

Care and carer support agency annual reporting under the *Carers Recognition Regulation 2021*

Reporting template – ACT Together 2022-23

Annual reporting obligation	Supporting evidence/examples
Section 4(a)-(b) – raising awareness about and promoting the care relationship principles	
<p>A care and carer support agency must report on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) The measures the agency has taken to promote the care relationship principles to:<ul style="list-style-type: none">i. people in a care relationship who are receiving support services from the agency in relation to the care relationshipii. the wider community.b) The measures the agency has taken to ensure the following people are aware of and understand the care relationship principles:<ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the agency’s employees and agentsii. people in a care relationship who are receiving support services from the agency in relation to the care relationship.	<p>ACT Together has reviewed the <i>Statement of Commitment between ACT Together and our foster and kinship carers</i> and updated it to include the care relationship principles.</p> <p>Policies, procedures, guides under development or review are considered with the care relationship principles in mind. One example is the Decision Making Framework developed in 2023.</p> <p>The Carer Recognition Act was discussed in the Carer Wellbeing Joint Committee in 2022-23 and will be added as a standing agenda item in 2023-24. Information about the Act has been included in carer newsletters.</p> <p>ACT Together has comprehensive guidelines for working with staff who are also foster or kinship carers which is on the ACT Together Hub and also circulated to staff every 3-6 months as a reminder.</p> <p>For staff that have other caring responsibilities, each agency within the ACT Together consortium has policy and enterprise agreements to support staff applying for flexible work arrangements and other assistance. These are managed on a case by case basis.</p> <p>In 2023-24 ACT Together will be conducting staff awareness of the care relationship</p>

principles via face to face and electronic information. A flyer is being developed to inform carers of the principles and this information will also be added to the slide show in the ACT Together foyer.

Section 4(c) – upholding the care relationship principles

Care and carer support agencies must report on:

- c) the measures the agency has taken, as well as their employees and agents, to uphold the care relationship principles in assessing, planning, delivering, managing or reviewing support services, programs and policies in relation to people in care relationships.

ACT Together undertakes a range of activities which uphold the care relationship principles including:

- Guidelines for case managers on working effectively with carers and working with staff who are carers.
- A unique, dedicated carer support team for foster and kinship carers.
- Tailored support packages offered as needed e.g. vouchers, counselling etc.
- Culturally appropriate support services
- LGBTQI+ carers represented at panels/events
- Training calendar for staff and carers
- Carer representation on various panels such as Carer Assessment and Linking Panel and Cultural Panel
- Foster care week acknowledgement and thank you event, Mother's and Father's day gifts

In 2023-24, the ACT Together communication procedure will be launched to further enhance all workers' ability to engage with carers and support the care relationship principles.

Section 4(d) – consulting with carers

Care and carer support agencies must provide:

- d) a summary of any consultation the agency has undertaken with carers receiving support services from the agency, or entities representing carers, when planning or reviewing support services and

ACT Together, staff and managers keep records throughout the year of consultations, meetings, planning, decisions and reviews and this information is included in children's annual review reports.

Annual household reviews collect information from carers which will help to inform how ACT



programs in relation to people in care relationships provided by the agency.

Together is upholding the care relationship principles.

ACT Together provides information and resources to carers via monthly carer newsletters.

ACT Together meet regularly with Carers ACT and CYPS which allows for a consistent approach across agencies with input from the voices of carers.

Carer feedback and input has been obtained through polls within the carer newsletter gauging carer experience with ACT Together.

Service Feedback

ACT Together welcomes compliments, comments or complaints from carers as it recognised as providing valuable and direct feedback on the quality and performance of services and organisational support functions.

All carers within ACT Together are given access to and information about how to provide feedback at the time of application and within the Carer Handbook.

Service feedback information is also provided on the Website and in our public areas on site. Carers are also directly asked on an annual basis if they wish to provide feedback through the annual review process.

All feedback provided by carers in the form of compliment, comment or complaint is investigated as required, responded to, reported on and provided to operational leaders and executives to inform practice development and organisational change. Reports are provided to operational leaders on a quarterly basis and to Executive on a six-monthly basis.

ACT Together meet regularly with CSD Complaints team to identify and manage systemic issues across organisations.



Section 4(e) – human resources policy development

Care and carer support agencies must provide:

- e) a statement about how the agency has incorporated the care relationship principles in its internal human resources policies in relation to employees who are carers.

ACT Together consortium member agencies have policies in place around significant life events and flexible work policies. Further review will be undertaken in 2023-24.

ACT Together has a proven track record of meeting carer and staff needs through the COVID-19 emergency with effective communication, flexible arrangements and the ability to implement responses such as setting up a vaccination centre to guarantee access to vaccines for our carers and our children.

