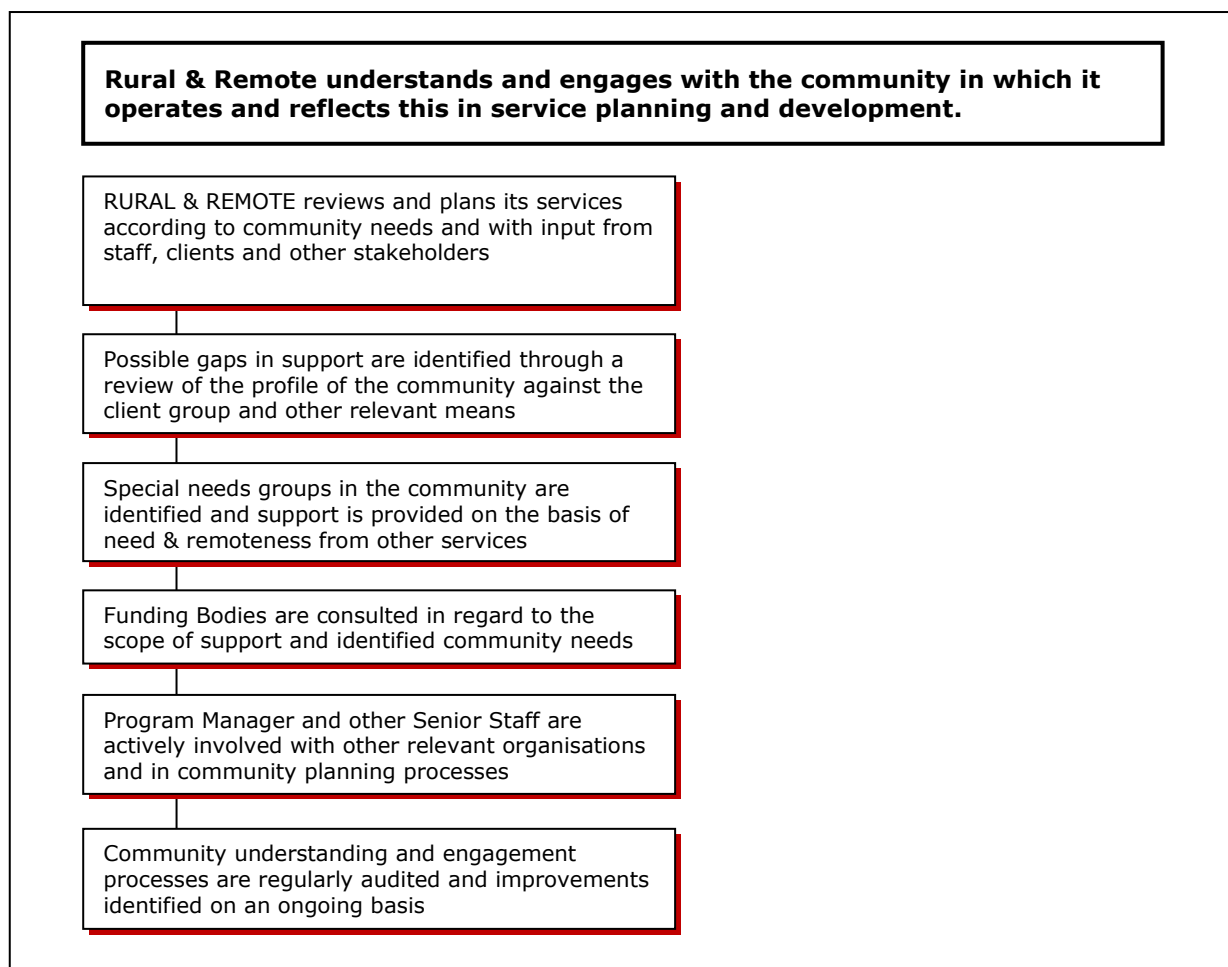


COMMUNITY UNDERSTANDING AND ENGAGEMENT



FORMS AND RECORDS

Improvement Plan	Shared Drive
RCC Inc Strategic Plan & RnR Operational Plan	Shared Drive
Client Handbook	Shared Drive
Funding agreements and accountability reports	Program Manager & Finance Manager
CHSP/QCSS/DVA and NDIS Promotion	Program Manager
Community Resources Information	Directories & Brochures in office
Corporate Calendar	Shared Drive

4.1 Planning Rural & Remote

Rural & Remotes' planning process includes an [Improvement Plan](#) that details all significant improvements in the operations of the home care programs and an Operational Plan covering longer term directions and changes, which also reflects the RCC Inc Strategic Plan.

The planning process is described in 1.14 Planning and includes input from clients, staff and other stakeholders. Demographic information on the community and future trends for the population is also reviewed. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) information is sourced and local knowledge of the demographics is used to inform the planning. The Department of Communities provide access to demographic data based on LGA's (Local Government Areas) via COMSIS (Community Services Information System), which can also be accessed to inform planning processes.

<https://statistics.oesr.qld.gov.au/comsis>

Information from continuous improvement and risk management activities feed into the planning process ensuring ongoing improvements are responsive to community and service user needs. Appropriate resources are allocated to the attainment of stated goals.

4.2 Clients with Special Needs

R&R meets the needs of people with special needs through a range of strategies including:

- Identifying the special needs groups in the community
- The provision of written information in key languages
- The use of interpreter services as needed
- Regular review and explanation of key service information from the Client Handbook, such as the review processes, services available, client rights, complaints and advocacy
- Referral to agencies who specialise in assisting particular people eg Vision Australia for people with vision impairment
- Arranging for relevant resources such as big number key telephones for people with impaired sight or telephones suitable for people with hearing impairment
- Training staff in understanding and respecting the special needs of clients
- Using specialist equipment where necessary and/or referring clients for specialist assessment where required
- Adjusting staff numbers, skills and times to best meet client needs wherever possible.

Strategies for particular service user groups include:

4.2.1 ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CLIENTS

R&R endeavours to provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients with culturally appropriate services, and where possible, services delivered by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff. R&R works closely with relevant local agencies e.g. Yabu Mija to ensure that services are culturally appropriate and that clients are supported whilst accessing and receiving support.

Once a referral is received, the RnR Team Leader or relevant Cluster Team Leader ensures that the information regarding the support plan and services is clearly explained and understood by the client and their family.

4.2.2 PEOPLE WHO DO NOT SPEAK ENGLISH

If a person does not speak English an interpreter is used. If the person has a family member who speaks both languages with them, they are used as the interpreter if this is acceptable to the client. Other options for interpreter services include a staff person or the Telephone Interpreter Service. R&R regularly provides support to Italian clients, particularly in the Northern Cluster. R&R

provides Italian clients with a Client Handbook & consent form in Italian and endeavours to employ Italian speaking support staff.

4.2.3 CLIENTS WHO DO NOT READ OR WRITE

In cases where the client has low level literacy skills, the RnR Team Leader or relevant Cluster Team Leader makes sure that the information in the Client Handbook, and information regarding the service plans, services & reviews are clearly explained and understood by them and/or their carer. Verbal consent is noted and forms are appropriately documented.

4.2.4 CLIENTS WITH DEMENTIA AND OTHER SPECIAL NEEDS GROUPS

When necessary, the RnR Team Leader or relevant Cluster Team Leader identifies the need for support for clients with dementia & their carers, or other special needs groups, such as those with disability or specific care needs. R&R provides ongoing training for staff in how to work with people with dementia or people with specific care needs. R&R makes every effort to make sure that services are delivered in an appropriate and sensitive way to all people, and in particular, to people with dementia and other special needs. Where additional support has been identified by the client/carer a formal referral to a Dementia Support Service will be arranged.

4.2.5 RURAL & REMOTE CLIENTS

THIS IS OUR KEY FOCUS AND PRIORITY OF ACCESS TO OUR SERVICES IS GIVEN TO PEOPLE IN THE MOST REMOTE AREAS (I.E. THOSE WITH EITHER NO ACCESS OR VERY LITTLE ACCESS, TO OTHER SERVICES). CLIENTS IN THESE AREAS WITH SPECIAL OR COMPLEX NEEDS HAVE TOP PRIORITY FOR SERVICES, (ASSUMING A SUITABLE WORKER IS AVAILABLE.)

NOTE: All the areas we service are considered rural and some are quite remote eg 500 kms away from the Ravenshoe Office site (see also Section 9: Service Access for details on how services are prioritised).

4.3 Consultations with Funding Providers

If changes in community needs are identified through ongoing monitoring processes or through the planning process and these changes cannot be accommodated within the current funding agreement, negotiations are initiated with the appropriate funding providers to vary the scope of the contract. Negotiations involve the Program Manager and any requests to changes to the contract are discussed and approved by the Management Committee.

4.4 Program Planning and Community Involvement

4.4.1 PROGRAM PLANNING

R&R Senior Staff are regularly invited to participate in the following home care activities:

- Relevant regional network meetings and Local Area Network (LAN) meetings;
- CHSP/QCSS Forums.

In addition, RCC Inc maintains membership of QCOSS (Queensland Council of Social Services) and R&R maintains membership with LASA (Leading Aged Services Australia - Queensland) and COTA (Council of the Ageing).

We also provide regular feedback to funding provider Contract Managers on any program issues that impact on home care clients or the management of our service. The R&R Program Manager also takes part in consultations regarding service system responsiveness, planning and reviews.

4.4.2 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

R&R networks with key community service providers and attends relevant meetings as appropriate in order to deliver effective services. These services include:

- Hospitals
- District Clinics
- Community Health Centres
- The Tableland Age Care Service (ACAT) team and other Aged Care Assessors
- Carer Respite Services
- Other allied and specialist health professionals and CHSP/QCSS service providers
- Aged Care Package providers
- NDIS Registered Providers and Local Area Coordinators.

The R&R Program Manager and/or RnR Team Leader maintain local and regional industry relationships with key service providers to:

- Promote the service
- Exchange information on community needs and responsive service delivery
- Discuss any issues regarding service system development and unmet client needs
- Explore areas for improvement in client coordination and enhancement of service delivery
- Provide support, share resources and develop partnerships, collaborative endeavours and brokerage agreements.

4.5 Community Resources Information

R&R maintains community resources information to ensure:

- Appropriate agencies in the community are identified
- Agencies are provided with information on Rural & Remote and
- Staff have access to information on available resources to facilitate effective referrals.

The Program Manager and Senior Staff, through their networking activities and liaison with funding Contract Managers are responsible for ensuring that the community resources information is complete and up to date. The Administration Assistant is responsible for ensuring adequate supplies of current brochures, community information booklets etc.

See also 13.2.3 Referral Process for Existing Clients

4.6 Monitoring Community Understanding and Engagement Processes

Community understanding, and engagement processes are regularly audited as part of the R&R audit program and staff, clients and other stakeholders are encouraged to provide ongoing feedback on issues and areas where improvements can be made.

- Annual client reviews, Home Care Support Worker appraisals and stakeholder surveys are undertaken;
- A documented improvement plan to address service changes responding to feedback is undertaken. Regular reports against the achievement of improvements are incorporated in monthly Program Manager reports to the Management Committee.

(see [Corporate Calendar](#) and Section 5: Continuous Improvement).