

It's about the individual person – your client

People from all walks of life use Home and Community Care services

People who use Home and Community Care services come from a range of backgrounds, cultures, circumstances and levels of abilities. Like everyone in the community people who use HACC services have a range of interests, capabilities and hopes. Home and Community Care services provide support that is based on each person's capabilities, needs and interests.

Who are the people you might meet?

Just as volunteers are made up of different people from different walks of life, the people who you may be working with will come from a range of different circumstances. This could include a person:

- who is young and has a disability
- who does not speak English at all
- who has dementia
- who is living in a same-sex relationship
- who is homeless
- who follows religious practices that are new to you
- who has been through life experiences such as war or migration



At the same time, you will meet people who remind you of people you know – your friends, neighbours, colleagues or family.

How do we make sure our support is suitable for people from all walks of life?

The Home and Community Care program has made many improvements to make sure that the support that is offered has been designed around the person's needs rather than trying to 'fit a person's needs into a service.' Everyone's individual circumstances and any special requirements are discussed with them when developing their care plan.

Some individual requirements that could be in a care plan include:

- any special needs for food preparation to meet the person's religious practices
- the best way for the person to understand and receive information if they do not communicate in English
- how to respect any household rules—for example not wearing shoes inside

A person's care plan can include support provided through a range of people and services. Family, friends, local community groups, doctors, and other health professionals may all work in partnership to provide the best possible support. Volunteers are an important part of this partnership.

Care plans vary depending on each person's circumstances and also what may be available in the local community. They can also vary as people's needs change.

How can I assist all the people I meet as a volunteer?

To be able to volunteer effectively with all clients, it is important that you:

- have an open and welcoming approach to all
- understand that individual beliefs and practices may differ from your own – or they may be the same – regardless this won't affect the services our clients receive
- see your client as an individual and do not make assumptions about them based on stereotypes
- see people's 'difference' to you as an opportunity to learn about new ways and new people
- discuss any concerns with your supervisor
- take up any training opportunities that will assist you in your role

Key messages

- Everyone is different – that is what is so interesting about working with people.
- Care plans take into account people's special needs and circumstances.
- Each care plan is centred around the needs of each person.
- Respecting each client for who they are, how they live, what is important to them, what they want to achieve and as an individual with their own unique life story.