

Your rights and responsibilities

A guide to help you understand your rights and responsibilities as a Queensland Community Support Scheme service user

What is the Queensland Community Support Scheme?

The Queensland Community Support Scheme (QCSS) provides supports to people who, with a small amount of assistance can:

- maintain or regain their independence
- continue living safely in their home
- actively participate in their community.

You may be eligible for the QCSS if you are under 65 years old (or under 50 years old for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people) with:

- a disability (and are not eligible for the National Disability Insurance Scheme)
- a chronic illness, mental health or other condition, or
- circumstances that impact your ability to live independently in the community.

Your rights

As a Queensland Community Support Scheme service user, you have a number of rights. Your provider should recognise your right to:

- be treated with respect and courtesy
- stay informed and be consulted
- be part of decisions made about your supports
- receive quality supports
- expect privacy and confidentiality
- have access to all personal information held about you by the provider
- have another person of your choice support you and advocate (speak for you) on your behalf
- have your comments and feedback valued
- make a confidential complaint if you are not happy with the supports you receive.

Your right to be treated with respect and courtesy

Your service provider must respect your ideas and the decisions you make about your life.

You can ask your service provider the following questions about this right:

- Will your staff ask my permission if they want access to my personal belongings, such as my clothes?

- Are staff expected to listen to what I have to say about my care?
- If I think that staff are not treating me with respect and dignity what can I do?
- Are staff expected to talk to me and members of my family in a respectful way?
- Who should I speak to in the organisation if I have any queries or problems?
- Who could I speak to outside of the organisation if I don't feel comfortable about speaking to an employee?
- How familiar is your organisation with my cultural background/religious beliefs?
- Will staff respect my cultural and religious beliefs?

Your right to be informed and consulted

As a Queensland Community Support Scheme service user, you have the right to be informed and consulted about the supports available to you and your rights as a service user.

You can ask your service provider these questions to help you get the most appropriate supports for your needs:

- What supports are provided?
- How will I be involved in planning the supports you provide to meet my needs?
- How often will I receive the supports, and for how long?
- Is there a cost for these supports?
- If I cannot afford the supports can I request a reduction in fees?
- Can I get the supports after hours or on weekends?
- Will I have the same staff each time?
- What happens if I don't take up the supports now and ask for it again later?
- Can I stop the service at any time, and how would I do this?
- Can I get a written copy of my rights as a client?
- Can I have the information in a language other than English?
- If my English is not good, can I have a family member or friend with me, or get access to an interpreter?

Your right to be part of decisions made about your supports

You have the right to be in control of the supports you receive by being part of your support planning and decision making process with your service provider.

Here are some questions you might ask your provider about this right:

- How will I be involved in developing the plan for my supports?
- Can I have someone of my choice with me during any discussions about my supports?
- If my needs change, will you review my support plan with me?
- Can I ask for a male or female worker?
- Can I choose a time that suits me to receive my supports?
- Will you advise me if there are any changes to my supports?
- How can I complain if I am unhappy about changes made to my supports?

Your right to receive quality supports

Your service provider needs to inform you about what supports it can and cannot provide. You have the right to receive well-planned and reliable supports.

You can ask these questions to help to receive the most appropriate supports for your needs:

- Will I receive a regular visit or phone call from my service provider to find out if I am satisfied with the supports I am getting?
- Will I receive a copy of information about the service provider?
- Do I get a copy of my support plan?
- Am I going to be consulted about any changes made to my supports?
- Is the service provider flexible about adapting supports to meet my needs?
- Will I be encouraged to speak up if I have any worries about my supports?

Your right to privacy and confidentiality

You have the right to privacy and confidentiality and the right to access information about you on service provider files. Here are some questions you might ask about this right:

- Can I get written information about my rights regarding privacy and confidentiality?
- What sort of personal details do you keep about your service users?
- Would you ever give my personal details to another service provider or to anyone else without my permission?

- Where do you keep my personal information?
- Is it secure? How do you make sure it is secure?
- Who has permission to access my file?
- Can I have access to my file?
- Who can I talk to if I feel that my privacy or confidentiality are not being respected?

Your right to an advocate

As a Queensland Community Support Scheme service user, you have the right to involve an advocate of your choice to represent you at any time. Your advocate can be anyone you wish, your partner, a family member, a friend or someone from an “advocacy” agency.

An advocacy agency can provide you with a person who can act on your behalf, with your permission. Service providers must accept your choice of an advocate.

Questions you can ask your service provider about your right to an advocate:

- Can I have a spouse or partner, family member, friend or person from an advocacy agency to represent me at any time?
- Can I get written information about my rights as a user of your services?
- Can I have my rights explained to me by an interpreter?
- Is there any independent advocacy agency that can tell me more about my rights as a Queensland Community Support Scheme service user?

The right to make a complaint

As a Queensland Community Support Scheme service user, you have the right to provide feedback about the supports you have received without fear of losing the supports or having them reduced.

Queensland Community Support Scheme providers are required to have clear, written policies for handling complaints. Service providers are required to make sure that you understand how these policies work.

You have the right to have an advocate of your choice to support you in making a complaint. If you are not comfortable talking to your service provider, you can talk to an advocacy agency.

Here are some questions you can ask your service provider about the right to make a complaint:

- Am I able to discuss any worries I have about the supports I am getting?
- Is there a particular person in your organisation who deals with complaints?

- Do I have to put my concerns in writing or can I talk to someone in person?
- Will my complaint be kept confidential?
- Will I risk losing my supports if I complain?
- If I am not satisfied with the result of my complaint, who else can I talk to within your organisation?
- Who can I go to outside of your organisation?
- Can I have a copy of your organisations policy and procedures for handling complaints?

Your responsibilities

As a Queensland Community Support Scheme service user, you have a number of responsibilities to the people providing supports to you.

You are asked to:

- notify your service provider about any changes to your circumstances that will affect the supports you need
- treat staff and volunteers with respect and courtesy. For example - let staff know as soon as you can if you are unable to keep an appointment
- provide a safe work environment for staff and volunteers. You can do this by helping staff provide you with your supports safely. For example – by making sure your dog is restrained; telling staff if there are any potential hazards like spills on the floor
- take responsibility for the results of any decisions that you make with staff and volunteers about your supports.

Need more information?

- Find out more about Queensland Community Support Scheme at www.qld.gov.au/qcss or call **1800 600 300** or email QCSSaccesspoint@ozcare.org.au
- To make a formal complaint to the Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors Complaints unit call **1800 491 467** (free call) or email feedback@communities.qld.gov.au or visit www.communities.qld.gov.au
- For further information about Advocacy supports visit www.qld.gov.au



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