INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Rural & Remote has effective information management systems in place.

Effective communication with staff and clients is achieved through meetings, client reviews, staff appraisals, training, newsletters, email and letters

The Policies and Procedures are maintained up to date and are accessible to staff and management

Client information is collected and maintained in accordance with the *Privacy Act and Australian Privacy Principles* and records are securely stored and shared appropriately

Staff information is maintained up to date and records are securely stored and shared appropriately

Archiving procedures are followed including securely storing and/or destroying information

Electronic information, including service delivery information, is securely stored and is backed up 4 days per week via the server

Information management processes and systems are regularly audited and improvements identified on an ongoing basis

FORMS AND RECORDS

Minutes of meetings	Shared Drive
Client information	Information Management System and paper files
Personnel Information	Information Management System and paper files – Program Manager, Administration Team and HRO
Financial management records	Finance folder on Server
Archives	Storeroom

3.1 Communication Strategies

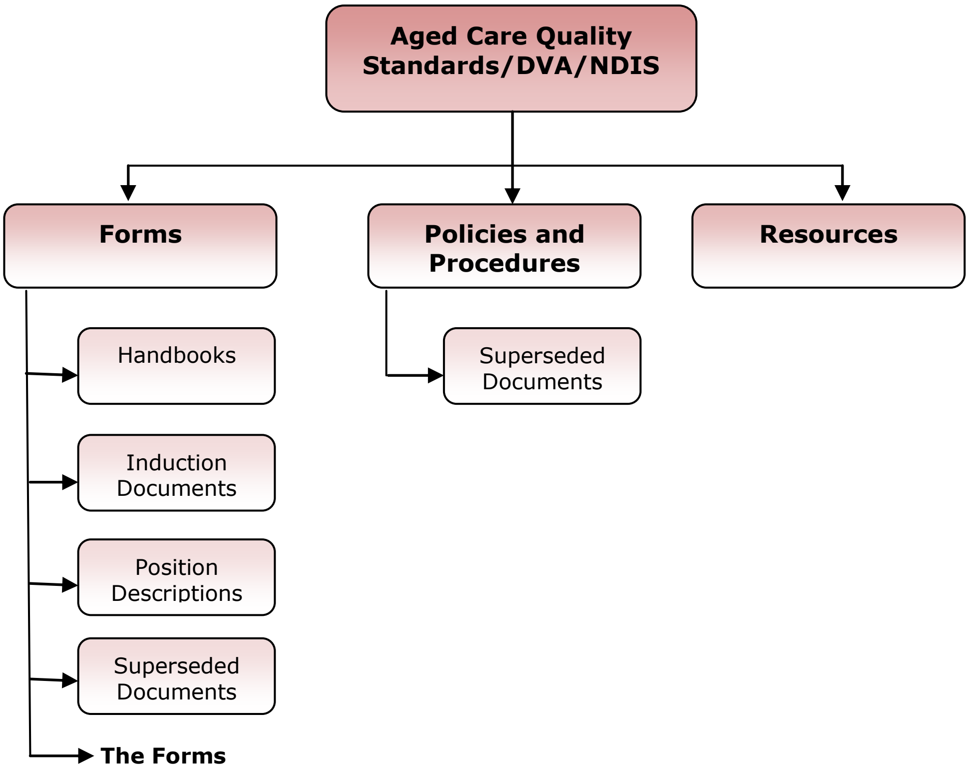
Underpinning the management of information in R&R are the following communication strategies:

- Regular meetings that involve all relevant office staff and Respite Program Staff, volunteers and client representatives (see 1.7 staff meetings)
- Regular reporting (see 1.Program Manager, Finance Manager and Respite Supervisor Reports)
- Training for staff in relevant policies and procedures and any changes impacting service delivery
- Involvement of senior staff and clients in the continuous improvement process (see Section 5: Continuous Improvement)
- Involvement of senior staff in the planning process (see 1.14 Planning)
- Regular letters to clients prepared by the Program Manager, Senior Staff & Admin/Finance assistant
- Emails and memos to relevant staff as required
- A staff news sheet as needed between quarterly meetings
- Updates via the Home Care Support Worker Induction Manual, Respite Service Volunteer Handbook and Client Handbook.

3.2 Policies and Procedures

3.2.1 STRUCTURE OF THE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The R&R Policies and Procedures include the following components:



The Policies and Procedures are maintained with permissions set (as read-only documents or editing restricted) in the Policies and Procedures folder on the shared drive. The Program Manager is responsible for maintaining the information up-to-date with assistance from the Administration Assistant and other senior staff as required. The involvement of all staff is encouraged to ensure policies and procedures reflect best practice as well as fostering ownership and familiarity with the material.

The Policies and Procedures Manual includes the following sections and is linked to relevant Standards and Legislation via the RCC Principal Policies and Policy Control Document:

A copy of each form used by R&R is maintained in the shared drive and '*Coordinator'* folder. All organisational documentation is to include a 'footer' with a file path designating the primary location of the original document.

NOTE: ***The document control system for Rural and Remote ensures all organisational documentation (electronic and hard copy) is managed in a consistent way. Internal and external accountabilities are maintained, and information management systems are well integrated.***

Records and documents created, received or used by Rural and Remote are in the normal course of business the property of RCC Inc. Rural and Remote official records constitute corporate memory, and as such are a vital asset for guiding ongoing operations and for providing evidence of service activities and transactions. They assist Rural and Remote in making better informed decisions and improving practice by providing an accurate record of what has gone before.

3.2.2 ACCESS TO POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

All senior staff and cluster team leaders can access the Policies and Procedures either through their own computer terminal or read a paper copy kept in the office. If staff require a paper copy of procedures these can be requested from the Program Manager but once printed are uncontrolled and should only be used as an immediate reference. Relevant forms, policies and procedures are also included in the Home Care Support Workers Induction Manual.

3.2.3 UPDATING THE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The need to update the Policies and Procedures Manual, forms or other material may occur through:

- Changes in legislation or regulations
- Changes in funding or funding guidelines and requirements
- Feedback

- Management decisions
- Adverse Event Reports
- CQI
- Audits and
- Reviews.

The process for updating the Policies and Procedures, forms etc. is:

When the need for change is identified:

19. The Program Manager develops draft changes with the assistance of other staff or delegates this task to other relevant staff

20. Draft changes are reviewed by relevant senior staff and Management Committee approval is obtained or otherwise;

21. When changes have been approved by the Management Committee, the Program Manager then updates the relevant documentation in the Policies and Procedures Manual.

22. The Policy and Procedures Manual is updated including forms and the table of contents. Old versions are watermarked 'superseded' and archived in the Superseded folder.

Note that any new form is referenced in the Policies and Procedures Manual.

23. Staff are advised of relevant changes to the Policies and Procedures either through a staff meeting, an email, a memo or a training session. Clients are advised, as appropriate and necessary, via staff, letters, or memos.

24. Major changes are recorded as an improvement in the Improvement Plan (see Section 5: Continuous Improvement).

25. Major changes are reviewed after an appropriately documented time to ensure they have achieved the required outcome.

3.2.4 REVIEW MINUTES OF MANAGEMENT MEETINGS

The Program Manager or delegated senior staff member reviews the minutes after all management meetings for decisions that need to be reflected in the Policies and Procedures.

3.2.5 CONTROL OF THE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- Electronic copies with permissions set (as read only or editing restricted) of the Policies and Procedures material are accessible to senior staff, including cluster team leaders via remote login
- Only the Program Manager can initiate changes to the original files and only within the process specified in 3.2.3 Updating the Policies and Procedures.
- Printed pages of the Policies and Procedures can be made for staff to refer to but are uncontrolled documents once printed (other than the authorised printed copy/copies). These must be kept to a minimum. The Administration Assistant as directed by the Program Manager or the Program Manager is responsible for recording the location of any full copies of the Policies and Procedures and for ensuring that they are updated when the originals are updated.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR DOCUMENT PROTECTION
RESTRICTED EDITING – Word Documents.

1. Open the document you wish to protect
2. Click on 'File'
3. Click on 'Protect Document'
4. In the drop down box – click 'Restrict Editing'

This will cause a side pane to open down the right side of the document.

5. Tick the box NO2 – Editing Restrictions – Allow only this type of editing in the document.
6. Under 'Exceptions' – click on More Users

This will cause a box to open up in the middle of the document pane.

7. Enter your email address – eg Manager@ravcom.org.au.
8. Click 'OK'

This will insert the email address in the side pane of the document.

9. Tick this box and click on NO3 – 'Yes, start enforcing protection'.

This will open another box in the middle of the document pane.

10. Enter your password and confirm.
11. Click 'OK'.
12. Save the document.

In future the document will be password protected and only the person with password access will be able to make designated changes.

3.2.6 REVIEW OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Policies and procedures including forms are reviewed over a 3 year period as documented in the Corporate Calendar. This is described in detail in Section 5: Continuous Improvement.

3.3 Client Information

3.3.1 PRINCIPLES FOR THE COLLECTION OF CLIENT INFORMATION

See Section 15: Privacy and Confidentiality.

3.3.2 MANAGEMENT OF CLIENT INFORMATION

Paper records

All clients have a paper file that includes referral information, client consent and assessment forms, client support/care plan, disaster management information, correspondence, progress notes and any other relevant information. Paper files are stored in the office in lockable filing cabinets. The RnR Team Leader in conjunction with the cluster team leaders are responsible for keeping client files updated, and to include progress notes as required.

Clients who have in-home services also have a folder at their home that includes information such as client handbook, copy of the care plan, advocacy and complaints information, charter of rights and responsibilities and an attendance sheet that is signed by any visiting R&R staff.

The folder is kept in a designated place in the client's home. The staff delivering care have their own copy of each of their client's care plans and consent form, which includes what to do if the client fails to respond when their service is due. All information is checked annually via the client review process and updated or missing information provided to the client if required.

Meals records

The client signs for each meal provided and the invoices are sent to our office monthly by the relevant hotel or café or meals on wheels provider.

Lawn Mowing vouchers

Clients are issued with 12 vouchers at the commencement of each financial year. As the vouchers are used – they are dated and signed by the client and handed to the subcontractor. The subcontractor provides all vouchers for each calendar month to the Finance Manager within 7 days of the month ending for the purpose of payment and client data entry.

Creating a client file

The procedure for creating a client office file is:

- The RnR Team Leader or other senior staff member creates an office file following the receipt of client assessment information, and acceptance of the person as a client.
- The office file information is entered into our information management system (data base) and a client number assigned.
- The client folder is taken to the client's home by the RnR Team Leader or relevant cluster team leader who organises the first service after completing the service level assessment documentation via client consultation.

File storage and maintenance

- Files are securely stored in the relevant client filing cabinet/s when not in use
- All incoming correspondence is logged in the relevant spreadsheet by the Administration Assistant before being filed
- Keys to the filing cabinets are secured in the office and available only to office staff as needed.

File movements

To take a file out the following procedure applies:

- The file is removed & returned by the relevant senior staff member
- Office-based files are not routinely removed from the office, but may be taken on extended field trips, when they will be kept in a locked brief case, either in a locked car, or in a locked motel room.
- The Program Manager is told which files have been taken from the office and the *client file movement register (form) completed*
- Files for clients who cease to access services are archived (see 3.6 Archiving).

Electronic records

Client information is also stored electronically on the Information Management System. The Administration Assistant is responsible for ensuring that data entry is completed (including entering a new client, amending data and exiting clients, assisting with client invoicing and producing rosters on information given to them by the cluster team leaders).

3.3.3 CLIENT ACCESS TO INFORMATION

See Section 15: Privacy and Confidentiality.

3.3.4 SUPPORT SERVICE INFORMATION

Information on the support services delivered to clients is recorded on the R&R Information Management System from time sheets completed by the service delivery staff and signed by clients in acknowledgement of receipt of services as per the roster. Any changes to service delivery are noted on a temporary timesheet and signed by both the client and staff member. The Administration Assistant is responsible for the entry of information. The Program and Finance Manager are responsible for the preparation of reports as outlined in 1.8 Management Reports.

3.4 Recording Service Delivery Information

The types of services provided by R&R and recording instructions follow:

3.4.1 CHSP & QCSS SERVICES

Domestic assistance

Domestic assistance includes assistance with everyday household tasks, including meal preparation and wood collection when there is no alternative form of cooking or heating.

Domestic assistance is recorded in hours excluding staff travel time.

Home maintenance

Home maintenance is assistance with lawn mowing in the form of vouchers given out annually at the beginning of the financial year.
Home maintenance is recorded as number of services

Personal care

Personal care supports independence in personal care activities such as showering and dressing.

Personal care is recorded in hours excluding staff travel time.

In-home respite care

Respite care is assistance provided to carers so they can have relief from their caring role and pursue other activities or interests. The motivation underlying the assistance to the carer is essential: a substitute carer is being provided so the carer gains time out.

Respite care is recorded in hours excluding staff travel time to and from the person's home but including any travel time undertaken as part of the respite.

Social support (Individual and Group)

Social support involves promoting and/or assisting social contact for people who are so socially isolated that they are unable to perform some necessary tasks that involve social interaction e.g. shopping or paying bills in person.

Social support is recorded in hours excluding staff travel time to and from the person's home but including any travel time undertaken as part of the social support.

Meals

Meals refers to meals from a Meals on Wheels provider and/or local hotels or cafes where there is no Meals on Wheels service. Either the client or a support worker picks them up, in some cases they may be delivered, and the client signs for each meal.

The number of meals delivered to each client is recorded.

Client care coordination – QCSS & DVA only

Client care coordination involves ongoing client support as required, 6 monthly reviews, liaison with support workers, re-rostering, & the facilitation of access to other services for clients with unmet needs. This may typically involve more than one service type and often more than one provider. Client care coordination is ongoing. Service user care coordination is recorded in hours.

Note: Administration work, accounts, processing time sheets, attending staff meetings, attending training etc. are not included. These are administrative tasks.

Counselling/support, information and advocacy support – QCSS only

This covers support to help clients and carers deal with their problems. It includes one-on-one counselling, support, advice and information.

Counselling/support information and advocacy support is recorded in hours.

3.5 General Information

The Administration Assistant, under guidance of the Program Manager, is responsible for organising and maintaining the filing of general information and updating administrative spreadsheets to ensure information remains current.

3.5.1 STAFF RECORDS

Staff files are kept in a filing cabinet in the office and are available only to the office staff. The filing cabinet is locked when the office is unattended.

Staff access to staff files

Staff can access their files as per the procedures specified in 7.7 Staff Files.

3.5.2 MINUTES OF MEETINGS

Minutes of general meetings and Program & Finance Manager/Respite Supervisor reports are maintained on the shared drive, general folder (for everyone).

3.5.3 OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

All other administrative information including funding information, financial information and general filing is maintained either in the filing cabinets in the office or kept on the shared drive in designated folders. The cabinets are locked out of hours or when the office is unattended for a lengthy period of time.

3.6 Archiving

The Administration Assistant in conjunction with the RnR Team Leader is responsible for archive management. Archived files are stored at the office in the archive storeroom. Archives are sorted by year, apart from client files which are all kept in a locked filing cabinet prior to secure destruction.

All client archived information is entered in the archives index. The index records the date of archiving, the file contents, the archive box name and number, and the file number and date of destruction.

3.6.1 TIMELINES FOR MAINTAINING RECORDS

R&R records are securely destroyed after the following time periods:

Employment applications unsuccessful	6 months

Staff records	7 years after the staff person ceases employment
Client records	7 years after the service user ceases receiving services except for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients, whose records are kept indefinitely, and records of children aged under 18 years, whose records are kept until 7 years after they turn 18 years of age
Financial records	7 years
General administrative records	7 years

3.6.2 ARCHIVING CLIENT RECORDS

Client paper records

When a client exits the service, their paper file is moved to the archives filing cabinet. Every 2 years, files older than 7 years are removed, noted in the archive register, and destroyed as per the timelines specified in 3.6.1 Timelines for Maintaining Records.

Client information management system records

Exited clients are de-activated on the Information Management System and re-activated if they return to the service. Service user records are destroyed as per the timelines specified in 3.6.1 Timelines for Maintaining Records.

3.6.3 MANAGING SUPERSEDED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Whenever changes are to be made to the policies and procedures manual or a form the following procedure applies:

- Before making changes, copy the existing file into the Superseded folder
- Watermark the document 'Superseded'
- Add 'today's date' to the end of the file name – e.g. Corporate Governance 030313
- You can now make your changes to the original document.

Superseded policies and procedures and forms are destroyed as per the timelines specified in 3.6.1 Timelines for Maintaining Records.

3.7 Computers

3.7.1 STANDARD OPERATING ENVIRONMENT (SOE)

The standard operating environment for R&R is:

- Windows Small Business Server 2010 on the server

Software as follows on each workstation:

- Office XP Pro 2007 or later
- Adobe Reader
- Adobe Acrobat
- MS Outlook 2010, and
- Internet Explorer V 8.0

3.7.2 DATA STORAGE

All R&R data including client file information, financial and administrative data, is stored on the server.

Secure access is maintained by the appropriate logon credentials which are not shared.

3.7.3 BACKUPS

RCC Inc staff are responsible for maintaining server backups. All changing computer data is backed up to external hard drives which are taken home and stored securely by the relevant staff member. 4 sets of portable hard drives are maintained.

3.7.4 EXTERNAL PROGRAMS

No programs, external data or utilities are installed onto any workstation without the permission of the Program Manager. Installing programs or other external data or utilities can introduce viruses into the workplace and can cause serious problems with the computer system.

3.7.5 PASSWORDS

Staff are given secure log-on credentials by the IT Consultant to RCC Inc to access the computer system. Staff keep a safe record of their passwords and also provide access to that information to the Finance Manager and/or Administration Assistant where relevant.

3.7.6 EMAIL

Staff may send and receive minimal personal emails where this does not interfere with work flow.

All emails are filed in the appropriate folders set. Emails documenting service feedback and information relevant to the operation of R&R should be forwarded to the Program Manager.

If pornographic, sex related or other junk email is received it is to be deleted without viewing it and BIZ IT are to be notified. Under no circumstances are staff to respond to it and information regarding this should be forwarded to the Program Manager.

3.7.7 INTERNET

Internet access is restricted to work related purposes. Internet access reports may be maintained & reviewed by the Program Manager.

Under no circumstances are any staff to access pornographic, sex related sites or any other site related to illicit or illegal practices or information.

3.7.8 GETTING HELP AND REPORTING PROBLEMS

R&R calls in assistance from local sources or businesses as needed to keep our computer systems operating and updated. This includes software installation and updates and monitoring backups.

If a staff person experiences any problems with a program or computer or other piece of equipment they will firstly discuss it with the Program Manager, who will then call in assistance if needed.

3.8 Monitoring Information Management Processes and Systems

Information management processes and systems are regularly audited as part of the R&R program and staff, clients and other stakeholders are encouraged to provide ongoing feedback on issues and areas where improvements can be made (see Corporate Calendar and Section 5: Continuous Improvement).
IT issues are recorded in S:\General for Everyone\IT issues.