

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline how Silver Chain protects the privacy of individuals.

## DEFINITIONS

**Privacy:** The right of people to lead their lives in a manner that is reasonably secluded from public scrutiny.

## POLICY DESCRIPTION

Silver Chain in a position of trust within the community and as such we seek to protect the privacy of individuals in accordance with the National Privacy Principles within the Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000 (*Privacy Act*). The following Privacy Policy Statement seeks to identify how we manage and protect the information provided to us in accordance with the *Privacy Act*. Employees and volunteers are also required to adhere to '*Confidentiality Policy*' COR-POL-001 and '*Consent Policy*' CC-POL-018.

Supervisors are responsible for drawing the requirements of this Privacy Policy and the Confidentiality Policy to the attention of all new employees and volunteers.

Any material breach of this Privacy Policy or the related Confidentiality Policy will be considered gross misconduct and may result in termination of contract of service or in ceasing to be a Silver Chain volunteer.

### Purpose and Use of Information Collected

Silver Chain is a not-for-profit organisation that provides health and care services to those in need within the community. Silver Chain routinely collects individual's personal and sensitive information to ensure delivery of appropriate, timely and quality health and care services. In most cases this is to ensure delivery of appropriate health and care services that are tailored to the needs of the individual.

Employees or volunteers collecting personal information must explain the primary purpose for collecting information at the first instance of direct communication with the individual.

As a not-for-profit organisation we receive limited amounts of government funding and rely on public fundraising to support the provision of health and care services. As such we also use client names and addresses to forward a regular Silver Chain newsletter.

This newsletter contains information on the array of services available to clients and also provides the reader with details as to how they can support the Silver Chain Foundation in its fundraising activity. Clients can elect not to receive this newsletter, however most find it helpful.

### Information Collected

To enable delivery of health and care services we collect the following types of personal information:

- Name and address of a client.
- Health status of a client.
- Relevant demographic and social information.

- Name and contact number of any carers or relevant family members.
- Name and contact number of the clients General Practitioner and other relevant health care providers.
- The name and contact number of the agency or individual referring the client for care.
- The frequency and type of services and care we provide to clients.

To deliver holistic hospice care services to clients with terminal illnesses we also request information on client's religious affiliations to better support the delivery of chaplaincy services as and when required by the client.

### **Disclosure of Information**

There are several instances under which Silver Chain needs to provide personal information to other agencies:

- The first instance is where we need to provide another agency (contractors) with information to enable care to be delivered to the client and therefore the client's consent must be sought prior to this release of information. Silver Chain contractors are required to abide by the same confidentiality and privacy requirements as Silver Chain employees and this is clearly stated within their contract.
- A second instance occurs where for legal reasons, Silver Chain is has a statutory obligation to disclose certain information. (For example, subpoenas, warrants, coronial inquiries, and provisions of the *Freedom of Information Act* and *Guardianship Act*). Privacy Act establishes guidelines for the release of information under these circumstances. Refer *Release of Client Information COR-WI-001*.
- The third instance is where we provide de-identified information to funding agencies and government departments to meet contractual requirements. These reports usually provide de-identified information on the amount of care provided and the types of clients supported. De-identified information cannot be linked directly back to an individual.

In all other situations, the release of personal information relating to the client may only occur with the written consent of the client or legal guardian of the client.

Notwithstanding the above, the client has the right to withdraw consent to release personal information at any time. Ideally such communication would be in writing.

### **Keeping Information Up To Date and Accurate**

Silver Chain makes every effort to keep personal information up to date and accurate. This may mean that at times Silver Chain staff will review the personal information held and request verification as to its accuracy.

Individuals should contact the Customer Centre Officer on 9242 0242 to request access to aspects of personal information that Silver Chain might hold, or to notify Silver Chain of any changes or corrections.

### **Information Safety**

Silver Chain takes reasonable steps to secure the personal information in its possession. Refer *Information Security - Confidentiality and Privacy COR-POL-099* for further details regarding Information Safety.

## Access to Individual Information

Individuals can request access to all the personal information held by Silver Chain by contacting the Customer Centre on 9242 0242. This request will be evaluated as per the requirements and conditions of the *Privacy Act*. There may be instances where access is denied to certain record or aspects of records in accordance with the *Privacy Act*. Refer *Release of Client Information COR-WI-001*.

The Chief Executives' office staff will ensure the request is handled in a timely manner. It is reasonable to expect that extraction of the personal information required may then take up to fifteen working days due to the need to access both paper-based and computerised information systems. A nominal fee may be charged to meet the costs of extracting the information. This is at the discretion of the Chief Executive.

## Privacy Concerns, Complaints and Suggestions

Silver Chain is keen to ensure it adheres to the National Privacy Principles and protects the individual's right to privacy. The Client Liaison Officer should be contacted via 9242 0242 to lodge any concerns, complaints or suggestions. A response to a complaint, concern or suggestion will be provided within three working days. Where a complaint requires investigation, the findings of the investigation will be discussed with the complainant within ten working days.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

Please refer to your immediate supervisor or the General Manager, Information Management for further information on this policy.

## RELATED DOCUMENTS

<b>Policies:</b>	COR-POL-001 Confidentiality Policy CC-POL-018 Consent Policy
<b>Work Instructions:</b>	COR-WI-001 Release of Client Information