



# How to Respond When a Client Does Not Respond to a Scheduled Visit

## POLICY

## Purpose

The purpose of this Winton Shire Council (Council) Policy is to ensure there are protocols to deal with non-response from a client when a Community Care Services team member arrives to provide a scheduled service. This will ensure appropriate and timely action when a client does not respond to a scheduled visit to minimize the risk of an adverse event or may provide for an earlier discovery of a mishap.

## Scope

This Policy Document applies to Community Care Services team members, clients and/ or their representative/s.

## Definitions

Term	What it means / refers to
CEO	The person appointed to the position of Chief Executive Officer under the Local Government Act 2009, and anyone acting in that position.
Director	A person appointed in a Department Director level position.
Community Care Services	Including Support services funded by the Department of Communities, Department of Health, National Disability Insurance Scheme, Department of Human services
Client	A person who receives approved services from a service provider.

## Policy statement

The program will be flexible and responsive to the individual needs of each Community Case Services client considering all environments, locations and contexts. The following are important elements in ensuring the safety of clients.

## Operational elements

### An individualised approach

As part of the development of a service response, all clients will have a documented response and/ or process in place if they do not respond to a scheduled visit. This response will be based on assessment and individualised because each client's circumstance will differ. This response will be documented in the clients care plan, on staff rosters and any other appropriate service documentation.

### Ensuring client's safety

In the event of a client not responding to a scheduled visit, a client's individual Do Not Respond plan must be followed up to ensure they have not fallen, been injured or taken ill and still be in their home.

## Establishing levels of responsibility for each party

To ensure a timely and appropriate response to a situation where a client might be at risk it is important to establish the level of responsibility of the service provider, the client and staff.

1. Do Not Respond plans of clients are to be clearly documented and reviewed annually.
2. Do Not Respond plans will also outline reasons why a client may not respond if needed.
3. Staff are to follow Do Not Respond plans as documented on their roster.
4. Staff are to report to a supervisor immediately and/ or emergency contacts.

## Joint plans between providers where possible/ appropriate

Where possible and appropriate, the formulation of a joint plan among stakeholders where a client is receiving services from multiple providers is considered good practice. It is up to each individual service to determine the most practical approach in these situations.

## When a client does not want a planned response

If the client requests, the option of not having a Do Not Respond plan, it should be documented and respected. It is important to note that even when a client has requested not to have a Do Not Respond plan, staff who have concerns or where there is an indication that there may be something wrong, they should still raise their concerns with their supervisors.

## What kind of strategies are good to include in a planned response?

The program will work with clients and stakeholders to develop strategies that may be proposed to clients in developing their individualised Do No Respond plan taking into consideration client's history of falls, mental health problems, dementia or those who repeatedly miss scheduled visits.

This may include:

- Safe storage of a spare key with provider,
- Medialert Systems
- Daily phone calls
- The use of a coded key safe installed at the client's home.
- Referral to other providers such as Home Assist Secure for assessment and considerations of appropriate aids, for example. Key safe. Arrangements for this may be made by the service provider or by the client. The client's permission must be obtained as to whom and under what conditions the key may be accessed.

Service providers should identify with the direct care worker the most appropriate person to accompany them when entering a client's home. This may be a supervisor, neighbour, an emergency worker such as ambulance personnel, or a police officer.

## Roles and responsibilities

Winton Shire Council ensures processes and practices achieve an ongoing partnership with clients in the assessment, planning and review, and safe delivery of their care and services including the employment of staff both qualified and experienced in assessment and support planning.

Staff follow policies and procedures, participate in development opportunities, work to establish partnerships, and deliver safe care and services that address the client's current needs, goals, and preferences.

Clients and/ or their representatives support a partnership approach and provide input on their needs and preferences for care and services.

## Communication

This document will be provided to appropriate Community Care Services staff and will be referenced when making Do Not Respond plans.

## Legislation, recognised Authorities and other sources

- *Aged Care Act 1997*
- National Disability Insurance Practice Standards
- A Guide for Community Care Service Providers on how to respond when a community care client does not respond to a scheduled visit.

## Review of Policy

This document will be reviewed every two years and when associated legislation or standards change and remains in force until amended or repealed by resolution of Council.

## Record of amendments and adoptions

Date	Revision No	Reason for amendment	Date adopted by Council.
November 2023	Version 1.0	Initial document	16 November 2023