



Patchwork-Guidelines for FACS Illawarra Shoalhaven

This document is designed for FACS Illawarra Shoalhaven staff registered as agents on Patchwork.



Document approval

The FACS/Patchwork Guidelines have been endorsed and approved by:

Gary Groves:

District Director: FACS IllawarraShoalhaven

Approval date:

Document version control

Distribution: Department of Family and Community Services –
Community Services (CS)

Department of Family and Community Services –
Housing NSW

Department of Family and Community Services –
Ageing, Disability and Home Care (ADHC)

Document name: FACS usage of Patchwork - Guidelines

Trim Reference:

Version: Version 1.0

Document status: Final Draft

File name: FACS Patchwork Guidelines

Next Review Date: June 2015

Table of contents

1	Purpose of FACS Patchwork Guideline.....	4
	1.1 Purpose.....	4
	1.2 Background	4
2	Relevant Policy and Code Reference documents	5
3	Scope and application	5
4	Patchwork Guideline.....	5
5	Security	7
6	Monitoring, evaluation and review	8

1 Purpose of FACS Patchwork guidelines

1.1 Purpose

FACS ISD staff across each of the streams Community Services (CS), Housing (HNSW) and Ageing, Disability and Home Care (ADHC) work closely with individuals, the service sector and stakeholders to achieve the best possible outcomes for individuals and to build strong and resilient communities.

This document is designed to guide how we conduct ourselves on Patchwork in the best interests of our clients. Government agencies involved in providing services to the public have a legal responsibility under the NSW Privacy & Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (the Privacy Act) to ensure their dealings with a person's personal information is lawful, and that an individual's rights to privacy are respected. By joining the Patchwork, agencies are confirming their intention to deal with information in a lawful and controlled way.

1.2 Background

Patchwork was developed by FutureGov in the UK in consultation with frontline practitioners. It is a secure, web based application which provides an avenue for frontline workers across multiple agencies to quickly access the contact details of other practitioners working with mutual clients to facilitate conversation and/or collaboration.

The idea behind Patchwork is that professionals are better able to provide services to a Client when they understand and can communicate with the whole team around the Client. Each person working with a Client can then be on the look out on behalf of other Agencies and can also communicate with those other Agencies in a quick and simple way.

5 key points about Patchwork are:

- 1) Patchwork lets practitioners connect around a Client.
- 2) Patchwork is a "super-charged" phonebook where you can access details of other workers and see who else is involved with your Client.
- 3) Patchwork keeps very limited information about the Client so that as many Agencies as possible can use Patchwork.
- 4) Using Patchwork you can raise an attention about a client to others working with the same person. The ability to raise concerns early to the team involved helps drive collaboration.
- 5) The mantra for Patchwork is our Client, not my Client.

2 Policy and Code Reference documents

The table below lists existing documents relevant to the use of Patchwork.

Policy and Code reference
Code of Ethical Conduct
Information Security Policy
Children and Young Persons Care and Protection Act 1998 (NSW)
Housing Act 2001 (NSW)
Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW)
Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 (NSW)

3 Scope and application

These guidelines apply to FACS Illawarra/Shoalhaven staff registered as agents on Patchwork. All FACS Community Services, Housing, and ADHC personnel registered on Patchwork must be frontline workers with client loads. No administrative staff will be authorised to be added as an agent on Patchwork.

4 Guidelines

4.1 Information Sharing

Government agencies involved in providing services to the public have a legal responsibility under the NSW Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 to ensure their dealings with a person's personal information is lawful and that an individual's rights to privacy are respected. By joining Patchwork FACS are confirming their intention to deal with information in a lawful manner.

Patchwork only stores essential information and is NOT case management. There is a minimal amount of information available to identify clients. Within Patchwork, practitioners are able to search for or add a client using or providing the following personal details only: Name, Date of Birth, partial address e.g. Post Code.

Only FACS staff directly working with clients will have access to Patchwork. FACS staff will be added onto the system by the Patchwork Administrator. Patchwork will connect FACS frontline staff with other

agencies working with the client as part of their case. In accordance with the Privacy Act a practitioner is prevented from using the information in Patchwork other than for this purpose.

4.1.1 Consent

FACS staff should follow existing best practice principles regarding obtaining client consent before placing them on Patchwork. For FACS Community Services staff, where clients/carers have not provided consent, refer to Chapter 16A of the Children and Young Persons Care & Protection Act 1998 and use your professional judgement in relation to using Patchwork.

- 4.1.2 All agencies on Patchwork are responsible for dealing with their own Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 requests and will also manage their own client complaints. Where a client wishes to be removed from Patchwork, other agencies involved should be notified along with the Patchwork Administrator. This action should be performed within 24 hours of the request being received by the Administrator.

Adding NGO agents to the client team.

Staff should exercise professional judgement and weigh up the benefit of inviting a particular agency/agent to the client care team against the risk that this may bring. You may be able to alleviate this risk by communicating with the practitioners in the care team. The value in Patchwork is to get a fuller picture of who is working with your client to better understand and support your client's needs and strengths.

The purpose of Patchwork is to promote collaboration by building a safe and secure network to connect with practitioners from different agencies for better outcomes for a child, young person and/or family.

4.1.3 Raising Attentions on Patchwork

Using the 'Raising Attention' function in Patchwork simply serves to notify the care team around a client that there is an increasing concern for the client. It does not replace good practice to communicate with the appropriate members of a care team or other agencies about the nature of the concern and devising a course of remedial action if required – nor does it replace any mandatory reporting processes. When concerns have been alleviated it is important to withdraw the 'Raising Attention' to ensure it does not remain indefinitely. This is to avoid the possibility of agents ignoring genuine attentions.

4.1.4 Interaction with other agencies

The purpose of Patchwork is to promote collaboration by building a safe and secure network to connect with practitioners from different agencies for better outcomes for a child, young person and/or family. Contact information contained within Patchwork is to promote co-operation between services and is a proportionate response to the problems of

multi agency information sharing, and rests on the premise that the responsibility to share is as important as the responsibility to maintain privacy. Agents on Patchwork are responsible for meeting their own agency's policies and procedures and best practice guidelines.

In the event, FACS staff notice any concerning behaviour of other agents on Patchwork; for example: agents adding themselves to client teams where you feel this to be inappropriate; or agents not removing themselves from client teams when no longer working with a client; or agents raising attentions on clients but not communicating with other agents regarding reasons for the attention etc. staff should contact the FACS Patchwork Administration Officer: Jo-Anne Rowland on: Jo-Anne.Rowland@facs.nsw.gov.au or the Patchwork District Coordinator (Christa.Thomas@facs.nsw.gov.au) for follow up.

5 Security

Patchwork can be accessed through the web across a 256 AES encrypted connection. FACS staff will be required to create strong passwords to activate their account. This will require 12 or more characters consisting of upper and lower case letters and numbers.

Access to Patchwork should be restricted to frontline FACS staff working with clients as part of their role. Information is not to be shared with any other agencies or individuals that have not been approved to join Patchwork and/or invited to join a client team. For FACS staff to be added to Patchwork they require their manager's approval

As a minimum the following will be in place:

- Access to the data should be restricted by password control;
- Access should be restricted to only those staff that require it as part of their role and are already working with the client;
- Data should not be stored/transferred on to any unprotected mobile equipment (for example data sticks);
- Information should not be printed from Patchwork;
- Up to date antivirus software should be running on all machines accessing the data; and
- Unprotected data should not be taken off site.

5:1 Data Quality

Each agency on Patchwork will be responsible for the quality/accuracy of the contact details they have entered and for informing other agencies or the Administrator of any inaccuracies discovered. Agents can only access information about their own clients – either having added them themselves or having been invited to the clients' team. There are no free-text fields to enter case plans, nor is there any capacity to upload or attach documents such as case notes to Patchwork.

6 Monitoring, evaluation and review

Patchwork is being implemented in the FACS Illawarra Shoalhaven District for a 3 year period starting June 2015. During this time monitoring, evaluation and review will be conducted by FACS head office.