* activity is the Grant Agreement manager in the DSS New South Wales State Office. Any enquiries in relation to this activity should be directed to that person in the first instance.