



Advocacy Policy

1. Purpose

The purpose of the Advocacy Policy is to provide guidelines for all employees as to the importance of advocates and that care recipients may request an advocate at any time. The policy outlines the steps that employees should take where an advocate is requested. The policy also outlines advocating for clients and supporting those clients, families and carers through accessing the required services.

2. Scope

The Advocacy Policy applies to all employees and board members of Southern Cross Care (Tasmania) Inc. (Southern Cross Care).

3. Definitions

Term	Definition
Advocate	A person acting on behalf of a body that has been paid an advocacy grant or a community visitors grant or any other person that has been asked by a consumer to act for them.
Advocacy	A process supporting a person to <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand and exercise their rights;• Have their voice heard on matters that are important to them;• Have their views and wishes considered in decision made about their life.
Business Hours	9 am to 5 pm, Monday to Friday, excluding Public Holidays
Consumer	A person receiving aged care services at their home or in an aged care home. For the purpose of this policy, a consumer also includes a person helping someone receiving aged care services. Aged care services include residential care, home care and flexible care.

4. Policy Statement

Southern Cross Care understands and acknowledges that advocacy provides a crucial means for consumers to understand and exercise their rights and as such is a crucial component in the prevention of and protection from abuse.

At all times the management and staff of Southern Cross Care will uphold the rights of consumers to have a person of their choice, including an aged care advocate, support them or speak on their behalf.

Consumers will be made aware of their right to seek an advocate, the role an advocate may play and advocacy services available to them. This information will be provided through the issue of a Client Information Pack prior to or when engaging the services provided by Southern Cross Care.



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It is the responsibility of Southern Cross Care staff to ensure that information about advocacy services is provided to consumers upon request.

Southern Cross Care will always ensure that other service providers, which it may use in the provision of its services, are aware of the rights of consumers.

5. Procedure / Link to Procedure(s)

Southern Cross Care will provide an advocate with access to its services as follows:

- At any time if a consumer receiving residential care services has asked the advocate to act for them; or
- During business hours in all other cases.

Southern Cross Care may request a letter of authority or similar from an advocate prior to providing access to its services or disclosing any personal information to the advocate. Verbal consent will be accepted if given in the presence of relevant Southern Cross Care staff and appropriately documented. The appointment of an advocate must be documented on the resident's file.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 Southern Cross Care

Facility Manager, Home Care Team Leader

6.2 Committees

Consumer Advisory Body

6.3 Others

Advocacy Tasmania

7. Supporting documents and References

7.1 Government legislation:

Aged Care Act 1997

User Rights Principles 2014

Charter of Aged Care Rights

7.2 SCC documents:

Client Information Pack, Feedback Policy

7.3 Other:

N/A

7.4 Policy Review and Implementation

This policy will be reviewed annually as a part of the ongoing review and continuous improvement of all of the organisations policies and procedures. In the case where changes to legislation and regulations that may impact this policy, a review will be carried out within 30 days of the change to legislation, regulation or other legislative requirements.