Frequently Asked Questions

Caring Hands Advisory Group

What is the Caring Hands Advisory Group?

Southcare's Caring Hands Advisory Group provides Southcare's governing body and leadership with feedback from our participants about the quality of our care and services.

The feedback and guidance provided by the advisory group will be considered in our decision making around of Community Home Care services.

Our Caring Hands Advisory Group is another way we will be listening to you.

Why should you consider joining the Caring Hands Advisory Group?

We recognise that all those interacting and using our Community Home Care services have their own unique lifetime of experiences, knowledge and skills. We want to celebrate this by asking you to share your knowledge and use your voice to represent the views of our Southcare Stars to help improve and guide future Community Home Care services offered by Southcare.

Advisory groups can be very rewarding and interesting, and we hope you will enjoy the opportunity to get to know other Southcare Stars involved. You will have the opportunity to learn more about the aged care sector and reforms and know that your voice is valued and powerful in shaping the way we operate on a day-to-day basis. Hearing different perspectives and alternate views may be challenging at times, but it can also be a reminder of the diversity that exists within our communities, which is something to embrace and celebrate.

By joining our Caring Hands Advisory Group you get to connect with others, be involved, respected and challenged as you share your opinions and learn more about the aged care sector.

Who can be involved in the Caring Hands Advisory Group?

Participants, family members, carers and representatives of those receiving Community Home Care services from Southcare are eligible to join and participate in the Caring Hands Advisory Group.

We aim to include a broad representation of the people we care for and a balance of opinions and perspectives.

How will members be selected?

Our Caring Hands Advisory Group is open for expression of interest from any of our customers, family members, carers and representatives, though we may need to cap the total number of participants for the meeting.

Participants will be selected at random and based on:

- a balanced group that comes from diverse backgrounds, genders, services and lived experiences representing our participant base,
- able to actively participate and
- ability to be interviewed

Those who are not selected to attend the meeting, will receive updates and be able to contribute by providing feedback directly to Southcare via feedback form, and by completing our annual customer survey.

What is expected from you?

By participating you will be invited to share ideas, opinion and suggestions about

- The quality of Southcare's care and services
- The way Southcare engages with our participants
- How Southcare communicates with and provides resources
- Issues of concern and areas for improvement
- Feedback will be reviewed by Southcare and details provided to Caring Hands Advisory Group on how this information has been used

You will be invited to attend at least two meetings per year. We understand that your circumstances may change and will work with you if unable to participate as planned.

Whose view will you be representing?

As a participant of the Caring Hands Advisory Group you will be required to use your voice to represent the views of all our Southcare Stars.

For every customer, family member, carer and representative that attends our Caring Hands Advisory Group meeting, there are many other participants that are not there. We ask that you think about your role in terms of representing those who are not able to be present, as well as yourself.

Can my grievances be resolved by the Caring Hands Advisory Body?

No, this is not a forum for grievances or complaints.

The purpose of our Caring Hands Advisory group is to gather feedback about a range of topics and issues that are important to our customers and families in general, as well as topics that relate to the running of Southcare.

Individual's concerns will be managed through our complaints processes, and that will ensure our time in the Caring Hands Advisory Group meeting is dedicated to discussing issues that may be applicable to our participants.

If you have issues or concerns that have not been addressed or resolved, we invite you to raise the complaint with your Care Partner or feedback form on the Southcare Connect app or website here.

What information will you share with me?

An orientation pack will be shared with you that will include code of conduct and terms of reference.

To make the most of your participation, we will provide you with information ahead of the meeting about the topic(s) for discussion so you can have time to think about the details and what they mean to you.

We will not share any personal or confidential details with the group.

How will you ensure the meeting is fair and equitable in hearing everyone's voice?

We value and encourage diverse views and welcome open discussion.

An agenda will be provided outlining the topics that will be discussed ahead of the meeting to allow participants time to prepare for discussion. We will keep the meetings purposeful and structured enough to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to speak and learn from each other's perspectives.

It is important that all participants are heard at the meeting, so fairness, respectful behaviour, and turn-taking will be a high priority.

What if I no longer can attend the meeting?

If, for any reason, you are no longer able to participate reach out to your Care Partner or email Kathleen Sutherland, Executive Manager Integrated Care Services at kathleen.s@southcare.org.au. If you require support to participate, let us know how we can assist you or what adjustments we can make so you can stay involved.

What is the period of time I will be part of the Caring Hands Advisory Group?

You will be a member of the Caring Hands Advisory Group until you are:

- no longer a participant of Southcare, including family members, carers and representatives, or
- no longer wish to participate

Notify Caring Hands Advisory Group team, your Care Partner or email Kathleen Sutherland, Executive Manager Integrated Care Services at kathleen.s@southcare.org.au to request to be removed from the group.

How will Southcare use the information?

We will conduct our Caring Hands Advisory Group in line with the expectations of the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission.

The minutes and a summary of advice and feedback will be provided to the Quality Committee and Southcare Board for consideration and contribute to Southcare's plan for continuous improvement. The Quality, Clinical and Risk Committee will share relevant information and actions taken based on the advice to Caring Hands Advisory Group members and broader customer community.

It is at the Quality, Clinical and Risk Committees' discretion if the advice and feedback provided is implemented.

Additionally, as a group, we will review the Terms of Reference every now and then, to make sure the meetings reflect what you all agreed to initially. If not, then it might be time to review the Terms or change the way our meetings function, depending on the preference of the group and our organisation's expectations of the feedback we hope to receive.

Will I be compensated for attending the meetings?

Participation in the Caring Hands Advisory Group is voluntary, and members will not be paid for their time. However, we value your time and are very grateful for your participation and will recognise your time with a thank you gift.

We can arrange assistance and support you as much as possible for you to attend and participate in a meeting. Please advise the Caring Hands Advisory Group team of support you require.

What if I no longer want to be or no longer able to be part of Caring Hands Advisory Group?

We understand that your circumstances may change and will work with you if unable to participate as planned or if you no longer wish to participate.

Notify the Caring Hands Advisory Group team, your Care Partner or email Kathleen Sutherland, Executive Manager Integrated Care Services at kathleen.s@southcare.org.au to request to be removed from the group.