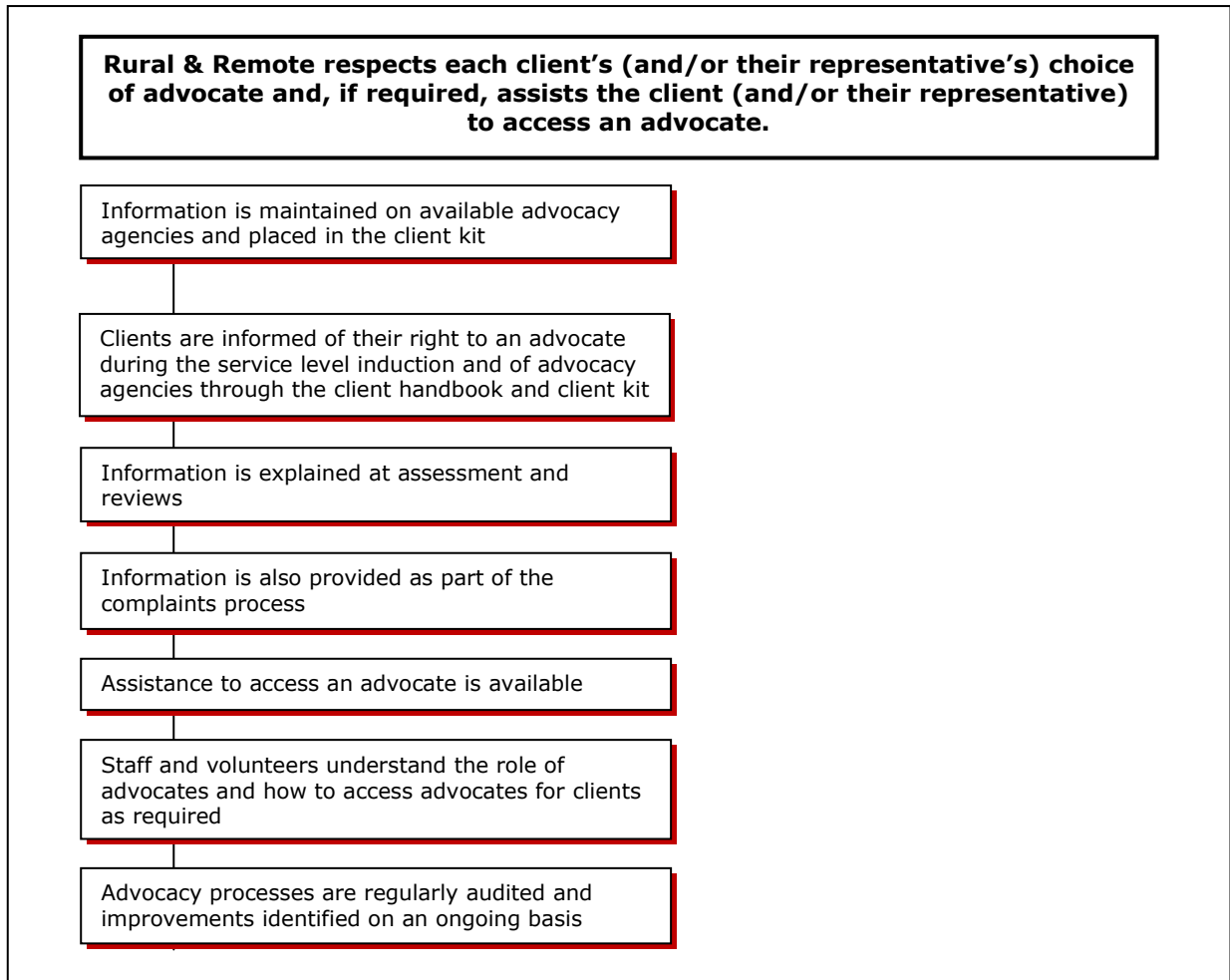


ADVOCACY



FORMS AND RECORDS

Client Handbook	Shared Drive
Authority to Act as an Advocate	Shared Drive Client records
Tell Us What You Think Form – Client/carer survey	Shared Drive
Central Risk Register	Shared Drive – Program Manager

17.1 Use of Advocates

Clients have a right to use an advocate of their choice to negotiate on their behalf. This may be a family member, friend or advocacy service.

Advocates are understood by R&R as representing the interests of the client. Information on the use of an advocate is included in the Client Handbook and is explained at entry to the service and at reviews, or as needed; R&R gives information about the local advocacy services available at entry and also respects the client's choice of advocate.

Staff ensure clients are aware of their right to use an advocate, and remind them of this option whenever appropriate including if a complaint is lodged.

All information provided is current and accurate and designed to support the client/carer to exercise choice and independence. Information provision incorporates the following considerations, in particular those outlined in the following **Standards 1.1 – 1.6, 2.5, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6 and 4.4 of the Aged Care Quality Standards:**

- ***Each client is treated with dignity and respect – with their identity, culture and diversity valued***
- ***Care and services provided, are culturally safe and appropriate***
- ***Each client is supported to exercise choice and independence, including to – make decisions about their own care and the way such care and services are delivered; make decisions about when family, friends, carers or others should be involved in their care, and; communicate their decisions, and; make connections with others and maintain relationships of choice, including intimate relationships***
- ***Each client is supported to take risks to enable them to live the best life they can (Dignity of Risk) See Section 11 – Support Planning and Delivery.***
- ***Information provided to each client is current, accurate and timely, and communicated in a way that is clear, easy to understand and enables them to exercise choice***
- ***Each client's privacy is respected and personal information kept confidential***
- ***Care and services are reviewed regularly for effectiveness, and when circumstances change or when incidents impact on the needs, goals or preferences of the client***
- ***Deterioration or change of a client's mental health, cognitive or physical function, capacity or condition is recognized and responded to in a timely manner***
- ***Information about the client's condition, needs and preferences is documented and communicated within the organisation, and with others where responsibility for care is shared***
- ***Timely and appropriate referrals to individuals, other organisations and providers of other care and services***

17.2 What is an Advocate?

An advocate is a person who, with the authority of the client, represents the client's interests.

Advocates may be used during client reassessments/reviews, and complaints processes or for any other communication between the client and R&R.

17.3 Appointing an Advocate

Clients wishing to appoint an advocate inform R&R in writing of the name of the person they wish for their advocate using the [Authority to Act as an Advocate](#) form.

Clients can change their advocate at any time and inform us in writing using an Authority to Act as an Advocate form. If a client has difficulty in completing the form due to language or literacy, our staff will assist them or refer them to an advocacy agency to assist. R&R assists and supports people with special needs to access an advocate of their choice by providing whatever support is required.

Completed authority forms are kept in the clients record.

If a client with dementia has no carer, staff will ensure an advocate is organized for them, after consultation with significant other persons or family of the client.

17.4 Guidelines for Advocates

Guidelines for advocates are detailed in the Authority to Act as an Advocate form; this is given to the client and explained to them if they wish to appoint an advocate.

17.5 Advocacy and Complaints Investigation Contacts

Services that may advocate on behalf of clients (depending on the issue) or provide advocacy support to clients include:

Aged & Disability Advocacy (Qld)	1800 818 338 or 3637 6000(Cairns)
Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission	1800 951 822
Agedcarequality.gov.au	

17.6 Monitoring the Advocacy Process

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