leading quality in community services

	Information Sharing Guidelines
Purpose	These Information Sharing Guidelines give effect to the *ACIA External 046 – Prevention and Management of Adverse Events in Community Care* policy. They set out clear, practical requirements for how information is identified, escalated, shared, stored, and used between: • ACIA • Certified Auditing Bodies (CABs) • Scheme Funders The Guidelines are designed to support early risk identification, participant safety, procedural fairness for providers, and consistent, lawful decision-making across the ACIS scheme.
Scope	These Guidelines apply to: • All ACIA staff, contractors, and representatives involved in certification, surveillance, quality assurance, or provider support • All CABs operating under the ACIS scheme • Information shared with Scheme Funders in connection with ACIS certification, surveillance, adverse events, or serious risk reviews They apply to both identified and deidentified information.
Legislative and Policy Framework	Information sharing under these Guidelines must comply with: • Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) • Relevant State and Territory privacy legislation • The Australian Community Industry Standards • The Australian Community Industry Certification Scheme (ACIS) • ACIA External 046 – Prevention and Management of Adverse Events in Community Care
Guiding Principles for Information Sharing	All information sharing will be guided by the following principles: **Lawfulness and necessity** Information is only shared where it is lawful, necessary, and directly related to managing safety, quality, or certification risk. **Proportionality** The amount and sensitivity of information shared will be proportionate to the level of identified risk. **Timeliness** Information relating to serious or emerging risks must be shared promptly to enable early intervention. **Accuracy and objectivity** Information shared must be factual, evidence based and clearly distinguish findings from allegations or preliminary concerns. **Procedural fairness** Where appropriate, providers will be afforded procedural fairness consistent with ACIS processes. **Confidentiality and security** Information will be handled securely and only disclosed to parties with a legitimate role in risk management.

Information Shared by Certified Auditing Bodies (CABs)	**Mandatory Escalation to ACIA**
	
	CABs must notify ACIA of the following matters within the timeframes below:
	
	Immediate notification (within 24–48 hours):
	• Serious or imminent risk to participant safety or wellbeing
	• Evidence or credible allegations of:
	  ○ Abuse, neglect, or exploitation
	  ○ Unauthorised restrictive practices
	  ○ Serious governance failure impacting service delivery
	• Major nonconformities where there is a high likelihood of harm
	• Any matter that may warrant suspension or revocation of ACIS certification
	
	Prompt notification (within 5 business days):
	• Repeated or systemic nonconformities
	• Emerging patterns of poor practice identified across audits
	• Significant deterioration in provider capability, staffing, or controls
	• Financial viability concerns impacting service continuity
	
	Information to be Provided
	Where practicable, CABs should provide:
	• Provider name and ACIS certification status
	• Nature of the risk or nonconformity
	• Evidence and audit findings supporting the concern
	• Initial risk rating and rationale
	• Immediate actions taken or recommended
	
	In addition, CABs shall follow the ACIA External 045 – Audit Report Timeframes Policy.

Information Shared by Scheme Funders	Scheme Funders may share information with ACIA to support risk-based certification and audit planning, including: • Deidentified incident and adverse event trend data • Notifications of serious adverse events involving ACIS certified providers • Intelligence relating to provider conduct, viability, or systemic risk • Requests for certification review, surveillance audits, or targeted assurance activity **Timeframes** • Serious or high-risk matters: as soon as practicable • Routine or trend-based information: prior to scheduled audits or through agreed periodic reporting
Information Shared by ACIA	**Information Shared with Scheme Funders** ACIA may share the following where relevant and lawful: • CAB audit outcomes and risk assessments • Certification decisions, conditions, suspensions, or revocations • Escalation advice regarding significant or imminent risks • Outcomes of risk reviews or surveillance audits Only information necessary to manage safety, quality, or scheme risk will be disclosed **Information Shared with CABs** ACIA may provide CABs with: • Relevant intelligence or concerns raised by Scheme Funders

	• Information to inform audit scope, focus, or timing • Deidentified sector trends or emerging risk themes
Managing Serious Risks and Adverse Events	Where information indicates a serious risk: • ACIA will coordinate with the CAB and relevant Scheme Funder • Possible actions include early surveillance audits, certification conditions, suspension, or revocation • Information sharing during this process will be ongoing, targeted, and documented
Deidentified Data and Sector Learning	ACIA may: • Aggregate and deidentify information for trend analysis • Share lessons learned with CABs and Scheme Funders • Publish high-level insights to support sector improvement • No information that could reasonably identify an individual participant or provider will be published.
Record-keeping and Security	• All information exchanges must be appropriately documented • Records will be stored securely in accordance with ACIA's information management policies • Access will be restricted to authorised personnel
Review and Continuous Improvement	These Guidelines will be: • Reviewed alongside ACIA External 046 or earlier if required • Updated in response to legislative change, stakeholder feedback, or emerging risks • Feedback from CABs and Scheme Funders will inform continuous improvement
References/ Resources	• Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) • Relevant State and Territory privacy legislation • The Australian Community Industry Standards • The Australian Community Industry Certification Scheme (ACIS) • ACIA External 046 – Prevention and Management of Adverse Events in Community Care