



SUPPORTING CHILDREN  
WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS  
(SCAN)

HUNTER AND  
CENTRAL COAST

POLICIES AND STANDARDS

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# Supporting Children With Additional Needs (SCAN) Hunter and Central Coast

Samaritans is committed to ensuring that children with additional needs receive funding to provide them with much needed support.

This support will ensure the inclusion of children with additional needs. It will also provide for equitable access to Early Childhood facilities for all children with additional needs.

Samaritans will respect the confidentiality and privacy of all children, families, Service providers and records.

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# **STANDARD ONE: APPLYING FOR SCAN CONTRIBUTIONS**

# Standard 1.1

## APPLICATION PROCESS

### 1.1.1 Purpose and Scope

This policy guides eligible Services through the procedures to be followed when applying for Supporting Children with Additional Needs funding.

### 1.1.2 Definitions

**Co-ordination Team:** Refers to staff employed by Samaritans to oversee the implementation of the Scheme.

**Children with additional needs:** Are defined as children with a Disability, a Challenging Behaviour or children of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent (ATSI) or from a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Background (CALD).

**SCAN:** The acronym of the Supporting Children with Additional Needs Scheme.

**Service:**

**FOR HUNTER SCAN SCHEME:** Refers to any eligible Pre-school, Occasional Care, Vacation Care or other State funded projects.

**FOR CENTRAL COAST SCAN SCHEME:** Refers to any eligible Pre-school, Occasional Care, Vacation Care or other State funded projects, including some places in multipurpose services where these places are State funded only, and not eligible for Child Care Benefit (CCB).

**Resource and Information Manual:** Refers to the folder given to all Services, which provides details on Samaritans, the brokerage agency; the Co-ordination Team and the SCAN scheme. It also contains the scheme's Policies and Standards document and master copies of all forms associated with the SCAN scheme required by Services.

**Individual/ Project Application Forms:** Refers to the SCAN Application Forms as supplied in the SCAN Resource and Information Manual.

**Supporting documentation:** This refers to recordings of diagnosis, assessments and observations made about the individual child that identifies the main issues around which additional support is being sought.

**Valid supporting documentation must be from a relevant professional and should not be more than twelve months old.**

**Levels one, two, three and four:** Refers to the level of support the child needs. See Resource and Information manual, for definitions of support levels.

**Emergency Funding:** Refer to Standard 1.3

**Waiting List:** Refer Standard 1.2

**Samaritans website:** refers to [www.samaritans.org.au](http://www.samaritans.org.au)

### 1.1.3 Principles

**FOR HUNTER SCAN SCHEME:** Samaritans is committed to providing equitable access to SCAN funding for any State funded Pre-school, Occasional Care, and Vacation Care Services that are eligible under the Department of Community Services guidelines.

**FOR CENTRAL COAST SCAN SCHEME:** Samaritans is committed to providing equitable access to SCAN funding for any State funded Pre-school, Occasional Care, Vacation Care and Multipurpose Services that are eligible under the Department of Community Services guidelines.

### 1.1.4 Policy

Samaritans encourages Services to apply for funding on behalf of families in order to enhance the self-esteem, developmental and educational potential of the children with additional needs.

### 1.1.5 Procedures

#### Application types

Applications will be accepted under four categories – Individual, Project-Group, Project or Project-Cluster.

- **Individual** – This funding application is for an individual child, enrolled in a Service, who has been identified as requiring additional support to access the Service and program.
- **Project-Group** – This application is made by a Service that seeks to undertake a project that will assist a number of children who are enrolled in that Service and are identified as requiring similar types and/or levels of support to access the Service and program.
- **Project** – This application is made by a Service who wishes to undertake a project that will assist identified families and children in the local community to access the Service and program.

- **Project-Cluster** – This application is made by a number of Services that propose to undertake a joint project that will assist a number of children who are enrolled in these services and who are identified as requiring similar types and/or levels of support to access these Services and programs.

**[a] INDIVIDUAL APPLICATIONS:**

- The master copy of the Individual Application Form is found in the SCAN Resource and Information Manual and is also available on the Samaritans Website.
- Services should photocopy and complete one application form for each child they are seeking funding for.
- Sample application forms are included in the SCAN Resource and Information Manual for Services to refer to.
- Services seeking Level one support need to submit Sections one and two of the Individual Application Form. In addition:
  - for a child seeking funding under the ATSI target group, services must provide a photocopy of the relevant section of the Services Enrolment Form where the family has identified the child has an ATSI heritage.
  - for a child seeking funding under the CALD target group services must provide a photocopy of the child's passport or a photocopy of the relevant section of the Services Enrolment Form where the family has identified the cultural background, religion and language/s used by the child.
- Services seeking Level two support for a child need to submit Sections one and two of the Individual Application Form. In addition:
  - for a child seeking funding under the ATSI target group, services must provide a photocopy of the relevant section of the Services Enrolment Form where the family has identified the child has an ATSI heritage.
  - for a child seeking funding under the CALD target group services must provide a photocopy of the child's passport or a photocopy of the relevant section of the Services Enrolment Form where the family has identified the cultural background, religion and language/s used by the child.
  - services seeking Level two support for language only, are required to submit Sections one, two and, if needed, any other relevant sections of the Individual Application Form, or provide supporting documentation from a relevant professional/s. Services are reminded that supporting documentation can be no more than twelve months old.

- Services seeking Level three or Level four support:
  - for language, are required to submit Sections one, two and, if needed, any other relevant sections of the Individual Application Form, or provide supporting documentation from a relevant professional/s. Services are reminded that supporting documentation can be no more than twelve months old.
  - for a child seeking language funding under the ATSI target group, services must provide a photocopy of the relevant section of the Services Enrolment Form where the family has identified the child has an ATSI heritage.
  - for a child seeking funding under the CALD target group services must provide a photocopy of the child's passport or a photocopy of the relevant section of the Services Enrolment Form where the family has identified the cultural background, religion and language/s used by the child.
  - relevant supporting documentation is required for all Level three and Level four applications. Services are reminded that supporting documentation can be no more than twelve months old.

#### **[b] PROJECT APPLICATIONS:**

- The master copy of the Project Application Form is found in the SCAN Resource and Information Manual or the Samaritans Website.
- Services who submit a Project Application in Terms one and/or three will be funded for up to two terms.
- Services who submit a Project Application in Terms two and/or four will be funded until the end of that term.
- For each project for which funding is sought Services should photocopy and complete an application form.
- Sample application forms are included in the SCAN Resource and Information Manual.
- for a child seeking funding under the ATSI target group, services must provide a photocopy of the relevant section of the Services Enrolment Form where the family has identified the child has an ATSI heritage.
- for a child seeking funding under the CALD target group services must provide a photocopy of the child's passport or a photocopy of the relevant section of the Services Enrolment Form where the family has identified the cultural background, religion and language/s used by the child.

### **Application deadlines**

- The Co-ordination Team will accept applications up to week seven of Terms one, three and four; and up to the end of week five in Term two (due to SCAN accountability to Office of Childcare to distribute all of the SCAN grant by 30<sup>th</sup> June annually). If eligible for emergency funding the application will be processed; if not it will be put on to the waiting list.
- The Co-ordination Team must receive applications by the specified date. Each year the Co-ordination Team will advise Services of these application deadline dates on the SCAN Calendar.
- No late applications will be accepted after the deadline dates. Any applications received after this time will be placed on the SCAN Waiting List or considered for emergency funding if available.

### **Parent / Carer Consent Forms**

- A Parent / Carer Consent Form, regardless of the level or the type of application, must accompany ALL applications.
- If a child is being included in any type of project application as well as an individual application, only one Parent Consent Form needs to be attached, however ensure that the box 'Consent on File' is ticked on the Project Application Form.

### **Multiple applications**

- Services are unable to submit multiple applications for the same child citing the same area of need. For example, if a Service submits an individual application for a child with a language delay they may not also submit a project-group application for children with language delays and again name this child. This child cannot be eligible for language support on an individual and a project-group level.
- Funding will however be available if a child crosses two target groups. For example, in the case of a child who has a disability and an ATSI background, and the service has identified in its goals for the child that there are additional needs associated with both disability and ATSI background, funding for both target groups may be granted. Documentation will be required to support the disability and the enrolment form will be cited by the Co-ordination Team on a service visit to confirm ATSI background. In the case of a child who has a disability and challenging behaviours, supporting documentation will be required to support both target groups in order to access funding for both. Note, that if the challenging behaviour is associated with the disability, the application will be funded solely under the disability criteria.

## Supporting documentation

- SCAN will accept a photocopy of a current report for a child.
- Reports older than twelve months from the date of observation, assessment, diagnosis or team meeting are not acceptable under DoCS requirements.
- In the case of long-term conditions such as Cerebral Palsy or Down's Syndrome, a paediatric report can be forwarded. Also acceptable for all applications for the disability or challenging behaviour target group is a copy of the child's Individual Educational Program (IEP), Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) or the yearly report from the child's Early Intervention Service.
- It is the responsibility of the Service to ensure reports are updated. These are to be faxed or attached to either the Service Accountability Form or the Confirmation of Funding Form. Updated documentation can also be handed or mailed to the Co-ordination Team at any time.
- Supporting documentation must support the level of funding the Service is seeking for the child, eg a child receiving Level four support will need more than a Speech Pathologist's Report Form as updated supporting documentation.
- The SCAN Resource and Information Manual, contains information regarding which professionals may provide supporting documentation.
- Documentation for support of language delays/disorders must be either on the SCAN Speech Pathologist Report Form or a photocopy of a current report, which provides the results of a standardised test showing the percentile rankings and/or level of articulation/phonology delay/disorder.
- For a child seeking funding under the ATSI target group, services must provide a photocopy of the relevant section of the Services Enrolment Form where the family has identified the child has an ATSI heritage.
- For a child seeking funding under the CALD target group services must provide a photocopy of the child's passport or a photocopy of the relevant section of the Services Enrolment Form where the family has identified the cultural background, religion and language/s used by the child.

## Processing time

- The Co-ordination Team will take three weeks to process all applications and determine the distribution of funds. Notification to Services in writing will arrive in the final week of term.
- Emergency applications will be processed promptly if being funded or if being placed on the Waiting List services will be notified.

## Notification process

- Prior to the end of Terms two and four, the Co-ordination Team will notify all Services in writing of the funding they will receive for the forthcoming six months.
- The letter will itemise the funding allocated per child as well as the total distribution of funds for that half-year. Figures quoted will be exclusive of GST.
- Funding and notification for all Project applications will be on a termly basis.

## 1.1.6 References

- SCAN Policies and Standards
- SCAN Resource and Information Manual
- NSW Department of Community Services, Office of Childcare, Supporting Children with Additional Needs guidelines for identifying level of support needs.

## 1.1.7 Person Responsible

It is the responsibility of the Co-ordination Team to:

- support Service Authorised Supervisors or their representatives with any enquiries relating to the application process
- ensure that timelines specified in the Policy/calendar are adhered to
- ensure confidentiality of children and services details
- ensure application and Service details remain fully confidential
- ensure Application Forms and supporting documentation remain current and up-to-date
- ensure the equitable distribution of funds to Services within the region.

It is the responsibility of the Authorised Supervisor to:

- ensure supporting documentation remains current for all individual applications submitted
- ensure the correct procedures are followed when applying for SCAN funding
- seek support from the Co-ordination Team, if required
- ensure timelines are adhered to.

## **1.1.8 Implementation and Evaluation**

The Co-ordination Team will review procedures annually from Service Feedback Forms as part of this process.

## **1.1.9 Documentation**

Project and Individual Application Form, Definition of Terms and Definition of Support Levels are in the SCAN Resource and Information Manual.

## Standard 1.2

# WAITING LIST

### 1.2.1 Purpose and Scope

This policy explains the Waiting List procedures associated with the Supporting Children with Additional Needs Scheme.

### 1.2.2 Definitions

**Waiting List:** Any application that has been unsuccessful in obtaining funding is kept on the Waiting List.

**Emergency funds:** Refer to Standards 1.3

**Samaritans Website:** Refer [www.samaritans.org.au](http://www.samaritans.org.au)

### 1.2.3 Principles

Samaritans recognises its obligation to provide support to as many children with additional needs as is possible. It strives to establish systems that will ensure all applicants will be considered for funding.

### 1.2.4 Policy

Samaritans acknowledges that children's needs cannot always be identified and supported within the timelines of the scheme. Therefore, the establishment of the waiting list system ensures that all children's applications are processed quarterly or as funds become available.

### 1.2.5 Procedures

- At the completion of each term's processing phase any children who were unsuccessful in obtaining funding will be placed on the Waiting List for later consideration.
- If any funds become available during the course of the year, this money will be added to the Emergency Funding Pool and the Co-ordination Team staff will distribute the money to the next eligible Level four or Level three application on the Waiting List.
- The Service will be contacted immediately by phone to confirm if additional funding is still required. Confirmation paperwork will be forwarded immediately and money will be credited to the Service's account.

- Throughout the year, as new children enrol or other children's needs become more obvious, Services are encouraged to submit applications. These applications will also be placed on the Waiting List for future consideration, if Emergency Funding is not available.
- At the beginning of week six of Term two, any emergency funds that have not been utilised will be allocated. Again, Co-ordination Team staff will access the Waiting List to determine the priority of allocation.
- Services are required to notify the Co-ordination Team of any changes to the status of any child on the Scheme's Waiting List.
- Waiting List applications will be reviewed and processed at the end of each quarter if adequate emergency funding is available.

## 1.2.6 References

- SCAN Policies and Standards
- SCAN Resource and Information Manual
- NSW Department of Community Services, Office of Childcare, Supporting Children with Additional Needs guidelines for identifying level of support needs.

## 1.2.7 Person Responsible

It is the responsibility of the Co-ordination Team to:

- maintain the Waiting List
- ensure new applications are placed onto the Waiting List and database
- ensure Waiting List details are kept confidential
- consult the Waiting List should funds become available.

It is the responsibility of the Authorised Supervisor to:

- advise the Co-ordination Team if the details of children on the Waiting List change
- understand that late, unsuccessful or mid-term applications may be placed on the Waiting List for consideration.

## **1.2.8 Implementation and Evaluation**

The Co-ordinator will ensure that Waiting List procedures are followed.

## **1.2.9 Documentation**

The Waiting List will be maintained at the Co-ordination Team office.

## Standard 1.3

# EMERGENCY APPLICATIONS

### 1.3.1 Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to guide Service Authorised Supervisors through the emergency application procedure for those children in their Services who require level four or Level three support.

### 1.3.2 Definitions

**Levels three and four:** Refer to Definitions of Support Levels in the SCAN Resource and Information Manual.

**Samaritans Website:** Refer [www.samaritans.org.au](http://www.samaritans.org.au)

### 1.3.3 Principles

Samaritans recognises that at any time during the year Services may find themselves needing to support a child new to their Service or who has recently obtained documentation that supports the higher level support needs of a child. Therefore, systems have been established to address this need.

### 1.3.4 Policy

Samaritans encourages Services to apply for emergency funds throughout the year for any child that requires a high level of support. Samaritans recognises that families in crisis require special attention and has developed procedures to identify and respond to children with support needs.

### 1.3.5 Procedures

- An emergency pool will be set aside for the purpose of supporting Services who enrol a child with Level four or three support needs during the course of the year.
- Should the emergency funding pool be depleted, any funding returning to the Scheme, will be used to fund the next eligible application on the Waiting List.
- Services who identify an immediate need for support are able to submit an application at any time. The Co-ordination Team will consider this application, and a prompt response will be forwarded to the Service.
- Emergency applications will only be considered for children who are eligible for Level three or four support.

- Any emergency funds not allocated by the beginning of week six of Term two, will be distributed in accordance with our priority levels on the Waiting List.
- Services should not presume that funding for children with high support needs will be guaranteed, as the provision of emergency funds is dependent on money being available.
- The allocation of emergency fund is dependant upon funds being available.

#### **FOR THE HUNTER SCAN SCHEME:**

- If supporting documentation is not available, five weeks funding may be distributed, allowing time to pursue documentation.
- If five weeks funding is approved, emergency funding will be set aside for that child, to cover the remaining weeks of that funding period. If after the five week period supporting documentation is not produced, that money will return to the emergency funding pool.
- Services requesting emergency funds without any supporting documentation may receive a visit from the Co-ordination Team to verify the child's needs.

#### **Availability of Emergency Funding**

- It is recommended services contact the Co-ordination Team prior to enrolling or varying the enrol details of a child funded at Level three or four, especially if the service is dependent upon SCAN funding for that child's inclusion.

### **1.3.6 References**

- SCAN Policies and Standards
- SCAN Resource and Information Manual
- NSW Department of Community Services, Office of Childcare, Supporting Children with Additional Needs guidelines for identifying level of support needs.

### **1.3.7 Person Responsible**

It is the responsibility of the Co-ordination Team to:

- ensure emergency funds are set aside and monitored closely
- distribute unused funds in week six of second term
- in the SCAN-it newsletter, advise services when emergency funding pool has been depleted
- emergency applications will only be considered for children who are eligible for Level three or four support.

It is the responsibility of the Authorised Supervisor to:

- understand that emergency funds are available to children with Level three and Level four support needs only
- understand that no funding is guaranteed and is entirely dependent upon available funds
- contact the SCAN Co-ordination Team before enrolling new children or offering existing days to funded children, especially if your service is dependent upon SCAN funds to support the child within the service.

### **1.3.8 Implementation and Evaluation**

Clear guidelines exist for Service staff and the Co-ordination Team to follow.

### **1.3.9 Documentation**

Individual Application Form, Definition of Terms and Definition of Support Levels are in the SCAN Resource and Information Manual.

# **STANDARD TWO: ACCOUNTABILITY**

## Standard 2.1

# ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES

### 2.1.1 Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to outline the accountability measures Samaritans has placed on the funding received from the Department of Community Services for the SCAN Scheme.

### 2.1.2 Definitions

**Service Accountability Forms A and B - Individual:** Refers to the Service Accountability Form A and Form B for individual applications in the SCAN Resource and Information Manual or Samaritans Website.

**Service Accountability Form - Project:** Refers to the Service Accountability Form for Project applications in the SCAN Resource and Information Manual or Samaritans Website.

**Confirmation of Funding Form - (for Individual Applications only):** Refer to the SCAN Resource and Information Manual or Samaritans website.

**Samaritans website:** Refers to [www.samaritans.org.au](http://www.samaritans.org.au)

### 2.1.3 Principles

Samaritans is committed to providing a fair and equitable brokerage model to Services within its demographic area.

### 2.1.4 Policy

Samaritans is committed to the fair and equitable provision of funds in accordance with its social justice ethos. This is achieved by the funds being allocated in a way that will achieve the best outcomes for children with additional needs.

## 2.1.5 Procedures

### Audited Statements

- Audited statements are not required by the SCAN Co-ordination Team.
- Services are however; reminded that under DoCS licensing requirements they are required to provide an audited statement at the end of their financial year.
- This statement should clearly show a line entry for SCAN income and SCAN expenditure, as this information will be provided to DoCS by the SCAN Co-ordination Team.

### Service Accountability Forms

- All Services receiving SCAN funding will be required to submit Service Accountability Forms three weeks prior to the end of the financial and calendar years (Terms two and four). Due dates will be provided to Services on the SCAN Calendar. It is acknowledged that Services will be required to project expenditure for the final three weeks of term owing to the SCAN cut off date for return of Service Accountability Forms. The Certification of Funding by the Management Committee members should be signed off on the evidence of the projected expenditure.
- Funding for the Services forthcoming Term one or three is dependent upon Services completing and forwarding the Service Accountability Forms to the SCAN Co-ordination Team. Late receipt of Accountability Forms may jeopardise funding for the following term.

### [a] INDIVIDUAL APPLICATIONS:

- The Service Accountability Form is divided into two parts – Form A and Form B.
- Every child who has received any individual funding MUST be accounted for on both Service Accountability Forms.
- Up to four children can be accounted for on Form A, while up to twelve children can be accounted for on Form B.
- Form A must be approved by the Authorised Supervisor but can be completed by any designated employee.
- Form B is to be certified by the Service's/or Organisation's Management Committee.
- Services are required to account for monies spent on each individual child's application during the previous six month period.

- Only the amount of the SCAN contribution needs to be accounted for on Form B. Additional contributions from Services are not required to be recorded.
- Receipts for goods purchased do not need to be forwarded to the Co-ordination Team, but may need to be produced for the SCAN Team at a Service visit.
- Expenditure of the contribution must reflect what Services indicated they would spend funds toward on the most recent Service Accountability or Confirmation of Funding Forms. For example, Services who used SCAN funds to purchase equipment but did not tick the equipment section on the forms may be required to reimburse those funds.

**[b] PROJECT-GROUP/PROJECT/PROJECT - CLUSTER APPLICATIONS:**

- One accountability form is to be completed for each Project-Group or Project Application funded by SCAN.
- For a funded Project-Cluster application, one accountability form must be provided from each Service, accounting for their portion of funds.

**Confirmation of Funding Form**

- A completed Confirmation of Funding Form is required three weeks prior to the end of Term one and Term three. Due dates will be provided to Services on the SCAN Calendar.
- Every child who has received any individual funding MUST be accounted for on the Confirmation of Funding Forms.
- Up to five children can be accounted for on the one Form.
- The Confirmation of Funding Form must be approved by the Authorised Supervisor but can be completed by any designated employee.
- The Form requests confirmation details of the child's enrolment for the forthcoming term.
- Funding for the Service's forthcoming Term two or four will not be considered until the Confirmation of Funding Form has been received by the Co-ordination Team. Late receipt of the Confirmation of Funding Forms may jeopardise funding for the following term.

## 2.1.6 References

- SCAN Policies and Standards
- SCAN Resource and Information Manual
- NSW Department of Community Services, Office of Childcare, Supporting Children with Additional Needs guidelines for identifying level of support needs.

## 2.1.7 Person Responsible

It is the responsibility of the Co-ordination Team to:

- advise Services of the due dates for the Service Accountability Forms and the Confirmation of Funding Forms
- maintain a database that ensures compliance with internal accountability structures and processes.

It is the responsibility of the Authorised Supervisor to:

- ensure the Service Accountability Forms and Confirmation of Funding Forms are returned to the Co-ordination Team by the required date
- ensure all details on the form are completed accurately
- sign the Service Accountability Form and the Confirmation of Funding Forms.

It is the responsibility of the Management Committee to:

- ensure two members sign the Service Accountability Forms.

## 2.1.8 Implementation and Evaluation

Procedures are clearly outlined for Service staff to follow.

## 2.1.9 Documentation

- SCAN Resource and Information Manual
- Audited Statements.

## Standard 2.2

# ACCOUNTABILITY OF THE CO-ORDINATION TEAM

### 2.2.1 Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that transparent accountability measures are in place to ensure efficiency and accuracy by the Co-ordination Team.

### 2.2.2 Definitions

**Transaction List:** A form used to record all SCAN transactions that occur, including, available Emergency Funding pool funds.

**Accounts Payable Form:** A form sent to the Samaritans Finance Department advising payments to Services.

**Accounts Receivable Form:** A form sent to the Samaritans Finance Department advising of funds that need to be recouped from Services.

**Term Funding Notification List:** A form sent to the Samaritans Finance Department at the end of each term advising of Service's quarterly payments for the forthcoming term.

**Change of Enrolment Details Form:** A form completed by Services advising the Co-ordination Team of variations to a child's enrolment. Refer to the SCAN Resource and Information manual or Samaritans Website.

**Funding Spreadsheet:** A spreadsheet designed to calculate funding levels.

**Samaritans website:** Refers to [www.samaritans.org.au](http://www.samaritans.org.au)

### 2.2.3 Principles

Samaritans is committed to ensuring an accountability process for its SCAN Co-ordination Team that meets the requirements of its funding body and any internal or external audit process.

### 2.2.4 Policy

Samaritans considers the recommendations of external agencies that assist the SCAN scheme develop funding controls.

## 2.2.5 Procedures

### SCAN Annual budget

- The Co-ordinator will prepare a draft budget in January each year.
- This draft budget will be forwarded to the Children's Services Area Co-ordinator and to the Manager, Community and Children's Services.
- The SCAN budget will then be approved in line with the Samaritans Budget Preparation Policy.

### Budget reviews

- Budget reviews will occur each month upon receipt of the scheme's Profit and Loss Statement, or as required.
- If a budget adjustment is required, an email is to be forwarded to the Children's Services Area Co-ordinator, giving full details.
- The Children's Services Area Co-ordinator will liaise with the Samaritans Finance Department and advise the SCAN Co-ordinator of the outcome.
- The SCAN Co-ordinator will make any approved budget adjustments.
- In accordance with SCAN Guidelines, the budget will be monitored closely toward the end of the financial year in order for the Co-ordinator to distribute all of the SCAN brokerage funds.

### Quarterly Payments

#### [a] AT THE END OF TERMS TWO AND FOUR:

- After the Co-ordination Team has processed new applications and Service Accountability Forms, data is to be entered on to the schemes' Funding Calculation Form.
- Once proposed funding levels for the next six months have been determined, the Funding Spreadsheet is to be sent to the Children's Services Area Co-ordinator for approval.
- When approval is received, data is to be recorded on the Term Funding Notification List then forwarded to Samaritans Finance Department. The Finance Department will seek authorisation of the Manager, Community and Children's Services, prior to processing.

**[b] AT THE END OF TERMS ONE AND THREE:**

- After the Co-ordination Team has processed new applications and Confirmation of Funding Forms, any proposed changes are to be forwarded to the Children's Services Area Co-ordinator for approval.
- When approval is received, data is to be recorded on the Term Funding Notification List then forwarded to Samaritans Finance Department. The Finance Department will seek authorisation of the Manager, Community and Children's Services, prior to processing.

**Mid term adjustments**

- When variations occur to a child's enrolment mid-term, the Service forwards a Change of Child Enrolment Details Form to the Co-ordination Team, advising of the changes.
- The Co-ordination Team will process the Change of Child Enrolment Details Form. This will entail calculating variations to funding, issue the Service with an updated letter, updating the database and recording changes on the SCAN Transaction List.
- All adjustments and calculations are to be checked, initialled and dated by a second Samaritans employee before processing can continue.
- Any variations to funding are to be transferred to the Samaritans Accounts Payable Form or Samaritans Accounts Receivable Form. This form is checked, signed and dated by a second Samaritans employee. Co-ordinators may sign off for amounts indicated under Samaritans delegations.
- Funding totals that exceed delegation are to be forwarded to either the Children's Services Area Co-ordinator, or to the Samaritans Finance Department (who will organise for the appropriate authorisation), depending on the funding total.
- As a cross-check, the Co-ordinator will send an email to Samaritan's Finance Department advising the amount of the pending Accounts Payable or Accounts Receivable advice.

**Processing of applications**

- All applications are read and given a level of funding. The Children's Services Area Co-ordinator undertakes a random sample review during each processing period.

**Audited statements**

- In line with the Samaritans funding agreement with DoCS, a copy of the SCAN audited statement must be forward to DoCS each year.

### **Internal and external audits**

- As a part of the Samaritans commitment to ensuring transparent practices, SCAN may be required to undergo an internal audit by Samaritans Accountants or an external audit by an agency engaged by Samaritans.

## **2.2.6 References**

- SCAN Policies and Standards
- Samaritans Policies and Standards
- NSW Department of Community Services, Office of Childcare, Supporting Children with Additional Needs guidelines for identifying level of support needs.

## **2.2.7 Person Responsible**

It is the responsibility of the SCAN Co-ordinator to:

- prepare a draft budget at the beginning of each year and forward it to the Children's Services Area Co-ordinator, the Manager, Children and Employment Services and the Samaritans Finance Manager.
- review the Profit and Loss Statements on a monthly basis and provide feedback to the Children's Services Area Co-ordinator if there are any concerns or adjustments required
- input data onto the Funding Calculation Form and determine funding levels at the end of Term two and four, once processing of applications has been completed. Calculations are to be forwarded to the Children's Services Area Co-ordinator for approval
- The Co-ordinator will transfer service funding totals to the Term Funding Notification List and forward to the Finance Department when approved
- As required, the Co-ordination Team will transfer all changes from the Transaction List to the Samaritans Accounts Payable Form and/or Samaritans Accounts Receivable Form. Arrange for a second Samaritans employee to cross check, sign and date the form. Delegation requirements are to be followed before forwarding to Samaritans Finance Department.

It is the responsibility of the Co-ordination Team staff to:

- ensure that all paperwork has been processed, initialled and dated by a second Samaritans employee.

It is the responsibility of the Children's Services Area Co-ordinator to:

- review the draft budget submitted by the SCAN Co-ordinator at the end of each year and provide feedback to the Manager, Children and Employment Services
- review the Profit and Loss Statements on a monthly basis and seek clarification from the SCAN Co-ordinator if there are any concerns
- liaise with the Finance Department if any discrepancies or adjustments are required, on behalf of the SCAN Co-ordinator. Provide feedback to the Co-ordinator regarding the outcomes of those discussions.

It is the responsibility of the Manager, Community and Children's Services to:

- review the draft budget submitted by the SCAN Co-ordinator at the end of each year and seek clarification or provide feedback to the Area Co-ordinator before proceeding with the Samaritans Budget Preparation Policy.

It is the responsibility of the Finance Department to:

- approve the SCAN budget in line with Samaritans Policies and Procedures
- prepare and distribute Profit and Loss Statements each month and be receptive to issues raised or requests for adjustments from the Children's Services Area Co-ordinator.
- as required, process funding requests from the SCAN Co-ordination Team
- according to Samaritans delegation Policies and Procedures, seek the signature for authorisation from the appropriate member of the senior management team
- facilitate an annual external audit of the SCAN scheme
- facilitate an internal audit review of the system used by the SCAN scheme, when required
- forward the required documents to DoCS in line with licensing requirements.

## 2.2.8 Implementation and Evaluation

Procedures are clearly outlined for all parties involved.

## 2.2.9 Documentation

- SCAN Resource and Information Manual
- Transaction List
- Accounts Payable Form
- Accounts Receivable Form
- Term Funding Notification List
- Change of Enrolment Details Form
- Funding Calculation Form
- Audited Statement

# **STANDARD THREE: BROKERAGE FUNDS**

## Standard 3.1

# PAYMENT OF CONTRIBUTIONS TO SERVICES

### 3.1.1 Purpose and Scope

This policy informs Services of the procedures Samaritans will follow regarding the notification and distribution of SCAN funds to the successful Services.

### 3.1.2 Definitions

**Service Profile Form:** Refer to the SCAN Resource and Information Manual.

**Conditions of Funding Agreement:** An agreement signed annually by the Samaritans Foundation and the Service/Organisations Management Committee, which outlines the obligations of both parties.

### 3.1.3 Principles

Samaritans utilises the skills of their professional finance team, who will ensure the payment of funds to Services.

### 3.1.4 Policy

Samaritans has clearly defined accounting procedures that will be used to ensure the distribution of funds is carried out professionally and accountably.

### 3.1.5 Procedures

#### Conditions of Funding Agreement

- All Services will be required to enter into a Conditions of Funding Agreement annually between Samaritans and their Service.
- Council-run Services, K.U. Children's Services and Co-operatives will be able to submit one Agreement covering all their Services.
- All Conditions of Funding must have the organisation's Common Seal (United Church affiliated Services are exempt) and is to be signed by authorised representatives.
- Two copies of the Conditions of Funding document will be forwarded to services during Term four, one marked Samaritans Copy the other Service Copy. Both copies of the Conditions of Funding Agreements should be returned for Samaritans representatives to sign. A copy will then be returned to each Service for your records.

### Payment of Contribution

- Services will receive a notification letter during the final week of Terms two and four, explaining exactly what funding amounts they will receive for the following six months. The letter will itemise funding allocations per child and/or project, as well as the total figure, which will exclude GST.
- Should any variations occur throughout the year an updated funding letter will be sent to the Service.
- Children will be funded in accordance with the yearly operating period of the Service which they attend.
- Services will be paid electronically by Samaritans Finance Department prior to the commencement of each term. The payment date will be shown on the SCAN calendar.
- All payments made by the Samaritans Finance Department are inclusive of GST.
- After Samaritans Finance Department has electronically credited the Service's account, a Recipient Created Tax Invoice will be forwarded to each Service in order for Services to pay the GST component.
- If a Service's bank account details change, the Co-ordination Team must receive an updated Service Profile Form, as soon as possible. This will be forwarded to the Samaritans Finance Department.

### 3.1.6 References

- SCAN Policies and Standards
- SCAN Resource and Information Manual
- NSW Department of Community Services, Office of Childcare, Supporting Children with Additional Needs guidelines for identifying levels of support needs.

### **3.1.7 Person Responsible**

It is the responsibility of the Co-ordination Team to:

- ensure Samaritans Finance Department is advised of Service EFT details and any changes that may occur
- provide Samaritans Finance Department with a list of Service names and the amount they are to be paid, including a GST breakdown and the date they are to be paid
- provide Services with a letter itemising their half yearly funding amount, and detail payment dates on the SCAN calendar
- forward updated funding letters to Services who experience funding variations throughout the term.

It is the responsibility of the Authorised Supervisor to:

- ensure the Co-ordination Team has the correct bank account and contact details of the Service.

### **3.1.8 Implementation and Evaluation**

Financial audits will occur.

### **3.1.9 Documentation**

- Financial records are maintained.
- Conditions of Funding Agreement.

## Standard 3.2

# VARIATIONS TO CONTRIBUTIONS

### 3.2.1 Purpose and Scope

This policy guides Authorised Supervisors through the procedures to be followed if situations arise resulting in some variations to funding.

### 3.2.2 Definitions

**Change of Enrolment Details Form:** Refer to the SCAN Resource and Information Manual and Samaritans website.

**Samaritans website:** Refers to [www.samaritans.org.au](http://www.samaritans.org.au)

### 3.2.3 Principles

Samaritans is committed to ensuring a fair and equitable system is established for all eligible Services to access. In order to ensure a fair system, measures have been developed to make sure that no Service is to be treated unfairly.

### 3.2.4 Policy

Samaritans encourages Services to utilise SCAN funding to achieve the best outcome for the child it was granted for. Samaritans requires Services to return funds if the child:

- becomes ineligible for continued funding
- when the funding is no longer needed by the child
- when the level of funding for a child decreases
- when a child's attendance at the service changes,

in order for other eligible children to have access to support.

### 3.2.5 Procedures

#### Transfer of contribution

- If a child currently being funded by SCAN, transfers from one eligible Service to another eligible service within the region, the new Service will be eligible to receive that child's funding. It is the responsibility of both Services to complete a Change of Child Enrolment Details Form detailing the changes and forward it to the Co-ordination Team.

- SCAN funding for the new Service will commence from the date the Change of Child Enrolment Details Form and a new Parent/Carer Consent Form is received.
- An invoice will be issued to the previous Service provider and the new Service will have the remainder of the term's funds deposited into their bank account, electronically.
- Confirmation paperwork will be forwarded to both Services.
- Funds cannot be transferred outside of regions.

#### **If a child leaves your Service**

- If a child leaves a Service, that Service is required to complete the Change of Child Enrolment Details Form and forward it to the Co-ordination Team within ten working days.
- On receipt of the form an invoice will be issued requesting a proportional reimbursement of funds back to the Scheme. Payment will be required within fourteen days from the invoice date.
- Non-payment of invoices by a service may jeopardise future funding.

#### **If a child increases or decreases their days of attendance**

- If a child increases or decreases their days or hours of attendance, Services are required to complete a Change of Child Enrolment Details Form and mail/fax it to the Co-ordination Team within ten working days.
- If the child has decreased days, an invoice will be issued by the Samaritans Finance Department to recoup funds.

#### **If a child takes a short or long term absence from your Service**

- If the child takes a short term absence, of less than four weeks, funding will be retained by the Service, and can be used to support other children in need.
- Absences longer than this will require funds to be returned to the Scheme for re-allocation.
- Long-term absences will result in suspension of contribution pending the return of the child.

#### **Re-allocation of contribution**

- Any funds that become available during the year will be added to the Emergency Funding pool.

### 3.2.6 References

- SCAN Policies and Standards
- SCAN Resource and Information Manual
- NSW Department of Community Services, Office of Childcare, Supporting Children with Additional Needs guidelines for identifying levels of support needs.

### 3.2.7 Person Responsible

It is the responsibility of the Co-ordination Team to:

- notify services that a non-payment of an overdue invoice jeopardises future funding
- arrange for an invoice to be issued to any Service that is required to return SCAN funds
- re-allocate emergency funds, if available
- arrange for additional funds to be electronically deposited to Services if variations to funding occur.

It is the responsibility of the Authorised Supervisor to:

- notify the Co-ordination Team if a child currently receiving SCAN funding from within your region transfers to or from your Service
- complete a Change of Child Enrolment Details Form within ten days should a child leave, increase or decrease days/hours or transfers from the Service
- no longer requires funding
- regulate short term absences of the child
- notify the Co-ordination Team when a long term absence becomes known or is anticipated
- ensure Samaritans invoices are paid within fourteen days.

### 3.2.8 Implementation and Evaluation

Samaritans have provided Authorised Supervisors with clear procedures to follow should any funding variations occur.

### 3.2.9 Documentation

Change of Child Enrolment Details Form is completed and processed by the Co-ordination Team.

## Standard 3.3

# EXPENDITURE OF CONTRIBUTION

### 3.3.1 Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to assist Services understand exactly what SCAN funding can be used for.

### 3.3.2 Definitions

**Individual Application Form:** Refer to the SCAN Resource and Information Manual.

**Project Application Form:** Refer to the SCAN Resource and Information Manual.

### 3.3.3 Principles

Samaritans recognises the importance of supporting children with additional needs to have access, active and inclusive participation in an Early Childhood environment.

### 3.3.4 Policy

Samaritans distributes the funding that enables Services to provide the support to children with additional needs.

### 3.3.5 Procedures

If successful in attracting funds for a child, Services must ensure funds are spent as described in their Application Form or subsequent Service Accountability Forms or Confirmation of Funding Forms.

Services can use SCAN contributions for any of the following:

- employment of a support worker
- employment of a CALD/ ATSI pool worker
- purchasing specific equipment
- purchasing specialised aids
- minor building renovations to allow inclusion (outside licensing requirements)
- staff training
- staff resources
- parent education
- subscription to relevant resource services, etc.

- Services are required to account for SCAN funds for each individual child every six months. Services are to complete a Service Accountability Form.
- Services who receive funding for a Project Application are required to submit a Service Accountability Form at the end of the either Term two or four.
- Services wishing to undertake minor building renovations are required to comply with DoCS regulations, Council regulations and Service OH&S requirements.
- Services opting to employ support staff with SCAN funds will do so in accordance with their Service's employment policies.

### **Purchasing of Equipment**

- Where funding for specialised equipment for a child with a disability is sought, enquiries are to be made in the first instance by the Authorised Supervisor of the Service with the family to ascertain whether the family already has possession of the said equipment for the child.
- If the specialised equipment sought in the application has already been supplied to that child from another source, it is expected that that equipment will accompany the child to the early childhood service. Funding for a duplicate piece of specialised equipment for a child will not be funded.
- Where the specialised equipment being sought has not already been acquired for the child, the family should discuss their child's equipment requirements with the Occupational Therapist, other health professionals or Early Intervention Service involved with the child and seek direction for accessing the equipment.
- In special circumstances, where a family is unable to transport the equipment needed for the child, the Authorised Supervisor is to investigate the possibility of seeking funding for transportation of the equipment to/from the child's family home each week. These special circumstances would include the size and shape of equipment restricting transport in the family vehicle, or where a family does not have a vehicle in which to transport the equipment.
- If SCAN provides 100% of the funds required to purchase equipment, this will then become the property of the SCAN scheme. When the equipment is no longer required (for example, when the child leaves the Service), the equipment must be returned in sound order.
- If SCAN makes a contribution toward the purchase price of equipment, it will remain the property of the Service.

- Should the Service decide not to go ahead with the purchase, all funds must be returned to the SCAN scheme
- Services are required to estimate the cost of equipment on the Project Application Form. When the estimate exceeds \$500, three quotes must be submitted with the Application.
- A resource library is available which Services will be able to access.
- A condition of borrowing is that resources must be returned in sound order. If damaged or lost, an invoice will be issued to cover the cost of replacing the resource or equipment borrowed.

### **Purchasing of Resources**

- Resource equipment must be a specific aid for a SCAN funded child, for example, the purchase of Aboriginal puzzles for a child from an ATSI background or a specialised computer mouse allowing a child with a disability access to the computer. Whilst all children can use the puzzle and mouse, the resources were purchased for the specific inclusion and access needs of those SCAN funded children.

### **Use of external support agencies within the Service**

- Services are able to utilise SCAN funds to employ the services of external agencies to work with a child on a regular basis within the Service, for example an CALD Support Worker or speech pathologist.
- SCAN funds may not be spent on external agencies conducting assessments on a child within the service.

## **3.3.6 References**

- SCAN Policies and Standards
- SCAN Resource and Information Manual
- NSW Department of Community Services, Office of Childcare, Supporting Children with Additional Needs guidelines for identifying levels of support needs.

### 3.3.7 Person Responsible

It is the responsibility of the Co-ordination Team to:

- train Service Authorised Supervisors as to what funds can be spent on
- maintain an equipment register and borrowing system for library items
- ensure the return of equipment fully funded by SCAN, following exiting of the funded child.

It is the responsibility of the Authorised Supervisor to:

- ensure funds are spent as proposed in the child's Individual Application Form, Service Accountability or Confirmation of Funding Forms
- maintain equipment funded by SCAN
- return equipment fully funded by SCAN following the exiting of the funded child
- ensure that the service compensates the SCAN Scheme, in full, for any equipment that is lost or damaged.

### 3.3.8 Implementation and Evaluation

The Co-ordination Team will review the Service's Accountability Form to ensure that funds were spent as stated.

### 3.3.9 Documentation

- SCAN Individual Application Form, the Service Accountability and/or Confirmation of Funding Form which documents the Service's plans for funding use.
- An Equipment Register will be maintained.
- The Co-ordination Team will monitor the return of equipment from Services when it is no longer required.

# **STANDARD FOUR: EVALUATION AND SUPPORT**

## Standard 4.1

### REFERENCE GROUP

#### 4.1.1 Purpose and Scope

This policy informs Services of the role and responsibilities of the Hunter and Central Coast SCAN Reference Groups.

#### 4.1.2 Definitions

**SCAN Hunter Area Reference Group:** Is made up of representatives from the Hunter Network Area (ARG).

**SCAN Central Coast Area Reference Group:** Is made up of representatives from the Central Coast Network Area (ARG).

**State SCAN Reference Group:** Is made up of one representative from each of the network areas across New South Wales (SRG).

**Terms of Reference:** Guidelines developed by the SRG and modified by the ARG to specifically reflect our local network area's needs.

#### 4.1.3 Principles

Samaritans recognises its responsibilities and requirements under the SCAN brokerage agreement. Hence the establishment of the Reference Group and the acceptance of the Terms of Reference document.

#### 4.1.4 Policy

Samaritans is committed to the establishment of a support network for the SCAN scheme, and aims to ensure a membership that is reflective of each local region.

#### 4.1.5 Procedures

##### Terms of Reference

##### a) Responsibilities of the Hunter and Central Coast Reference Groups

Each Area Reference Group is responsible to provide:

- advice and support to the SCAN Organisations in a mutually and collaborative manner.

The Area Reference Groups are not responsible to:

- monitor accountability of the SCAN Organisation.

**b) Membership of the Hunter and Central Coast Reference Groups**

The intent of the membership is to involve the diverse range of interests in children's services in the local area. To achieve this it would be expected that any individual organisation would not be overly represented.

The **Hunter** Reference Group membership should support the inclusion of (but is not restricted to):

- 2 x representatives for Children from an Aboriginal or Torres Straight Islander
- 1 x representative for Children with a Challenging Behaviour
- 1 x representative for Children Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
- 1 x representative for Children with a Disability
- 1 x representative for Metropolitan services
- 1 x representative for the Lower Hunter
- 1 x representative for the Upper Hunter
- 1 x representative for parents
- 1 x representative from DoCS – permanent member
- 2 x representatives from Samaritans – permanent members

The **Central Coast** Reference Group membership should support the inclusion of (but is not restricted to):

- 1 x representatives for Children from an Aboriginal or Torres Straight Islander
- 1 x representative for Children with a Challenging Behaviour
- 1 x representative for Children Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
- 1 x representative for Children with a Disability
- 1 x representative from Preschool services
- 1 x representative from Occasional Care Services
- 1 x representative from the community
- 1 x representative for parents
- 1 x representative from DoCS – permanent member
- 1 x representatives from Samaritans – permanent members

Because the role of the Hunter and Central Coast Reference Groups is to provide advice and support, membership is not restricted to the list provided. To better respond to local needs it may be useful to include people with expertise in early childhood development, health services, managerial skills or a regional worker.

Should a conflict of interest or grievance arise, members should follow the Samaritans Complaints and Grievance Policy.

A transparent process must be in place for the nomination of members to the Hunter and Central Coast Reference Groups and for their election to the State Reference Group.

The SCAN Organisation will receive nominations for all elected positions of the Hunter and Central Coast Reference Groups. Nominations will be taken to the respective Area Reference Group for determination of membership by vote. Where more than one nomination for the same position is received, election of positions will be made by those ARG members present. The Committee may decide to seek further nominations for any elected position.

Elected members shall stand down every two years; commencing from the beginning of 2005. However, members are eligible for re-election for ongoing terms.

Membership is on a voluntary basis and there is no payment of fee for being a Hunter or Central Coast Reference Group member.

**Hunter Reference Group:** The DoCS advisor to SCAN and two representatives from the Samaritans are permanent members of the committee.

**Central Coast Reference Group:** The DoCS advisor to SCAN and one representative from the Samaritans are permanent members of the committee.

**Hunter Reference Group:** If a member misses two consecutive meetings of the Hunter Reference Group without explanation, the SCAN Co-ordinator will make contact with the representative to discuss their commitment. The SCAN Co-ordinator will report back to the Reference Group. After 3 consecutive meetings, membership will be reviewed by ARG members.

#### **c) Meetings of the Hunter and Central Coast Reference Groups**

The SCAN Organisation is responsible to:

- convene and facilitate each Area Reference Group meeting,
- hold a minimum of one meeting each quarter,
- keep minutes of each meeting, and
- ensure all eligible service providers are advised of any decisions made by each Area Reference Group through regular correspondence.

Where agreed to by the SCAN Organisation, service providers and DoCS, the ARG may be convened and facilitated by DoCS.

#### **d) State Reference Group representation**

Each Area Reference Group will ensure their local area is represented at State Reference Group meetings.

#### **e) Outcomes to be achieved**

Children's services will have:

- a forum through which to participate in the implementation of SCAN at the local level, and
- a process through which to advise, inform and support the implementation of SCAN, including any improvements.

### **4.1.6 References**

- SCAN Policies and Standards
- NSW Department of Community Services, Office of Childcare, Supporting Children with Additional Needs Guidelines for identifying levels of support needs.
- Area Reference Group Terms of Reference - Department of Community Services.

### **4.1.7 Person Responsible**

It is the responsibility of the Co-ordination Team to:

- follow the procedures as outlined in the Terms of Reference.

It is the responsibility of the members of each Area SCAN Reference Group to:

- follow the procedures as outlined in the Terms of Reference.
- ensure regular attendance at meetings.
- maintain confidentiality relating to issues of individual services

### **4.1.8 Implementation and Evaluation**

Procedures and expectations are clearly outlined for the Co-ordination Team and Reference Group members to follow.

### **4.1.9 Documentation**

- Hunter SCAN Reference Group - Terms of Reference Document.
- Central Coast SCAN Reference Group - Terms of Reference Document.

## Standard 4.2

### SUPPORT VISITS

#### 4.2.1 Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to advise Services of the procedures involved in support visits.

#### 4.2.2 Definitions

**Support visits:** These are face-to-face visits conducted by the Co-ordination Team to offer advice and support to Services receiving SCAN funding.

**FOR HUNTER SCAN:**

**Upper Hunter Area:** Refers to Services in Singleton, Muswellbrook, Denman, Merriwa, Willow Tree, Murrurundi, Scone and Aberdeen.

**Lower Hunter Area:** Refers to Services in the Cessnock, Maitland, Raymond Terrace and Port Stephens areas.

**Metropolitan Area:** Refers to Services in the Newcastle and Lake Macquarie areas.

#### 4.2.3 Principles

Samaritans recognises the need to support Services that receive SCAN funding. In order to:

- support Service staff
- address any issues that have arisen
- ensure that SCAN funding has been utilised in accordance with the child's application
- provide Service staff the opportunity to have input into the SCAN scheme
- provide SCAN training to staff
- provide resources.

Whilst accountability will form a part of the visit, Samaritans aim is to offer a support network to the Services of the Hunter and Central Coast respectively.

## 4.2.4 Policy

Samaritans encourages Services to utilise the skills and knowledge of its Co-ordination Team. During the support visits Samaritans has directed its Co-ordination Team to determine what additional support is needed by the Services and to deliver that support in accordance with its mandate.

## 4.2.5 Procedures

- All Hunter services receiving SCAN funds will receive a minimum of two support visits per year from the Co-ordination Team staff.
- Central Coast services may receive a support visit each term.
- Services claiming for a large number of children may receive additional support visits.
- Additional support visits can be arranged by contacting the Co-ordination Team.
- Before visiting, Services will be contacted and a convenient time will be made to meet with the Authorised Supervisor or support worker, as needed.
- When visiting, the Co-ordination Team will review the written programs on all children who are receiving SCAN funding. Staff may also sight child enrolment forms, confirm child enrolment details and support staff rosters/register, if needed.
- Services should advise the Co-ordination Team of any additional information or assistance that is needed when they phone to make their appointment. The Co-ordination Team will bring out the resources requested.
- In the Upper Hunter Area, group support meetings may be conducted in order to share information and offer support.
- The visiting Co-ordination Team member will complete a Support Visit Report Form during each visit. A copy can be provided upon request.

## 4.2.6 References

- SCAN Policies and Standards
- SCAN Resource and Information Manual
- NSW Department of Community Services, Office of Childcare, Supporting Children with Additional Needs guidelines for identifying levels of support needs.

## 4.2.7 Person Responsible

It is the responsibility of the Co-ordination Team to:

- contact Services prior to visiting to make an appropriate time for the visit
- record when a Service visit takes place on the database
- complete the Support Visit Report Form for future reference
- **For Hunter SCAN Scheme:** arrange group support visits to the Upper Hunter Region, if needed.

It is the responsibility of the Authorised Supervisor to:

- formulate programs based on the outlined goals for children who are receiving SCAN funding and make these available to the Co-ordination Team
- contact the Co-ordination Team if they are having any problems and require a support visit
- have information identifying ATSI background, cultural background and home language recorded by families on enrolment forms of children who are funded by SCAN for the ATSI and CALD target groups
- make available the sign-in register, enrolment forms for SCAN-funded children in the ATSI and CALD target groups, and support staff register/roster, if required.

## 4.2.8 Implementation and Evaluation

Authorised Supervisors are aware of the Co-ordination Team's role and requirements whilst undertaking service visits. Feedback given during these visits will be recorded and used for future evaluation purposes.

## 4.2.9 Documentation

The Support Visit Report Form will record details and outcomes of the visit.

## Standard 4.3

# SERVICE FEEDBACK FORMS

### 4.3.1 Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to advise Services of the evaluation tools Samaritans will use to assess the SCAN scheme.

### 4.3.2 Definitions

**Service Feedback Form:** Refer to the Resource and Information Manual.

**SCAN Parent/Carer Letter:** Letter sent to all new families introducing the SCAN Scheme.

### 4.3.3 Principles

Samaritans is committed to incorporating the ideas and suggestions of the Service providers who use the Scheme.

### 4.3.4 Policy

Samaritans encourages Services to provide the Co-ordination Team with as much feedback as possible. It is from this feedback that Service practice will be reviewed and changes will be made, where needed.

### 4.3.5 Procedures

- Services will be required to complete a Service Feedback Form at the end of each financial year.
- Services and families are encouraged to provide feedback at any time throughout the year if they have any issues they wish to raise.
- All Feedback Forms and communication from Service Providers and families will be treated confidentially.
- The Co-ordinator will use the feedback as an important evaluation tool for the Scheme.
- The data will be collated and a report presented to each Area Reference Group and Samaritans management team.
- Services are required to pass on to new families a SCAN Parent/Carer Letter when forwarded by the SCAN Co-ordination Team.

### 4.3.6 References

- SCAN Policies and Standards
- SCAN Resource and Information Manual
- NSW Department of Community Services, Office of Childcare, Supporting Children with Additional Needs guidelines for identifying levels of support needs.

### 4.3.7 Person Responsible

It is the responsibility of the Co-ordination Team to:

- remind Services when the Feedback Forms are due, via the SCAN calendar
- collate all Service comments and suggestions and use them as a basis for re-evaluation of the Scheme's procedures
- supply services with the SCAN parent/carer letter of introduction to each new family whose child receives SCAN funding.

It is the responsibility of the Authorised Supervisor to:

- return Feedback Forms on time
- provide constructive comments and suggestions
- return a Feedback Form or make communication anytime throughout the year, when they wish to raise an issue with the Co-ordination Team
- pass on the SCAN parent/carer letter of introduction.

### 4.3.8 Implementation and Evaluation

Feedback will be gathered and used for evaluation purposes using the Service Feedback Form and the Parent/Carer Letter to families. Information collected by the Co-ordination Team will be assessed and incorporated where possible.

### 4.3.9 Documentation

- Service Feedback Form
- SCAN Parent/Carer Letter of Introduction to families.

## **Standard 4.4**

# **SCAN RESOURCE AND INFORMATION MANUAL**

### **4.4.1 Purpose and Scope**

This policy guides Services through the use and purposes of the Resource and Information Manual that is provided to all Services.

### **4.4.2 Definitions**

Master copies: This refers to a number of the forms located in the SCAN Resource and Information Manual. A number of the Scheme's forms are also available on the Samaritans website [www.samaritans.org.au](http://www.samaritans.org.au).

### **4.4.3 Principles**

Samaritans is committed to providing Services with an easy-to-follow system that is readily accessible and simple to update. The Manual will provide Services with all the master copies and details they will require to participate in the SCAN scheme.

### **4.4.4 Policy**

Samaritans encourages Services to familiarise themselves with the Resource and Information Manual and ensure updates are immediately attended to in order to ensure the Manual is current at all times.

### **4.4.5 Procedures**

All eligible Services will receive a SCAN Resource and Information Manual.

The Manual will contain sections that address the following:

- Co-ordination Team details
- History of the SCAN Scheme
- The Samaritans Foundation
- Policies and Standards
- DoCS SCAN Guidelines
- Definition of Terms and Support Levels
- SCAN Flow Charts
- Supporting Documentation and what you will need

- Funding Notification letters
  - The SCAN it newsletters
  - Fact Sheet
  - Area Reference Group contact details
  - Resource Library register and Useful links
  - Individual Application Form Samples
  - Project Application Form Samples
  - Individual Application Form Master copy
  - Project Application Form Master copy
  - Service Accountability Form A and B  
    - Individual applications Master copy
  - Service Accountability Form – Project Master copy
  - Confirmation of Funding Form Master copy
  - Change of Enrolment Details Form Master copy
  - Service Profile Form Master copy
  - Service Feedback Form Master copy
  - Parent/Carer Information Brochure Master copy
- Those forms listed above as ‘Master Copies’ should be photocopied before use.
  - If any form is changed or additions made, a new form will be mailed to each Service, to add or substitute with the old form in the Manual.

## 4.4.6 References

- SCAN Policies and Standards.
- NSW Department of Community Services, Office of Childcare, Supporting Children with Additional Needs guidelines for identifying levels of support needs.

## 4.4.7 Person Responsible

It is the responsibility of the Co-ordination Team to:

- ensure all Services receive a SCAN Resource and Information Manual
- ensure any new or amended forms are sent out to the Services for inclusion or substitution into the Manual and updated on Samaritans Website

- clearly advise Services when sending new or amended forms exactly where each page should be placed in the Manual.

It is the responsibility of the Authorised Supervisor to:

- photocopy master copies before completing them
- update the Manual upon receipt of new or amended forms.

#### **4.4.8 Implementation and Evaluation**

Procedures are clearly outlined for Services to follow, in order to ensure an up-to-date Manual is maintained.

#### **4.4.9 Documentation**

The Resource and Information Manual.

## Standard 4.5

# ADDITIONAL SERVICES

### 4.5.1 Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to advise Services of the additional services offered by the SCAN Co-ordination Team.

### 4.5.2 Definitions

**'The SCAN-it'** – A newsletter published on a regular basis, and distributed to all eligible Services and interested agencies.

**Fact Sheets** – An information sheet outlining facts about a range of issues and additional needs relevant to SCAN target groups, produced for the staff and families of eligible services.

**Inservice training** – The SCAN Co-ordination Team will endeavour to facilitate or advise on relevant training for staff and/or families based on the identified needs of services.

### 4.5.3 Principles

Samaritans recognises the need to offer additional support services to eligible SCAN services that receive SCAN funding.

### 4.5.4 Policy

Samaritans encourages Services to utilise the skills and knowledge of its Co-ordination Team and the additional services that have been established.

### 4.5.5 Procedures

#### Resource library

- Equipment can be borrowed for a period of time deemed appropriate through negotiations between Services and the SCAN Co-ordination Team. Collection and returning of borrowed items is by negotiation.
- The Conditions of Funding Agreement, signed by all Services annually, detail the terms and conditions by which Services are able to access the Resource library.

### **Inservice training**

- If the Co-ordination Team is unable to facilitate the inservice training, they will endeavour to organise for an external agency to facilitate the training.

### **Newsletter publications**

- 'The SCAN-it' provides Services with relevant information on SCAN, as well as general information from other network agencies. It will also include interesting articles, upcoming inservice courses on offer, or publications to purchase.

### **Research facilities**

- The Co-ordination Team has the facilities to offer research capabilities to Services. Services requiring research for any target group information are encouraged to contact the Co-ordination Team for assistance. The Co-ordination Team will conduct research on behalf of Services and report back any findings.

### **Email network system**

- Interesting articles, websites, SCAN due date reminders, inservice courses and any other relevant community service notices will be forwarded to Services with email facilities.
- If Services want to buy or sell items or advise other Services of up and coming events eg in-house inservice courses, the Co-ordination Team is able to forward these details to a large percentage of Services.
- Whilst the Co-ordination Team endeavours to include as much of this information in 'The SCAN-it' newsletters, there is often additional information that could be pertinent to pass on to Services. Due to the mailing costs this information will be emailed or faxed to services.

### **Fact Sheet publications**

- Fact sheets are an information sheet outlining facts about a range of issues and additional needs relevant to SCAN target groups, produced by the Co-ordination Team for the staff and families of eligible services.
- If a service has a request for a specific Fact Sheet topic, please advise the Co-ordination Team.

## 4.5.6 References

- SCAN Policies and Standards
- SCAN Resource and Information Manual
- NSW Department of Community Services, Office of Childcare, Supporting Children with Additional Needs guidelines for identifying support needs.

## 4.5.7 Person Responsible

It is the responsibility of the Co-ordination Team to:

- maintain an inventory of all books and equipment in the Resource Library
- maintain a borrowing log
- ensure that borrowed resources are returned according to the agreed timeframe
- ensure that borrowed resources are returned in sound order
- where resources are lost, or returned damaged, arrange for the service to be invoiced for the replacement cost
- identify training needs of the Services
- endeavour to make arrangement for inservice training to be conducted, where prudent
- liaise with other networks to co-ordinate the training
- produce 'The SCAN-it' newsletter
- undertake research for Services upon request
- email or fax relevant information to Services
- produce and distribute SCAN Fact Sheets.

It is the responsibility of the Authorised Supervisor to:

- utilise the Resource Library, as required in line with SCAN policy
- adhere to the conditions of lending, which includes replacement cost for lost or damaged resources
- advise the SCAN Co-ordination Team of any training needs their Service may have
- read 'The SCAN-it' newsletter
- contact the Co-ordination Team if additional information relating to the additional needs for any target group is required
- advise the Co-ordination Team if the services email address changes
- circulate Fact Sheets to Staff.

## 4.5.8 Implementation and Evaluation

The Co-ordination Team staff will gauge the success of the resource library, inservice training and research facilities by the level of use by Services, and feedback from service providers on the newsletter and fact sheets.

## 4.5.9 Documentation

- SCAN Resource and Information Manual
- Library Inventory
- Borrowing log
- 'The SCAN-it' newsletter
- SCAN Fact Sheets.

# **STANDARD FIVE: FUNDING FOR SPECIFIC NEEDS**

## Standard 5.1

# FUNDING FOR CHILDREN WITH LANGUAGE DELAYS

### 5.1.1 Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to advise Services of the criteria used by the Co-ordination Team to determine funding levels for children with language delays or disorders.

### 5.1.2 Definitions

**Severe language delay/disorder:** Refers to a child who is assessed by a Speech Pathologist with:

- a percentile ranking of 1 - 2% on any standardised test
- a moderate language delay with a high functional impact. (underline the last part)

**Moderate language delay/disorder:** Refers to a child who is assessed by a Speech Pathologist with:

- a percentile ranking of 3 - 6% on any standardised test

**Severe or moderate articulation/phonology delay/disorder:** Refers to a Speech Pathologist's assessed level of the delay/disorder as a moderate or severe assessment.

### 5.1.3 Principles

Samaritans recognises the need to ensure adequate funding levels are available to those children with a severe or moderate language delay or disorder.

### 5.1.4 Policy

Samaritans encourages Services to apply for funding on behalf of Service users who experience language delay or articulation/phonology disorders. Samaritans has developed very clear criteria to assist Services understand the eligibility for these children.

## 5.1.5 Procedures

### Funding Criteria

The following criteria was developed in consultation with the SCAN Co-ordination Team, Hunter Area Reference Group and the Hunter /New England Area Health Speech Pathologists.

For children to be eligible for Level three funding they must:

- have a severe language delay/disorder with a percentile ranking of 1 – 2%.
- have a moderate language delay/disorder and the assessed high functional impact of the delay/disorder on the child warrants regular support.
- be a child whose level of speech does not yet allow them to complete testing because of language delay/ disorder, attention span or behaviour.
- have a severe articulation/phonology disorder.
- For children to be eligible for Level two funding they must:
  - have a moderate language delay/disorder with a percentile ranking of 3 – 6 %.
  - have a moderate articulation/phonology disorder.

### **Supporting documentation**

- Supporting documentation for language support must include either the Speech Pathologist Report Form (Section four of the Individual Application Form) or a Speech Pathologist report that includes the results of a standardised test giving a percentile ranking for language or clinical assessment of a high/moderate articulation/phonology delay/disorder. If this is not included, the child will be ineligible for funding.
- As children's supporting documentation is updated, Services must ensure they forward the Speech Pathologist Report Form (Section four) or a report from the Speech Pathologist giving a percentile ranking or articulation assessment. Non-receipt of said documentation will result in discontinuation of funding. The date of assessment recorded must be less than twelve months old.

## 5.1.6 References

- SCAN Policies and Standards
- SCAN Resource and Information Manual
- NSW Department of Community Services, Office of Childcare, Supporting Children with Additional Needs guidelines for identifying levels of support needs.

## 5.1.7 Person Responsible

It is the responsibility of the Co-ordination Team to:

- follow the criteria as specified in the policy when determining the distribution of funds for children with language and articulation/phonology delays/disorder
- maintain current supporting documentation details on the SCAN database.

It is the responsibility of the Authorised Supervisor to:

- ensure all the necessary documents are forwarded to the Co-ordination Team for consideration
- ensure all updated supporting documentation is in line with Standard 5.1.5
- ensure that reports remain current i.e. the date of the assessment is less than twelve months old.

## 5.1.8 Implementation and Evaluation

Criteria is clearly outlined for Service staff to understand.

## 5.1.9 Documentation

SCAN Resource and Information Manual.

## **Standard 5.2**

# **FUNDING FOR CHILDREN WITH SEVERE ALLERGIES**

### **HUNTER SCAN SCHEME ONLY**

#### **5.2.1 Purpose and Scope**

The purpose of this policy is to advise Services of the criteria developed to support children who suffer from severe allergies.

#### **5.2.2 Definitions**

**Severe allergies:** Refers to a child who, when exposed to certain allergens, experiences a severe allergic reaction or anaphylactic reaction that requires urgent medical treatment in the form of an adrenalin injection.

#### **5.2.3 Principles**

Samaritans is committed to providing a fair and equitable distribution of funds to children with severe allergies based upon the child's severity.

#### **5.2.4 Policy**

Samaritans is committed to ensuring adequate funding is provided to Services who enrol a child with a severe allergy, to enable them to create a safe environment for that child.

#### **5.2.5 Procedures**

- New applications from Services for a child/ren with a severe allergy may receive funding for staff training, policy and procedural development.
- The service should submit a completed Severe Allergy Form (located in the application form) completed by a Medical Practitioner or Immunologist.
- Funding may be approved for one term, giving staff time to implement and become comfortable with the new policies and procedures. This will be determined by the Co-ordination Team from the details provided on the Severe Allergy Form.
- Services previously in receipt of funding for children with severe allergies may not receive further funding for the purpose of updated anaphylaxis

training for staff, for two years after the last funding for that purpose. The Co-ordination Team will consider the time expired between applications.

- Ongoing funding for children with severe allergies will not be guaranteed, but instead determined by the severity of each child's condition.

## 5.2.6 References

- SCAN Policies and Standards
- SCAN Resource and Information Manual
- NSW Department of Community Services, Office of Childcare, Supporting Children with Additional Needs guidelines for identifying support needs.

## 5.2.7 Person Responsible

It is the responsibility of the Co-ordination Team to:

- enforce the schemes Policies and Standards in regard to children with Severe Allergies.

It is the responsibility of the Authorised Supervisor to:

- ensure all supporting documentation is attached to the individual application
- provide updated reports for children who receive ongoing funding.

## 5.2.8 Implementation and Evaluation

Procedures are clearly outlined for Service staff to follow.

## 5.2.9 Documentation

SCAN Resource and Information Manual

## Standard 5.3

# FUNDING FOR CHILDREN WHO ARE GIFTED OR TALENTED

### CENTRAL COAST SCAN SCHEME ONLY

#### 5.3.1 Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to advise Services of the criteria developed to support children who are gifted or talented.

#### 5.3.2 Definitions

**Gifted Children:** Refers to children with the potential to exhibit superior performance across a range of areas of endeavour.

**Talented Children:** Refers to children with the potential to exhibit superior performance in one area of endeavour.

#### 5.3.3 Principles

Samaritans is committed to providing a fair and equitable distribution of funds to children who have been assessed by a relevant professional as gifted or talented.

#### 5.3.4 Policy

Samaritans is committed to ensuring adequate funding is provided to Services who enrol a child who has been assessed by a relevant professional as gifted or talented.

#### 5.3.5 Procedures

- New applications from Services for a child/ren with an assessment of gifted or talented ability may receive funding for staff training and/or additional support.
- The service should submit a current report from a relevant professional identifying the gifted or talented ability.
- Ongoing funding for children who are gifted or talented will not be guaranteed, but instead determined by the service's ability to meet the additional needs of individual children from this target group.

### **5.3.6 References**

- SCAN Policies and Standards
- SCAN Resource and Information Manual
- NSW Department of Community Services, Office of Childcare, Supporting Children with Additional Needs guidelines for identifying support needs.

### **5.3.7 Person Responsible**

It is the responsibility of the Co-ordination Team to:

- enforce the scheme's Policies and Standards in regard to children who are gifted or talented.

It is the responsibility of the Authorised Supervisor to:

- ensure supporting documentation is attached to the individual application
- provide updated reports for children who receive ongoing funding.

### **5.3.8 Implementation and Evaluation**

Procedures are clearly outlined for Service staff to follow.

### **5.3.9 Documentation**

SCAN Resource and Information Manual

## **Standard 5.4**

### **SPECIFIC NEEDS THAT WILL NOT ATTRACT FUNDING**

#### **5.4.1 Purpose and Scope**

The purpose of this policy is to advise Services of what specific groups or requests will not be eligible for funding under the Hunter and Central Coast SCAN schemes.

#### **5.4.2 Definitions**

##### **HUNTER AND CENTRAL COAST SCAN SCHEMES**

**Assessment:** Refers to the report provided by a relevant professional which outlines their determinations.

**Child care fees:** Refers to the daily fee charged for a child's enrolment at a service.

##### **HUNTER SCAN SCHEME**

**Gifted Children:** Refers to children with the potential to exhibit superior performance across a range of areas of endeavour.

**Talented Children:** Refers to children with the potential to exhibit superior performance in one area of endeavour.

##### **CENTRAL COAST SCAN SCHEME**

**Severe allergies:** Refers to a child who, when exposed to certain allergens, experiences a severe allergic reaction or anaphylactic reaction that requires urgent medical treatment in the form of an adrenalin injection.

#### **5.4.3 Principles**

Samaritans is committed to providing a fair and equitable distribution of funds to children with additional needs. Precisely which additional needs will attract funding is defined in consultation with our Hunter and Central Coast Area Reference Groups.

#### **5.4.4 Policy**

Samaritans is committed to working with the Hunter and Central Coast Area Reference Groups, and involving community input into the SCAN scheme. In turn we implement the decisions made at such a forum.

## 5.4.5 Procedures

### FOR BOTH HUNTER AND CENTRAL COAST SCAN SCHEMES

#### **Funding for assessments**

- The SCAN scheme will not provide any financial assistance to Services to obtain any form of assessment reporting.

#### **Funding for the subsidising of child care fees**

- The SCAN scheme will not provide any funding to assist families to pay for child care fees.

### FOR THE HUNTER SCAN SCHEME ONLY

#### **Funding for gifted and talented children**

- Children who have been diagnosed or display gifted or talented attributes, will not be eligible for funding under the SCAN scheme.

### FOR THE CENTRAL COAST SCAN SCHEME ONLY

#### **Funding for severe allergies:**

- The Central Coast SCAN Scheme will not provide funding for children with allergies or who have had an allergic reaction.

## 5.4.6 References

- SCAN Policies and Standards
- SCAN Resource and Information Manual
- NSW Department of Community Services, Office of Childcare, Supporting Children with Additional Needs guidelines for identifying levels of support needs.

## 5.4.7 Person Responsible

It is the responsibility of the Co-ordination Team to:

- enforce the schemes Policies and Standards document
- refer recommendations made by Area Reference Group Meetings to Samaritans Management

- implement the decisions relating to the scheme made by Samaritans Management.

It is the responsibility of the Authorised Supervisor to:

- ensure awareness of which children will not be eligible for funding.

## **5.4.8 Implementation and Evaluation**

Policies are clearly outlined for Service staff to follow.

## **5.4.9 Documentation**

SCAN Resource and Information Manual – Policies and Standards document.

# **STANDARD SIX: COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES**

## Standard 6.1

# COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

### 6.1.1 Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this document is to ensure that Samaritans have an open and transparent Complaints Policy, which is easy to understand, comprehensive and timely in application.

This policy and procedure applies to all staff, clients, visitors, families and all others who wish to provide feedback or make a complaint related to any aspect of Samaritans business.

This policy provides a planned framework for the resolution of complaints and grievances (Grievance Policy HR-POL/00109).

### 6.1.2 Definitions

**Samaritans** - Samaritans Foundation, Samaritans Youth Services Pty Ltd, Samaritans Enhanced Living Options Coastal Pty Ltd, Samaritans Enhanced Living Options Hunter Pty Ltd or any other organisation operating as part of Samaritans Foundation.

**Staff** - all paid employees and volunteers who work for Samaritans.

**Client** - any person for which Samaritans provide a service.

**Complaint** - anytime that our staff, clients, visitors, families or others feel that Samaritans staff have not acted in an appropriate manner, or that Samaritans policies and procedures have not been implemented in a manner according with Samaritans stated philosophy and ethos. This includes appeals of a decision and staff grievances.

**Grievance** - a grievance is any condition of employment that the employee feels is unjust or unfair, or thinks should be brought to the attention of management. A grievance may be any act, omission, situation or decision that you think is unfair, discriminatory or unjustified. To assure prompt attention, grievances should be submitted within five (5) working days of the event, which has prompted the grievance.

### 6.1.3 Principles

**Easy to use and Consistent** – Samaritans policy will be user friendly and be applied consistently in all cases.

**Communication** – Those who lodge a complaint shall remain informed and up-to-date on the progress of any complaint made. For complaints that remain at an informal level the relevant Supervisor will be responsible for liaising with the complainant for the entirety of the complaints process. For formalised complaints the complainant shall receive confirmation of receipt of the complaint from the HR Manager within five working days. During the complaints handling process the complainant will remain informed of any delays in the progress of the complaint. Upon completion of a formal investigation process, the Director will advise the complainant of the outcome.

**Confidentiality** – only the people directly involved in the complaint as part of the nature of the complaint or in the resolution of the complaint will have access to the information about the complaint. Information will only be recorded on a persons file if they are disciplined as a necessary action in the resolution of the complaint.

**Equity** – Samaritans explicitly caters for groups with special needs and where reasonable will make every effort to ensure there are processes in place to cater for these groups. This may include and not be limited to alternative formatting of documents, the use of interpreters and the provision of advocates.

**Fair (Impartial)** – No-one will make assumptions or will take any action until all sides have had a chance to tell their story and all information has been considered.

**Free of unfair repercussions or victimisation** – management will take all necessary steps to ensure that people are not victimised for making legitimate complaints. Samaritans will, however, discipline staff for breaching policies and standards, including making false complaints. All parties should be aware that S.47 of the Community Services (Complaints, Reviews and Monitoring) Act 1993 makes retribution a criminal act and details penalties applicable to people who engage in retribution.

**Important** – all complaints are treated seriously. No one will be made fun of or treated badly for making a complaint.

**Support** - All people have a right to support during the complaint process. This may be through another staff member, supervisor, external party, Human Resources or the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). EAP provides a confidential counselling service to assist employees and their families with work, personal and family concerns that they may experience.

**Timely** – Samaritans aim to address complaints as quickly as possible and, at least, within four weeks. Time limits have been set for different stages of the process.

**Opportunities** - the complaints handling process forms an integral part of and maximises opportunities for service improvement.

## 6.1.4 Policy

Samaritans has a positive attitude towards complaints and feedback, as they are a key opportunity to develop the quality of our services. We encourage our staff, clients, families and others to make a complaint if dissatisfied. Samaritans will respond to complaints quickly, objectively and confidentially and will at all times work together with others towards fair and practical solutions. All complaints are important as they provide opportunities for learning and growth. As a key component in empowering our staff we will train them in complaints handling.

We will ensure that those who require it will be given assistance to provide, lodge and work through the complaints process.

## 6.1.5 Procedure

**Note:** If staff have a grievance (i.e. a complaint about any condition of employment that the employee feels is unjust or unfair, or thinks should be brought to the attention of management) then staff should follow the Grievance Policy (HR-POL/00109). Samaritans supports the resolution of grievances amongst staff without fear that they will be discriminated against or suffer any loss because of an action by them of raising a legitimate grievance.

### Step One

A Complaint is made in writing to the Supervisor of relevant service. The complaint should outline the circumstances, the people involved and be dated and signed by the complainant. If the complaint relates to the Supervisor then the complaint should be forwarded to the next level, e.g. Manager.

### Step Two

The Supervisor should assess the complaint and make a decision if:

- A. The complaint can be resolved at the local level, for example, a neighbour complaint, then the supervisor should take immediate action to resolve the issue and on resolution complete the complaints register form and forward to the Human Resources Manager within one working day. If on commencing on dealing with the complaint it becomes clear that a local solution is not possible complete the complaints register form and forward to Human Resources Manager within one working day.

**OR**

**B.** If it is not appropriate to resolve the complaint at the local level then the Supervisor completes a complaints register form and forwards this form - to the Human Resources Manager within one working day

The Supervisor should advise the Human Resources Manager as soon as possible that he/she will receive a complaint either via telephone or by telephone to expect receipt of form and complaint by a voice message or email.

### **Step Three**

The Human Resource Manager will log the complaint, assign a confidential identification number and establish a file, and will forward confirmation of receipt in writing to the complainant within one working day. If you do not receive confirmation in writing within five working days you should contact the Human Resources Manager direct to confirm receipt.

### **Step Four**

The Human Resources Manager will forward the complaint to the appropriate Director within one working day.

### **Step Five**

The Director will decide on the appropriate person/s to investigate the complaint and establish a timeframe for completion. They will brief the investigator and agree on a comprehensive investigation plan.

### **Step Six**

The investigator will commence the investigation and determine the need for debriefing or referral to outside parties. The investigator will speak to complainant (if necessary an advocate can be arranged) to ensure the complaint is thoroughly understood and to explore possible resolutions, they will also speak to witnesses including the supervisor and any other relevant parties. The investigator will advise the complainant if there are delays throughout this process.

### **Step Seven**

The investigator will make a final report to the divisional Director within 14 days including a summary of the investigation and suggested recommendations. The recommendations could include, for example, changes to policy or procedures, training, mediation, no action necessary, apology, changed decision or disciplinary action.

### **Step Eight**

The Director will make the final decision on action plans after consulting with any necessary parties and will advise the complainant of that outcome and implementation. This should be completed within 28 days of receipt of original complaint.

### **Step Nine**

Action plan and outcomes are implemented and monitored for the coming six months.

### **Step Ten**

The file is referred to Human Resources Manger for confidential storage.

### **Appeals**

If you feel that the procedure set out has not been followed and/or that the outcome was unfair, you can appeal to the Director. If the grievance was against the Director then you can appeal directly to the CEO. In either case the Director or the CEO will look at the way the complaint was handled.

If you feel your complaint has not been properly dealt with by the organisation, you may wish to take it to an external agency to see if they can help; for example, the relevant State Commissioner for EEO, the NSW Anti-Discrimination Board, the Commonwealth Human Rights Commission. You can do this at any time of the investigation procedure.

### **Children's Services Clause**

If a parent of a child provided with any class of children's service makes a complaint to the licensee about the conduct of the service, the licensee must, unless the complaint is of an obviously trivial nature:

- a). give written notice of the complaint to the Director-General within one week after the complaint is made; and
  
- b). give written notice to the Director-General of any action taken in response to the complaint as soon as reasonably practicable after the action is taken.

## **6.1.6 References**

- Samaritans Grievance Policy HR-POL/00109
- Samaritans Managing Performance HR-POL/00112
- Community Services (Complaints, Reviews and Monitoring) Act 1993 Section 47

## 6.1.7 Person Responsible

**All Employees are responsible for** reporting and encouraging clients, visitors and families to provide feedback, register complaints and grievances.

**Supervisors are responsible for** working with staff, clients, visitors and families to resolve workplace issues and to report complaints, grievances and feedback to their Manager and Human Resources Manager by the next working day upon receipt of a complaint.

**Managers are responsible for** working with supervisors and complainants to resolve issues and work towards preventing reoccurrences.

**The Human Resource Manager is responsible for** registering, receipting and referring the complaint and for maintaining confidential records and for overseeing the complaints system and process in its entirety.

**Directors are responsible for** ensuring that the investigation is conducted in a professional, timely and independent manner.

**Investigators are responsible for** undertaking a comprehensive, fair and timely investigation and providing a report of recommendations to the Director.

*All persons are responsible for observing confidentiality standards of Samaritans.*

## 6.1.8 Implementation and Evaluation

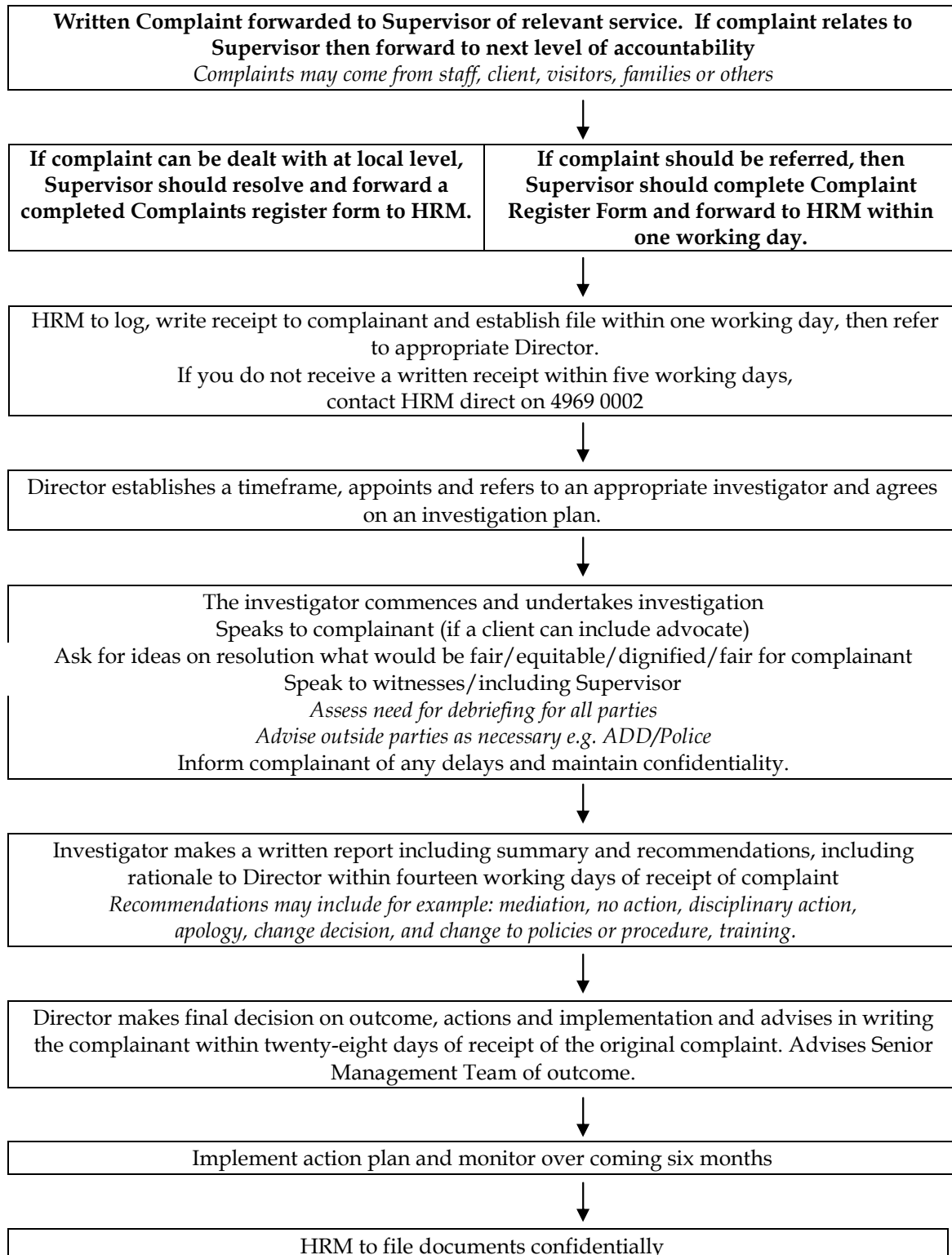
The implementation of this policy is immediate and will be supported by awareness training and publication. This policy should be evaluated annually.

## 6.1.9 Documentation

Attachment One - Complaints Process /Flowchart

Attachment One

## Complaints Process /Flowchart



## Standard 6.2

# GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

### 6.2.1 Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this document is to ensure that Samaritans have an open and transparent Grievance Procedure, which is easy to understand and free from reprisal and timely in application.

This policy and procedure applies to any staff member who has a grievance related to any condition of employment.

This policy fits under the framework provided for resolution of grievances under the Complaints Policy (HR-POL/00104).

### 6.2.2 Definition

**Grievance** - a grievance is any condition of employment that the employee feels is unjust or unfair, or thinks should be brought to the attention of management. A grievance may be any act, omission, situation or decision that you think is unfair, discriminatory or unjustified. To assure prompt attention, grievances should be submitted within five (5) working days of the event which has prompted the grievance.

**Client** - any person for which Samaritans provide a service.

**Complaint** - anytime that our staff, clients, visitors, families or others feel that Samaritans staff have not acted in an appropriate manner, or that Samaritans policies and procedures have not been implemented in a manner according with Samaritans stated philosophy and ethos.

**Samaritans** - Samaritans Foundation, Samaritans Youth Services Pty Ltd, Samaritans Enhanced Living Options Coastal Pty Ltd, Samaritans Enhanced Living Options Hunter Pty Ltd or any other organisation operating as part of Samaritans Foundation.

**Staff** - all paid employees and volunteers who work for Samaritans.

**Supervisor** - the person who directly manages or oversees the activities and performance of other employees.

## 6.2.3 Principles

- **Easy to use and consistent** – Samaritans policy will be user friendly and be applied consistently in all cases.
- **Confidentiality** – only the people directly involved in the grievance process as part of the nature of the grievance or in the resolution of the grievance will have access to the information about the grievance. Information will only be recorded on an employee's file if they are disciplined as a necessary action in the resolution of the grievance. All information gathered must be without speculation or unnecessary discussion.
- **Fair (Impartial)** – All appropriate participants to the grievance will have an opportunity to communicate their account of the relevant incident/s and no action will be taken until all the information has been collected and impartially considered.
- **Free of unfair repercussions or victimisation** – management will take all necessary steps to ensure that people are not victimised for raising a grievance. However, if staff breach policies and standards or raise false or frivolous grievances they will be disciplined.
- **Important** – all grievances are treated seriously. No one will be made fun of or treated badly for making a grievance.
- **Support** - All people have a right to support during the grievance process.
- **Timely** – Samaritans aim to address grievances as quickly as possible and, at least, within four weeks. Time limits have been set for different stages of the process.

## 6.2.4 Policy

Samaritans aims to provide an effective and acceptable means for employees to bring problems and grievances concerning their work, and their wellbeing at work, to the attention of management. For that reason a formal grievance policy and procedure has been developed for the benefit and use of employees. Clients will have recourse to raise issues of concern through the Complaints Policy (HR-POL/00104). This policy follows the procedure for Complaints (HR-POL/00104) and should be read in conjunction with that policy.

## 6.2.5 Procedure

**(a) If possible, try to resolve the grievance directly with the other person involved.**

You have the right to bring any grievance regarding any work-related situation and should do so with the other person involved within five (5) working days of the incident having occurred. Sometimes, people don't mean to do things that hurt or offend others. This does not mean that it is OK. However, it may mean that if you can tell the person that their behaviour is not acceptable and/or offensive they may be able and willing to stop or change their behaviour suitably. Behaviour which is considered hurtful, offensive or unsuitable may differ amongst people and descriptions of such behaviour may be covered under the policy on Harassment (HR POL - 00110).

**(b) If this doesn't work or you do not feel comfortable, go to your Supervisor**

You can make your grievance known either orally or in writing. Tell your Supervisor or what has happened and what you think could be done to resolve it. Your Supervisor is in charge of your immediate work environment and will attempt to help sort out any problems on a local level and will report back to you within two working days, if possible, on what has happened subsequent to your reporting the grievance and what action has been taken to resolve the grievance. They will register your grievance with the Human Resources Manager (in accordance with Step One of Complaints Policy HR-POL-00104).

There are some situations, which may arise where you may not want to take your grievance to your Supervisor (for example, if the grievance is of a sexual nature and the Supervisor is of another gender, or, where the grievance is about or directly involves the Supervisor or if it involves another Service). If this proves to be the case, take your grievance to the next level of management, your Supervisor's manager.

All grievances that you take to your Supervisor will be treated privately. However, grievances, which are discussed with your Supervisor and are of a serious nature would need to be discussed with the relevant Manager(s) and/or the Director. Nothing will be done without talking to you first and getting your agreement.

All Supervisors should take immediate action to resolve the grievance raised in an appropriate and timely manner. If a Supervisor is unclear as to the appropriate action, they should discuss this confidentially with their manager or with the Manager Human Resources.

### **(c) Going to your Manager**

If the problem still has not been resolved in a short period of time, you can follow up your earlier action with a formal grievance raised through your Supervisor or Manager. Again the grievance can be made orally (although notes may need to be taken) or in writing. A written grievance at this time could take the form of a copy of the original grievance (if in writing originally) or a revised/modified grievance. All Managers will follow the procedure set down in this document.

Your Manager will take the following steps:

1. They will register your grievance with the Human Resources Manager (in accordance with Step One of Complaints Policy HR-POL/00104) and together they will determine the appropriate person to deal with the grievance. They will advise you of your right to take the grievance to other groups including external agencies such as the Anti-Discrimination Board or Human Rights Commission where relevant.
2. The person allocated to deal with the grievance will and explain the grievance handling procedure, including what may happen if there is enough evidence to support your grievance or what may happen if there is not enough evidence to support your grievance and, depending upon the circumstances may:
  - arrange for a meeting with the person who the grievance is being made against and an advocate of your choice, if required, at a mutually convenient time;
  - talk to other people involved separately and impartially to hear their side of the story,
  - discuss the decision made to sort out the grievance, including any support options (where the outcome of the grievance investigation shall be implemented on both parties); and
  - make periodical assessments of the effectiveness of the outcome following the investigation of the reported grievance.
3. The types of outcomes possible following the investigation of a grievance may include:
  - if the grievance is substantiated (it is judged to have happened)
    - a. An apology offered.
    - b. Appropriate disciplinary action.
    - c. Ongoing supervision or mentoring.
    - d. Mediation between the employees.
    - e. Training or development program implemented.
    - f. Other action as appropriate.

- if the grievance is not substantiated (there is not enough proof)
  - a. Training for all staff in relevant issues.
  - b. More regular supervision and mentoring for appropriate employees.
  - c. Other action as appropriate.
  
- if the grievance is deemed to be frivolous, discussions and disciplinary action where appropriate will be undertaken.

#### **(d) Appeals**

If you feel that the procedure set out has not been followed and/or that the outcome was unfair, you can appeal to the Director. If the grievance was against the Director then you can appeal directly to the CEO. In either case the Director or the CEO will investigate the grievance process and make a determination as to the suitability of the process and the outcomes. The Director or CEO may implement alternative outcomes if they believe this is appropriate.

If a staff member is unhappy with the outcomes of the process they are entitled to take the appeal through each management stage of the organisation until it reaches the CEO and has a determination upon the process by the CEO.

If you feel your grievance has not been properly dealt with by the organisation, you may wish to take it to an external agency to see if they can help; for example, the relevant State Commissioner for EEO, the NSW Anti-Discrimination Board or the Commonwealth Human Rights Commission, or you may wish to refer the matter to your Union. You can do this at any time of the investigation procedure.

#### **(e) Children's Services Clause**

If a parent of a child provided with any class of children's service makes a complaint to the licensee about the conduct of the service, the licensee must, unless the complaint is of an obviously trivial nature:

- a). give written notice of the complaint to the Director-General within one week after the complaint is made; and
  
- b). give written notice to the Director-General of any action taken in response to the complaint as soon as reasonably practicable after the action is taken.

## **6.2.6 References**

- Samaritans Complaints Policy HR-POL/00104
- Samaritans Managing Performance HR-POL/00112
- Community Services (Complaints, Reviews and Monitoring) Act 1993 Section 47

## 6.2.7 Person Responsible

- All employees are responsible for reporting and encouraging colleagues to provide feedback and register appropriate grievances.
- Supervisors are responsible for working with staff to resolve workplace issues and to report grievances and feedback to their Manager and Human Resources Manager within one working day of a formal grievance being raised.
- Managers are responsible for working with Supervisors and staff to resolve issues, implement recommendations and work towards preventing reoccurrences.
- Human Resource Manager is responsible for registering, receipting and referring the grievance and for maintaining confidential records and providing appropriate and confidential advice on best practice to management and staff.
- Directors are responsible for ensuring that the investigation is conducted in a professional, timely and independent manner.
- Investigators are responsible for undertaking a comprehensive, fair and timely investigation and providing a report of recommendations to the Director.
- The Human Resource Manager is responsible for overseeing the grievance system and process in its entirety

*All persons are responsible for observing confidentiality standards of Samaritans.*

## 6.2.8 Implementation and Evaluation

The implementation of this policy is immediate and will be supported by awareness training and publication. This policy should be evaluated annually.