

Supported Residential Services News

Autumn 2008 Issue 2

SRS News

Welcome to the second edition of the *SRS News*.

In this edition:

- SRS Regulatory Review
- Fire Safety & Emergency Management
- Healthy mouths & healthy teeth for pension-level residents
- SRS census update
- Community Visitor Protocol

Review of the Regulation of Supported Residential Services in Victoria, 2008

The Victorian Government is reviewing the laws that regulate SRS and we would like to hear your views.

What is the review of SRS about?

The Victorian Government regulates SRS through the Health Services Act 1988 and the Health Services (Supported Residential Services) Regulations 2001.

The government wants to be sure that the legislation and regulations continue to provide protections for residents.

It has produced a public Discussion Paper

and an easy-to-understand leaflet. Both have information and issues about SRS. Both have 20 questions about SRS regulation to respond to.

All SRS Proprietors will be sent a copy of the Discussion Paper and the leaflet. The documents will also be made available to residents, families and service providers.

Steps and dates in the review

May 2008: Discussion paper released.

July 2008: Public forums conducted.

1 August 2008: Written submissions close.

September- November 2008: Consultation with key stakeholders.

2009: Reform options finalised for Ministerial consideration.

2009 onwards: Bill to Parliament (subject to Cabinet endorsement) and implementation.

We would like to hear your views

How to put forward your views

We encourage you to read the Discussion Paper before putting forward your views.

Write a response

Answer some or all of the 20 questions. A template is available on the SRS website. You can still write

a response without answering the questions.

Mail, email or fax us your written comments.

Participate in a public forum

Details of dates and locations will be put on the website, and will also be sent out with the Discussion Paper.

If you want to attend a forum please register via the SRS website or phone us on:
1800 079 537

For more information

Telephone:

1800 079 537 (free call*) to speak to the Project Team.

Fax: 03) 9096 9163

Website:

www.health.vic.gov.au/srs

Email us at:

srslegislationreview@dhs.vic.gov.au

Mail a written response:

SRS Legislation Review, Aged Care Branch, DHS, GPO Box 4057, Melbourne, Vic 3001.

** Free call not available from mobile phones.*

Fire Safety & Emergency Management

Since 1991, there have been several fire-related fatalities in Victorian SRS. In more recent times, there have been smaller fires where SRS residents and staff have been placed at risk.

In an emergency situation at any work place, including SRS, it is important that staff are able to take immediate and appropriate action to ensure the safety of all persons at the facility.

QUESTIONS SRS PROPRIETORS SHOULD ASK THEMSELVES

Do your staff know how to respond in an emergency event? ie. Do you have written procedures and designated assembly areas in the event of an evacuation?

Are staff aware of all the unforeseen risks related to fire?

Do you know what the fire safety features of your SRS are, and have they been maintained?

In February and March this year, DHS coordinated three information seminars for SRS proprietors on Fire Safety and Emergency Management. Guest speakers from the

Country Fire Authority (CFA), the Metropolitan Fire Brigade (MFB) and the Building Commission attended to provide free advice to SRS proprietors. Information provided at these seminars focused on the legal obligations SRS proprietors have under;

1. *Building Act 1993* and *Regulations 2006* for maintenance of fire safety features within the building.
2. *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* for providing a safe workplace – for both employees and residents.



SRS proprietors and staff during a 'mock evacuation' coordinated by the CFA, at the Dandenong info session in February 2008.

It is important to ensure that all SRS and their staff have the capacity to effectively respond to emergencies. It is expected that SRS proprietors ensure the development of documented emergency procedures and make sure all staff are trained in emergency response procedures.

FREE TRAINING

In April and May 2008, the majority of pension-level SRS staff attended Workplace Emergency Response (WER) training. Further training sessions will be available for ALL SRS and their staff from August 2008. Proprietors can claim a \$40 contribution from DHS for each staff member that attends WER training. Training via DVD will also be available in July 2008.

FREE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN GUIDE FOR PROPRIETORS

In July 2008 you can get a free resource Guide for developing an Emergency Management Plan that meets the requirements of Australian Standard 3745. DHS will provide further detail about how SRS proprietors can obtain this Guide.



WER Trainer Chris Tasic demonstrating use of a fire extinguisher at the WER free training for SRS staff.

Healthy teeth and gums for residents of pension-level SRS

What is oral health?

Oral health is sometimes called dental health. It basically means taking care of your mouth: teeth and gums. Good oral health is important for eating, drinking and talking as well as appearance, self-esteem, social interactions and life opportunities.

About the pension-level SRS oral health project

In the 2007-08 state budget, the Victorian Government announced \$1.9 million over 4 years to improve oral health of residents of pension-level SRS.

The broad parts of the project are:

1. Part one

Oral health kits containing free toothbrushes, toothpaste and dental floss (see sample below) will be provided to residents of pension-level SRS by July 2008. This will be coordinated by Dental Health Services Victoria (DHSV).

ALL pension-level SRS will be delivered oral health kits by July.



2. Part two

Trialling the use of oral hygienists* and assistants to offer dental check ups, oral health resources, and referral for dental treatment. They will be employed by two community health services- Knox and Inner South.

Selected pension-level SRS in Eastern and Southern suburbs will be involved and this will start after July 2008.

Project management

A project reference group has been set up to provide expert advice, guidance and support to the project. The reference group is made up of representatives from DHS, DHSV, the community health services and SRS proprietors.

This is an exciting opportunity to improve the oral health of residents of pension-level SRS. We look forward to working in partnership with Proprietors and staff to make it a success.

More information about the Oral Health Project will be provided to pension-level SRS in the next few weeks.

What does an oral hygienist do?

An oral hygienist is also called a dental hygienist. They remove plaque, stain and calculus (tartar) from teeth and to teach people how to maintain oral health.



Project Management Team

Back (left-right): Catherine Griffiths- DHS, Denise Harisiou- Knox CHS, Maureen Williams- Inner South CHS, Catherine Thompson- DHS, Jill Coyne- DHS (Chair) Dennis Gaylard-DHS, Frank Luo- Hollydale Lodge SRS. Front (left- right): Fiona Preston- DHSV, Sita Vij- DHSV, Daniel Dharumasena- Hazelwood SRS. Absent/ not included in photo: Anne Lyon- Knox CHS, Liz Jones- DHS, Shannon Checklin- DHS.

SRS Census: It's happening in June 2008

The department will be undertaking a Census of all SRS during the month of June. The census collects information about the SRS industry and data collected contributes to the regulatory, policy and program activities of government in the SRS sector and provides a source of information about SRS.

The Social Research Centre will be conducting the Census and each SRS will be receiving a census form and instructions in the first week of June. Each SRS Proprietor will also receive a phone call from the Social Research Centre to check your mailing details and answer any questions you have about the census.

The department is providing a contribution of \$40 per SRS in recognition of the time it takes to complete the census and the importance of the information collected. SRS Proprietors will be asked to provide a tax invoice to the department for the \$40 upon return of the Census to the Social Research Centre.

For further information about please contact Shane Mc Donald from the SRS & Accommodation Support Unit at DHS on 03) 9096 7227.

Protocol between the Community Visitors Program and DHS SRS Program

On 27 February 2008 the Department of Human Services (DHS) SRS Program and Office of the Public Advocate Community Visitor Program co-signed a Protocol negotiated between the two programs.

Our two organisations have had a long relationship of working together, and the duties of both a Community Visitor (CV) and Authorised Officer (AO) are sometimes complex.

The Protocol formally underpins the continued relationship between the two programs and it will help the two organisations to continue working in partnership

To ensure prompt follow-up where serious concerns regarding resident care have been identified, the 2008 Protocol is supported by a referral form to make sure that issues don't 'fall between the cracks'.



(Left) Jane Herington, DHS Director Aged Care and statewide delegate for the SRS Program with (right) Colleen Pearce, Public Advocate, Office of the Public Advocate – Community Visitors Program.

Contact

If you have comments, feedback or requests please let us know.

All correspondence to:

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03) 9096 6978 or
email
Shannon.checklin@dhs.vic.gov.au