

Applies to	Intereach workers. For the purpose of this document, the term “Worker” applies to all employees, volunteers, contractors, students and Directors.				
Version	1.1	Date approved	16/4/2025	Next review date	24/03/2026

1. Policy Statement

Intereach recognises its legislative and contractual requirements in relation to setting and implementing fees. We will ensure that fees are determined in a way that is transparent, accessible and fair.

Intereach commits to ensuring the sustainability of services through the application of fees that are clearly communicated, up-to-date, and applied consistently throughout Aged Care Services.

2. Scope

This Policy applies to participants receiving care and services within Home Care Package (HCP), Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) and Community Transport.

This Policy does not include Home and Community Care Program for Young People.

Intereach deliver approved services for Veterans Home Care (VHC) and collect a co-payment from the participant which is set by VHC. Co-payment is the participant’s contribution towards the cost of receiving these services and are outlined within the Participant’s Service Plan.

- Participants receiving services under VHC requiring further information around payments or fees are encouraged to contact Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) 1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372) or go to the DVA website dva.gov.au/VHCpaymenthelp.

3. Objective

The objective of this Policy is to ensure:

- fees charged are transparent and consistent;
- compliance with legislative and government requirements are met;
- individuals with the capacity to pay will contribute to the cost of the service in accordance with program guidelines; and,
- fair and transparent processes are in place so that individuals experiencing financial hardship are not excluded from services.

4. Definitions

- **CHSP** is the government subsidised Commonwealth Home Support Programme.
- **Client Contribution** is the fee the participant pays to Intereach for the services provided under the CHSP.
- **Basic Daily Care Fee** is an amount that everyone can be asked to pay, it applies to Home Care Package only. This fee is set by the government at a percentage of the single basic age pension; it varies depending on the Home Care Package level. The basic daily fee changes in March and September each year in line with the age pension.
- **Co-Payment Service** is a fee the participant pays to Intereach for services provided under VHC. VHC require the participant to pay a small contribution known as a co-payment.
- **DVA** is the Department of Veterans’ Affairs.
- **HCP** is Home Care Packages program, funded by the Australian Government.
- **VHC** is Veterans’ Home Care, a program funded through the Department of Veterans’ Affairs (DVA).

5. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of Senior Manager, Aged Care to:

- ensure fee collection processes are in place; and,
- comply with the *Intereach Privacy Policy* regarding financial and other personal information received, including in relation to the payment/non-payment of fees.

It is the responsibility of Aged Care Managers to:

- ensure that all participants are provided with the applicable fee schedule upon intake to the relevant program;
- comply with the *Intereach Privacy Policy* regarding financial and other personal information received, including in relation to the payment/non-payment of fees;
- notify participants within four weeks of any proposed changes to the fees charged or the way in which the fees are collected; and,
- clearly communicate fees and payment options to participants in a culturally sensitive way, and in the person's first language where possible.

It is the responsibility of the Finance Department to:

- ensure fee collection processes are followed including non-payment of fees;
- comply with the *Intereach Privacy Policy* regarding financial and other personal information received, including in relation to the payment/non-payment of fees;
- clearly communicate payment and financial hardship options available to participants in a culturally sensitive way, and in the person's first language where possible; and,
- ensure an appeals process is managed in a fair and transparent manner.

It is the responsibility of all workers to:

- comply with this policy and seek support and guidance from their direct manager or supervisor as required; and,
- comply with the *Intereach Privacy Policy* regarding financial and other personal information received, including in relation to the payment/non-payment of fees.

6. Policy

6.1. Principles

Intereach apply the following six principles across all Aged Care Services, when setting and implementing fees for participants receiving Aged Care Services where a charge applies. We have aligned our principles with the Department of Health and Aged Care, National CHSP Client Contribution Framework.

1. **Consistency** – All participants who can afford to contribute to the cost of their care should do so. Fees charged will not exceed the actual cost of service provision.
2. **Transparency** – Fees and charges are documented and presented in an accessible format and be publicly available on our website, given to participants prior to service and explained to all new and existing participants.
3. **Hardship** – The Fee Policy will include arrangements for those who are unable to pay the requested contribution.
4. **Fairness** – The participant's capacity to pay will be considered and should not exceed the actual cost to deliver the service. The Fee Policy takes into account partnered participants and participants in receipt of compensation payments.
5. **Sustainability** – The revenue from client contributions will be used to support ongoing service delivery and expand the services Intereach are currently funded to deliver.

In addition, HCP Fees are charged in accordance with the Home Care Package Program Operational Manual in line with Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care

compliance and regulations. Prices for all care and services must be reasonable and justifiable, ensuring they are value for money and consider the effort and resources it takes to coordinate them.

6.2. Fees

Fee schedules are made available to participants prior to providing services, for which a charge will apply. Fees are disclosed in the following fee schedules:

- Intereach Aged Care Support Fee Schedule;
- CHSP Support to Live at Home Fee Schedule;
- HCP Pricing Schedule; and,
- Community Transport Fee Schedule.

For HCP services the following is applicable.

- Intereach will update our current fee schedules within My Aged Care (MAC).
- Fees and charges are outlined within the HCP Agreement relating to the package level and inclusive of government charges and subsidies
- If services are required at levels above the value of the HCP subsidy, the participant will be asked to pay a contribution to make up this difference, unless another source of funding can be applied

For CHSP services the following is applicable.

- Intereach will report the total dollar amount collected from the client contributions as per the requirements of the Commonwealth Grant Agreement.
- Where two CHSP participants in the same household are partners, only one will be asked to contribute to services that benefit both participants e.g. domestic assistance. For personal services such as showers, each individual will be charged for the service they receive. Intereach will work with participants to ensure the best utilisation of funds to ensure financial burden is minimised.

All fees charged by Intereach are reviewed on an annual basis taking into consideration:

- community feedback;
- operational costs;
- the current market;
- annual Consumer Price Index (CPI) increases; and,
- program guidelines.

Participants will be provided with at least four weeks' notice of any changes to the fee schedule, with the exception of a reduction to fees. For HCP services no changes to the costs of a Home Care Package will be made by Intereach without consulting with the participant first.

Participants are expected to contribute to the cost for each instance of a service they receive, subject to their capacity to pay.

Where a participant has received (or is receiving) a compensation payment that is intended to cover some or all of the costs of home-based care, services and/or equipment, the full cost of the service/s will be requested.

6.3. Cancellation of services

Participants may cancel their services at any time and for any reason.

Participants must provide at least 24 hours' notice, during business hours of the cancellation of any services. Where a participant does not provide at least 24 hours' notice, Intereach will charge the fees in respect of the cancelled service.

6.4. Payment of fees

Participants are given choice regarding payment options and are provided with details upon intake and upon request.

All participants and their advocates have a right to query fees for which they have been charged. Any appeal in relation to fees is to be dealt with promptly, confidentially and in a fair manner.

6.4.1. Payment flexibility

Where a participant expresses an inability to contribute towards the cost of their service due to extenuating hardship circumstances, a confidential discussion will be held. Depending on the circumstances, a number of options may be considered and all reasonable attempts to negotiate will be made to arrive at a mutually agreed contribution. During this period, services will continue as usual unless otherwise agreed. Any agreement in relation to payment of fees will be provided in writing.

Applications for financial hardship will be assessed in a fair and consistent manner utilising a means-tested method considering the participant's income and assets in line with government guidelines. Assessment is undertaken by the Intereach Finance Department within 14 business days of receipt.

Appeals in relation to financial hardship decision must be provided in writing to the Finance Department, within 14 days of the decision. The decision is reviewed by the Finance General Manager and a final decision is made taking into consideration all information provided.

6.4.2. Failure to pay fees

Any participant who is identified as being in arrears of at least 30 days of the due date, without prior arrangement, will be contacted to explore the reasons for non-payment. If the participant is unable to pay the outstanding contribution amount, Intereach will review their ability to pay.

Where an agreement for outstanding contribution repayment cannot be reached Intereach may, at its discretion cease services, in this instance General Manager approval is required.

7. Context	
7.1. Standards or other external requirements	<p>Home Care Packages Program Operational Manual – A guide for home care providers (version 1.5, November 2024)</p> <p>Commonwealth Home Support Programme Manual 2024-2025 ((version 2, December 2024) (Appendix F – Guide to National CHSP Client Contribution Framework))</p> <p>Commonwealth Grant Agreement</p>
7.2. Legislation or other requirements	<p>Aged Care Act 1997 (Cth)</p> <p>Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)</p> <p>User Rights Principles 2014</p>
7.3. Reference Internal documents	<p>Support to Live at Home Fee Schedule</p> <p>Community Support Fee Schedule</p> <p>Home Care Package Pricing Schedule</p> <p>Community Transport Fee Schedule</p> <p>Financial Management Policy</p> <p>Feedback and Complaint Policy</p> <p>Privacy Policy</p> <p>Aged Care Services Participant Advocacy and Support Policy</p>

8. Document control			
Version	Date approved	Approved by	Next review date
1.0	24/03/2023	Quality Governance Group	24/03/2026
1.1	16/04/2025	Quality, Risk and Performance Governance Group	24/03/2026