

# Workers Care Program

## Support and Advocacy Service for Injured Workers

### What is the Support and Advocacy Service (SAS)?

We understand that sometimes it can be difficult to speak up when you are unhappy about something. Sometimes you may want to make a complaint about us, the services we fund or the way we do things.

We want to provide you with access to an impartial and external support and advocacy service to assist you to make a complaint to us. The complaint process does not need to be navigated alone.

There is no requirement for you to use a SAS provider if you want to make a complaint. If you feel comfortable and confident making a complaint and do not need this help, you do not need to use it. The use of a SAS provider to assist you is entirely your choice.

### How can the SAS help me?

The SAS providers are intended to:

- provide you with information about our complaint process
- provide you with emotional and end-to-end support through this process
- minimise conflict throughout the complaint process by having an impartial person involved
- alleviate any misunderstandings you may have about the process or the outcome of the complaint, and
- allow you support and advocacy that is independent of Workers Care and that you can access anonymously (if you wish)

All SAS providers are impartial, independent from us and are not involved in your service delivery.

### Can the SAS help me lodge a dispute?

No, SAS providers are not able to assist you with lodging disputes.

If you disagree with a decision we have made about your medical, hospital and rehabilitation treatment, and decide to lodge a dispute, it will be heard by the Personal Injury Commission (PIC). It is not considered appropriate for the SAS providers to provide you with assistance regarding disputes that may be heard in the PIC.

If you wish to dispute a decision that we have made, talk to your icare contact in the first instance.

### How can I access the SAS?

The contact details for the SAS providers are contained at the end of this information sheet. You can contact them at any time to start receiving advocacy support for a complaint you are involved with.

Alternatively, you can ask your case manager or someone at Workers Care (such as your icare contact), or a member of the Lifetime Schemes Complaints and Disputes Service to touch base with a SAS provider who will contact you about the support you need.

## **How much does it cost?**

There is no cost involved in taking advantage of the complaint advocacy services available from the SAS providers. This service is funded by Workers Care at no cost to injured workers or their families.

## **Can I use the SAS for help with issues other than complaints?**

You are free to contact a SAS provider for help in relation to other issues, however such assistance will not be funded by Workers Care. It will be up to each SAS provider to decide if they can assist you and to advise you of any potential costs.

## **Will Workers Care know if I have used the SAS?**

Not unless you want us to know.

The advocacy and support services can be provided to you on a totally confidential basis. You can receive support during the entire complaint process from a SAS provider without Workers Care knowing about the service. Whether or not you want us to know is completely up to you.

## **Who are the SAS providers?**

### **Spinal Cord Injuries Australia**

Spinal Cord Injuries Australia's policy and advocacy team address many issues that affect people living with a spinal cord injury (SCI) and physical disability. They ensure that public money is spent on projects that promote inclusiveness, and lobby for new programs and services that address unmet needs. All their advocates have lived experience with SCI and physical disability.

Contact Spinal Cord Injuries Australia on 1800 819 775 or visit at [www.scia.org.au](http://www.scia.org.au)

### **Synapse**

Synapse has assisted, supported and advocated for people with a brain injury, their families and carers for over 30 years. Synapse's vision is that those affected by brain injury and profound disability in Australia are able to lead a life of quality, based on their own decisions and choices. Synapse has a team of highly qualified advocacy staff that will stand beside you, assist you and ensure your point of view is expressed.

Contact Synapse on 1800 673 074 or visit at [www.synapse.org.au](http://www.synapse.org.au)

### **Disability Advocacy NSW Inc (DA NSW)**

DA NSW provides advocacy to people with disabilities who experience unfair treatment or are experiencing disadvantage. DA NSW believes that people with disability have the same rights (and responsibilities) as people without disability. DA NSW aims to ensure that people with a disability realise these rights in practice by advocating with and for them. DA NSW will ensure that each person has access to the service and adopt, apply and promote non-discriminatory advocacy in respect to age, gender, race, culture, religion or disability.

Contact DA NSW on 1 300 365 085 or visit at [www.da.org.au](http://www.da.org.au)

## Who do I speak with for more information?

For more information about the SAS you can speak with either your icare contact or a member of the Lifetime Schemes Complaints and Disputes Service.

The Lifetime Schemes Complaints and Disputes Service can be contacted on 1300 738 586 or at [feedback.workers-care@icare.nsw.gov.au](mailto:feedback.workers-care@icare.nsw.gov.au)

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GPO Box 4052, Sydney, NSW 2001  
**General Phone Enquiries:** 1300 738 586  
Email: [care-requests@icare.nsw.gov.au](mailto:care-requests@icare.nsw.gov.au)  
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