

Community and Sector Engagement Policy

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Document number: SCS-PP-4008 Version 2.1

Approval

Policy owner: Executive Manager, Specialist Community Services

Business Unit: Specialist Community Services

Approved by: Chief Executive Officer

Date approved: 30/01/2019

Review date: 27/05/2023

1. Purpose

1. Specialist Community Services (SCS) understands the multi layered diversity, within the communities and service sectors it operates in. As such, it endeavours to connect to and, participate in the relevant communities/sectors at Governance, service, and consumer / client levels.
2. This policy is intended to communicate SCS' commitment to establishing and maintaining community, sector and organisational relationships that encourage and enable collaboration, that will ultimately contribute to the benefit of consumers/ clients of the service.

2. Scope

1. This policy applies to all staff who work in the following SVD PWA Specialist Community Services:
 - Mental Health Service
 - Tom Fisher House
 - Passages Youth Engagement Hubs
 - Housing Plus

3. Policy principles

1. SCS will carefully identify relevant forums, networks and activities to ensure that relevant service sectors are engaged with and, SCS is represented in these environments.
2. Attendance at community and sector activities will be consistent, planned, and, relevant to both service objectives and the SCS Strategic Operational Plan.
3. Community and sector activities will be attended by the most appropriate representative relevant to the level of participation and decision making required.
4. SCS will utilise the opportunities that volunteering provides as a means to identify and form strategic partnerships of mutual benefit to both parties, as outlined in the SCS Volunteer Framework.
5. SCS will communicate with communities and service sectors in an open and transparent manner, inviting pathways for continued dialogue, relationship enhancement and potential service level agreements where appropriate.
6. SCS will be proactive in efforts to participate in community and sector initiatives, rather than waiting for issues/challenges to arise.
7. SCS will use opportunities for community and sector engagement to communicate on behalf of and highlight the voices of those who are most vulnerable; that is, those who are typically most marginalised and the least vocal and/or visible members of the community.
8. Where possible, SCS will utilise community and sector engagement as a vehicle for influencing systemic change that is aimed towards the unique needs of the consumers/clients they work with, being heard and where possible met.
9. SCS welcomes community and sector feedback and views, considering that other perspectives are a valuable part of continuous improvement, particularly with regards to meeting the needs of consumers/clients.
10. In all community and sector engagement, SCS will participate in ways that are in line and reflective of, the SVPWA values and SCS practice philosophies.

4. Roles and responsibilities

1. The Executive Manager, Specialist Community Services is responsible for maintaining the currency of this policy.
2. Society representatives are required to adhere to this policy. Failure to comply may be considered a breach of our policies and may result in disciplinary action.

5. Review

1. This policy will be reviewed at least every two years, after consultation. Some circumstances may trigger an early review; this includes but is not limited to legislative changes, organisational changes, incident outcomes and other matters deemed appropriate by the Executive Manager.

6. Further assistance

1. Society personnel should speak with their Manager regarding any questions about the implementation of this policy.

7. References

References made in this policy are:

1. SCS Strategic Operational Plan
2. SCS Volunteer Framework

8. Related documents and legislation

Related documents and legislation at the time of approval include:

1. MHS Carer Engagement Plan - MHS
2. MKTFC-PP-3001 Media and Social Media Policy
3. SVDPWA-PP-1006 Conflict of Interest Policy
4. Homelessness Service Standards, *Department of Communities, Government of Western Australia*
5. The Carers Recognition Act 2004, *The Department of Justice, Government of Western Australia.*
6. The Mental Health Act 2014, *The Department of Justice, Government of Western Australia.*
7. The Charter of Mental Health Care Principles, *Mental Health Act 2014.*
8. The National Standards for Mental Health Services, *Department of Health, Australian Government.*
9. The Youth Work Code of Ethics, *The Association for Youth Work Western Australia.*

9. Approval and amendment history

Version	Approval authority	Date	Amendment summary
1.0	CEO	31/01/2019	Initial version
2.0	EM, SCS	27/05/2021	Scheduled review
2.1	EM, SCS	01/12/2021	Conversion to new template

10. Definitions

Term	Definition
Community Engagement	<p>According to the United States Department of Health and Human Services (2011), community engagement is “the process of working collaboratively with and through groups of people affiliated by geographic proximity, special interest or, similar situations to address issues affecting the well-being of those people” (p.7.)</p> <p>https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/community-engagement/what-community-engagement</p>
Service Sector	<p>The term "service sector" refers to an economic sector that, unlike agriculture and industry, produces no goods, but provides a service that satisfies a need. Education, health, finance, government, transportation, and trade are service sectors.</p> <p>https://www.encyclopedia.com/humanities/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/service-sector</p>
Stakeholder	<p>The international standard providing guidance on social responsibility, called ISO 26000, defines a stakeholder as an "individual or group that has an interest in any decision or activity of an organisation."</p> <p>Stakeholders may include suppliers, internal staff, members, customers (including shareholders, investors, and consumers), regulators, and local and regional communities. Additionally, stakeholders may include purchasers, clients, owners, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).</p> <p>https://asq.org/quality-resources/stakeholders</p>