

**Grampians Region HACC Program**

**Continence Care in the Community**

**Role of the Community Support Worker**

Community Support Workers are expected, by the HACC Program and their employing organisation to work within their ‘scope of practice’ – this means that you are only able to provide assistance where you are qualified to do so.

The Grampians Region Personal Care Protocol (2009) advises that clients with loss of bowel or bladder control are considered to have complex care or unstable health needs. Support specific to bowel or bladder care are only offered by a personal care provider once the client has been assessed by a health professional. The health professional then determines if it is appropriate for a Community Support Worker to undertake bowel or bladder care tasks for the consumer and provides a written task list and client specific training where it is required[[1]](#endnote-1).

As a Community Support Worker it is your role to assist clients with a bowel/bladder tasks as specified by the clients support/care plan. If the activity is not listed on the support/care plan you are not able to do it. Should a client/their family request assistance with a task that is not on the support/care plan you should explain to them that you will ask your supervisor to contact them to discuss this request for support. It is not your role to advise clients on their condition or recommend specific aids/equipment – this is the role of the health professional.

The following are some of the tasks considered appropriate for the Community Support Worker to undertake:

* Emptying a catheter bag
* Washing out the overnight bag (not the catheter bag)
* Emptying male drainage equipment (bag, urinal, etc)
* Prompting and where appropriate assisting with some continence medication (must be reported on your medication ‘sign off’ tool)
* Having input into bowel and bladder measurement charts as requested
* Changing of continence aids, eg bed/chair protection, pads/continence pants, commodes, etc
* Prompting and assisting clients with hydration – as determined by the health professional
* Prompting and assisting with toileting

All tasks will be listed on the client support/care plan. If you are unsure of how to carry out a task contact your supervisor – do not just go ahead if you are concerned. Some tasks will require client specific training before you can undertake them – the health professional and your manager will determine what you may/may not do and ensure you are appropriately trained prior to undertaking the task.

Developed 07 November 2014

1. Grampians Region Personal Care Protocol, 2009, Pages 6,7 [↑](#endnote-ref-1)