

<b>SERVICE DELIVERY POLICY NO.: 7:19</b>	
<b>POLICY TITLE:</b>	<b>Client Fees</b>
<b>DATE OF EFFECT:</b>	<b>January 2016</b>
<b>AUTHORISED BY</b>	<b>Management Committee</b>
<b>APPLICATION:</b>	<b>Staff and Volunteers</b>
<b>CROSS REFERENCE:</b>	<b>Policies: 6.2, 6.6, 7.1, 7.2, 7.4, 7.5, 7.6, 7.7, 7.9, 7.13, 7.17</b> <b>Home Care Standards:</b> <b>Standard 1: Effective management</b> <b>Standard 2: Appropriate access and service delivery</b> <b>Standard 3 Client rights and responsibilities</b> <b>Human Services Quality Standards:</b> <b>Standard 1: Governance and management</b> <b>Standard 2: Service access</b> <b>Standard 3: Responding to individual need</b> <b>Standard 4: Safety, wellbeing and rights</b> <b>Standard 5: Feedback, complaints and appeals</b> <b>Standard 6: Human resources</b>
<b>POLICY STATEMENT:</b> LIBERTY will abide by the principles and guidelines outlined by the relevant funding bodies with regards to the assessment and application of client fees.	

**PROCEDURES:****7.19.1 Client Fees**

- LIBERTY applies the Fees Policy principles of both the CHSP and CCP programme guides to address the issues of access, equity, affordability, user rights and privacy and to ensure that fees generated by both the CHSP and CCP are used efficiently and for the benefit of clients.

**7.19.2 Fee Schedule**

- Fees charged for support services provided by LIBERTY are set in accordance with the relevant fees policy (as above) and are revised annually in June/July for the next financial year. Current fee levels are shown in the LIBERTY Fee Schedule.

**7.19.3 Fee Reduction**

- LIBERTY recognises that some clients have a limited capacity to pay for support; however, the payment of a fee for service by clients who have the capacity to pay is endorsed. People who are assessed as being in need of support are eligible to receive support, regardless of their capacity to pay. Clients are informed of fee reductions in the Client Information Pack.

- In assessing client's ability to pay for support the following applies:
  - clients can nominate whether they wish to be considered for a fee reduction. Clear guidelines are available to indicate the circumstances where a fee reduction might be appropriate. In such circumstances, the clients may be asked to complete a Fee Reduction Form;
  - to assist clients, their general household circumstances are determined (whether they live alone, are part of a couple or family living together, live in a household of unrelated people or are in some other circumstance);
  - the Services Manager and relevant Supervisor takes into account any exceptional and unavoidable expenses the client may have, such as high pharmaceutical expenses;
  - the client is given clear instructions about whose income is to be assessed (single, or couple). This is identified on the Income Assessment Form. Information obtained about a clients' income is treated as private and confidential;
  - clients are asked to advise LIBERTY within 30 days of any significant changes in circumstances which may alter their status in relation to the payment/non-payment of fees;
  - in cases of hardship or where clients request assistance, the fee can be waived. Clients are advised and reassured that support will not be refused or withdrawn if they are unable to pay the fee due to hardship;
  - clients are advised of the result of their application for a fee reduction/waiver within 15 working days from the date of lodgement; and
  - the Services Manager makes the decision, after income assessment is submitted and reviewed.

#### **7.19.4 Refusal to Pay**

- Clients are sent reminders if they do not pay as arranged or if invoices are not paid in a timely manner. If a client is identified as being in arrears, without prior arrangement, the Services Manager or relevant Supervisor will contact the client or their representative to discuss the matter. The client is advised that they can have an advocate with them for this discussion. A payment plan or other arrangements are made to assist the client to meet their responsibilities regarding fee payment. Client financial circumstances are reassessed at this time; and
- If, after consultation the client refuses to pay, they are provided with a letter outlining the action that will be taken by LIBERTY.

#### **7.19.5 Appeals on Fees**

- Clients can advise the Services Manager and/or relevant Supervisor that they wish to appeal a fee determination. The Services Manager explores and documents the reasons for the appeal. Clients are encouraged to provide written information to support their appeal. The Services Manager and Supervisor will review the documentation and may meet with the client and/or their representative to discuss the appeal.

- The Services Manager will discuss the appeal with the General Manager. The decision of the General Manager is final and will be communicated to the client in writing within 30 days of the date of appeal. If the client or representative wishes to further appeal the decision, they may refer to the matter to an Independent Appeals Tribunal for decision; and
- No client will be disadvantaged or penalised as a result of lodging an appeal and if appropriate, fees will be reduced while the appeal is being considered (refer 7.20.3 of this policy).

#### **7.19.6 Invoices**

- The Administration Supervisor will ensure that invoices are issued at the end of each month and that, in consultation with the Supervisors, outstanding invoices are followed up on. Clients unable to pay can request a fee reduction or waiver.

#### **7.19.7 Fee Payments**

- The necessary information for fee payments is included in the Client Information Kit.
- Clients can pay their fees by:
  - direct debit (currently N/A);
  - cash to staff in the LIBERTY L&L program/ or at any time of service delivery - e.g. Home Services;
  - Centrepay (currently N/A);
  - cheque/post; and/or
  - direct bank deposit.

#### **7.19.8 Processing Fees**

- Fees are processed as follows:
  - a receipt/statement is issued to the client for fees received;
  - fees paid directly to the LIBERTY office are recorded in MYOB;
  - fees paid to the staff in the field are receipted in the LIBERTY receipt book provided and handed to the Supervisor or delegate at the LIBERTY office; and
  - fees paid by cheque or Money Order are received by the Administration Officer and or delegate, receipted, and entered into the HMS and MYOB.

#### **7.19.9 End of Month Check**

- At the end of each month the Administration Supervisor prepares a report on fees to check that no services have been charged twice and that all fees are appropriate and correct.

Policy reviewed: June 2016