

## **Open Place health and support brokerage guidelines, 2017-18**

This document outlines the guidelines to accessing health and support brokerage at Open Place as of 1 August 2017. Brokerage is available under the following areas:

- Health \$1500
- Additional Dental \$1000 (for eligible service users only)
- Dire Circumstances \$500
- Funeral contribution \$1500

### **Health Brokerage**

The total amount that can be provided for health brokerage is \$1500 in a financial year, beginning 1 July 2017.

Service users can choose to use \$1500 for one area of the health service areas or from across a number of areas. However \$1500 per service user is the maximum amount available per financial year.

Health Brokerage areas of support for service users: These areas of support are defined under Health Brokerage Criteria:

- **Medicare gap expenses**
- **Private health out of pocket expenses**
- **Dental expenses**
- **Optical expenses**
- **Allied health expenses**
- **Hearing aids and mobility expenses**
- **Pharmaceutical expenses**

### **Health Brokerage Criteria**

Service users can choose to spend the \$1500 available in any of the health/medical/dental areas listed below.

- **Medicare gap expenses** can apply to GP visits and diagnostic tests not covered by Medicare (for example, MRI), as well as other areas that require Medicare gap assistance (for example, out of pocket expenses such as initial consultations and further consultations for medical specialist appointments).
- **Private Health** out of pocket expenses not covered by private health insurance (excluding the first \$500 of excess or annual excess fee) can be covered.
- **Dental expenses** at private dental clinic. Open Place will make every effort to link service user in to local public dental service. Service users can also apply for an additional \$1000 to be used for dental treatment. (see specific funding for dental treatment for details)

- **Optical expenses** including frames and lenses covered under prescription.
- **Allied health expenses.** Treatment may include dietician, podiatry, physio, osteopathy, chiro, and myotherapy. Support will be provided following a letter of support from GP. Efforts will be made to ensure that a primary health care plan is implemented by a GP, which provides five free sessions per year.
- **Hearing aids** and mobility equipment expenses. Open Place will continue to seek out other available subsidies and assistance, e.g. Victorian Hearing Aid Bank.
- **Pharmaceutical expenses.** A contribution for prescription medication that is provided via a script from a GP. Assistance is available by arrangement with pharmacist who is able to accept payment by credit card, from Open Place. Reimbursements to service users will not be provided for these expenses.

### Conditions

1. Health and support brokerage is not transferable to other areas.
2. Some items are not covered by health brokerage. These include, education and vocational expenses, white goods, gym membership and alternative medicines.
3. If brokerage assistance is sought this arrangement must be discussed with Open Place staff first. Open Place will be unable to meet expenses in circumstances where there has been no prior discussion.

### Additional Dental Brokerage Criteria

In addition to the maximum of \$1500 provided for health treatment an additional \$1000 is available for all those service users who had used less than \$2500 by 30 June 2016 for dental treatment.

This means that a service user can access up to \$2500 for dental treatment by using the \$1500 from health brokerage and the \$1000 of specific dental funding.

### Dire circumstances Brokerage Criteria

Service users who find themselves in times of extreme hardship can be provided with brokerage support. Some examples are but not limited to:

- Assisting regional and rural service users with accommodation needs while travelling significant distance to visit immediate family in hospital
- Assisting with critical transport costs for regional and rural service users relating to employment or medical needs
- Assisting with establishment of housing transitioning from homelessness, or maintenance of housing to prevent homelessness. This amount can include contribution to rental arrears, moving costs and establishment costs.
- Assisting with extreme hardship via vouchers for petrol or food when no other source of assistance is available.

There is a maximum of \$500 in a financial year available per person in this category. This cap can be lifted at the Mangers discretion based on assessment of need.

### Funeral Contribution Brokerage Criteria

A contribution of up to \$1500 is available for funeral costs of registered service users. This expenditure is not included in the total of \$1500 available for health brokerage.