

Elder Abuse Policy

Table of Contents

Definitions	2
Organisation Statement	2
1. POLICY COMMITMENT	3
2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	3
Governing Body	3
3. PREVENTION COMMITMENTS	3
Independent Living Unit (ILU)–Specific Measures	4
4. REPORTING AND ESCALATION OBLIGATIONS	4
Reporting Obligations – Residential Aged Care and Community/Home Care	4
Retirement Living/ILU:	5
5. DOCUMENTATION AND PRIVACY	5
6. EDUCATION, COMMUNICATION AND CULTURE	5
7. MONITORING AND KPIS	5
8. REFERENCES	6

Background

Carrington is committed to upholding the rights, dignity, and safety of older people by operationalising a zero-tolerance, rights-based approach to the prevention, identification, and response to abuse, neglect, and exploitation. This commitment applies across all Carrington services, including Retirement Living (Independent Living Units), Residential Aged Care, and Community/Home Care. This policy aligns with the [Strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards commencing 1 November 2025](#), [Statement of Rights](#), [Code of Conduct for Aged Care](#), and [SIRS](#).

Definitions

Term	Definition
Elder abuse	A single or repeated act, or lack of appropriate action, within a relationship of trust causing harm or distress to an older person (WHO) .
SIRS reportable incidents	Eight categories including unreasonable use of force; unlawful sexual contact/inappropriate sexual conduct; neglect; psychological or emotional abuse; unexpected death; stealing or financial coercion by a staff member; inappropriate use of restrictive practices; unexplained absence/missing consumer.

Scope and Applicability

- Residential Aged Care & Community/Home Care: comply with SIRS, Code of Conduct for Aged Care, and Strengthened Quality Standards from 1 Nov 2025.
- Retirement Living / ILUs (NSW): not regulated by SIRS, but Carrington applies equivalent prevention/response pathways and meets NSW Retirement Villages obligations, including implementation of an elder abuse prevention strategy per Rule 10 and access to Fair Trading complaints routes.

Consumer Outcome

Consumers are safe from abuse, neglect, or exploitation and feel respected, protected, and empowered to live with dignity, choice, and autonomy.

Consumers experience prompt, compassionate, and transparent responses to any allegations or suspicions of abuse, ensuring their wellbeing and emotional safety are prioritised.

Organisation Statement

The Carrington Governing Body accepts ultimate accountability for the prevention of elder abuse across all services. It is committed to a culture of safety, respect, and dignity where abuse, neglect, and exploitation are never tolerated. Governance structures ensure effective oversight, risk management, transparent reporting, and continuous improvement. The Governing Body ensures that leadership decisions, workforce behaviour, and care delivery uphold every consumer's right to live free from abuse and to feel safe, respected, and heard.

1. POLICY COMMITMENT

Carrington is committed to:

- Rights-based, person-led care (Statement of Rights).
- Supported decision-making and registered supporters under the new Aged Care Act.
- Open disclosure with timely, honest communication.
- Cultural safety and accessibility (including interpreters).
- Continuous improvement via an effective Incident Management System (IMS).

2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Governing Body

	Governing Body	Executive Team	RACF Leadership Team	Executive Manager Community Care	Retirement Living/ILU Leadership	All Workers and Volunteers
Responsibilities	Define risk appetite	Accountable for implementation of policy	SIRS compliance	SIRS compliance in home environments	Village & Communications Coordinator (VCC) is first escalation	mandatory internal reporting of suspected abuse
	Monitor KPIs for SIRS training	Approve policy and training	Incident triage, investigation and notification	Ensure safe service delivery and decision-support.	Executive Manager Business Operations (EMBO) is decision authority (including police referral)	Cooperate with investigations
	Resource capability for SIRS/IMS training	Escalation oversight	consumer safety planning		Maintain records	Adhere to the Code of Conduct
		Regulatory reporting assurance				

3. PREVENTION COMMITMENTS

Carrington is committed to proactively safeguarding older people by embedding preventative strategies that uphold their rights, autonomy, and wellbeing. Our approach focuses on early identification of risk, education, and system-wide accountability. Carrington is dedicated to creating safe, respectful, and empowering environments for older people by embedding proactive, preventative measures across all services. Our prevention approach is grounded in human rights and zero tolerance for abuse, neglect, and exploitation. It includes robust systems and practices that promote safety, support informed decision-making, and enable early identification of risk. These commitments are operationalised through the following key focus areas:

Safe Recruitment and Conduct

All staff and volunteers undergo rigorous screening, including reference checks and alignment with the Aged Care Code of Conduct during onboarding. Role-specific training reinforces expectations for ethical, respectful, and safe behaviour.

Consumer Education and Advocacy

Older people and their representatives are provided with accessible information about their rights and available supporting services. This includes promoting access to independent advocacy services such as the Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN) via 1800 700 600.

Supported Decision-Making

Carrington recognises and records the involvement of formal and informal decision supporters, respecting each person's right to dignity of risk and autonomy in decision-making.

Risk Screening and Early Identification

Structured prompts at the intake and review stage help identify potential risks such as social isolation, coercion, or financial abuse. Where concerns arise outside of these review points, an adhoc review can be facilitated. This process is aligned with the NSW Interagency Policy to prevent abuse of older people.

Incident Management System (IMS)

A robust IMS supports prevention through accessible reporting, root cause analysis, trend monitoring, and continuous learning. The system is fully integrated with the Serious Incident Response Scheme (SIRS).

Independent Living Unit (ILU)–Specific Measures

Tailored strategies for ILU residents include visible messaging about safety and rights, safe visitor protocols, clear communication pathways with the operator, and access to the NSW Ageing and Disability Abuse Helpline (1800 628 221)

4. REPORTING AND ESCALATION OBLIGATIONS

In the instance of immediate danger: call 000; ensure safety and medical care.

External support for all consumers: OPAN 1800 700 600; NSW Ageing & Disability Abuse Helpline 1800 628 221.

Reporting Obligations – Residential Aged Care and Community/Home Care

Carrington ensures full compliance with the Serious Incident Response Scheme (SIRS) by mandating timely and accurate reporting of all incidents involving actual or suspected abuse, neglect, or exploitation. The quality team should be notified when an issue is suspected so that support can be provided throughout the reporting and review of potential abuse. The following reporting requirements apply:

Mandatory Reporting under SIRS

All incidents must be reported in accordance with SIRS classifications and timeframes:

- Priority 1 Incidents: Must be reported to the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (ACQSC) within 24 hours of becoming aware of the incident.
- Priority 2 Incidents: Must be reported within 30 days of becoming aware of the incident.

Reporting Process

Reports are submitted via the My Aged Care Provider Portal, using the SIRS Decision Support Tool to determine the appropriate priority level and response.

Police Notification

Where there is a reasonable suspicion that a criminal offence has occurred, the matter must be reported to NSW Police without delay.

Retirement Living/ILU:

- Carrington maintains a clear and accountable internal reporting process for any concerns or allegations of abuse, neglect, or exploitation within Retirement Living settings. The process includes:
- Internal Notification: All concerns must be reported to the Village Care Coordinator (VCC) as the first point of contact.
- Acknowledgement and Triage: The VCC will acknowledge the report, assess the nature and urgency of the concern, and initiate appropriate triage actions.
- Escalation and Decision-Making: Matters requiring further actions such as noting, reviewing or follow up are escalated to the Executive Manager for Business Operations (EMBO) for decision-making and oversight.
- External Reporting and Support: Where appropriate, the matter may be referred to NSW Police and/or the NSW Ageing and Disability Commission (ADC).
- Evidence Preservation: All reasonable steps must be taken to preserve any evidence relevant to the concern.
- Support for the Older Person: The wellbeing, safety, and preferences of the older person are prioritised throughout the response process.

5. DOCUMENTATION AND PRIVACY

- Maintain secure records of allegations, actions, notifications (ACQSC, police, ADC), decisions and outcomes.
- For ILUs, records must include date of allegation/suspicion; brief description; whether police were notified; if not, rationale.

6. EDUCATION, COMMUNICATION AND CULTURE

- Mandatory induction and annual refreshers for all workers, aligned to Strengthened Standards and the Code of Conduct.
- Resident/consumer-facing materials: rights, how to get help (OPAN/ADC/SIRS).

7. MONITORING AND KPIS

- Leading indicators: 90% workforce trained; time to triage; time to ACQSC notification; 100% cases with safety plans; 100% ILU cases acknowledged within 24h.
- Lagging indicators: substantiation rate; repeat incidents; consumer satisfaction with responses; trend analysis with corrective actions.
- Quarterly Board reporting and continuous-improvement in place where issues have been identified.

8. REFERENCES

Name	Source
ACQSC – Strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards (providers)	https://www.agedcarequality.gov.au/providers/quality-standards/strengthened-quality-standards
Department of Health – Strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards (Aug 2025)	https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/strengthened-aged-care-quality-standards-august-2025?language=en
Retirement Village Elder Abuse Strategies	Retirement-village-operator-guide.pdf
Department of Health – About the new rights-based Aged Care Act (starts 1 Nov 2025)	https://www.health.gov.au/our-work/aged-care-act/about
ACQSC – Statement of Rights (workers)	https://www.agedcarequality.gov.au/workers/reform-changes-workers/statement-rights
Department of Health – Statement of Rights factsheet (replaces Charter 1 Nov 2025)	https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/2025-08/a-new-aged-care-act-for-the-rights-of-older-people.pdf
ACQSC – SIRS ‘About reportable incidents’ (Priority 1 <24h, Priority 2 <30 days)	https://www.agedcarequality.gov.au/providers/serious-incident-response-scheme/reportable-incidents/about-reportable-incidents
ACQSC – Reportable incidents (8 categories)	https://www.agedcarequality.gov.au/providers/serious-incident-response-scheme/reportable-incidents
Department of Health – Serious Incident Response Scheme (overview)	https://www.health.gov.au/our-work/serious-incident-response-scheme-sirs
ACQSC – Effective Incident Management Systems (best practice guidance)	https://www.agedcarequality.gov.au/resource-library/effective-incident-management-systems-best-practice-guidance
NSW – Interagency Policy: Preventing and responding to abuse of older people	https://dcj.nsw.gov.au/documents/community-inclusion/seniors/nsw-interagency-policy-preventing-and-responding-to-abuse-of-older-people.pdf
NSW Health PD2023_023 – Identifying and responding to abuse of older people	https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2023_023.pdf
OPAN – Aged Care Advocacy Line 1800 700 600	https://opan.org.au/
NSW Ageing & Disability Commission – Abuse Helpline 1800 628 221	https://ageingdisabilitycommission.nsw.gov.au/
NSW Fair Trading – Retirement villages complaints/enquiries	https://www.nsw.gov.au/departments-and-agencies/fair-trading/complaints-and-enquiries/housing-and-property/retirement-villages
ADC – Keeping residents safe from abuse (Retirement villages, Rule 10)	https://ageingdisabilitycommission.nsw.gov.au/tools-and-resources/for-professionals/retirement-village-elder-abuse-strategies.html