# When and how to refer someone to Community Connections Program (CCP)

## What is Community Connections?

Community Connections Program assists participants to build their capacity to establish and connect with social and wellbeing supports in their local community.

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare states that social connection is important in shaping wellbeing across the life span. In contrast, loneliness can be harmful to both mental and physical health. However, strong social connections can improve quality of life and provide better health outcomes.

### Who is Community Connections for?

CCP is for South Australians aged 18 to 64, who are not eligible for Federal Government programs such as the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and My Aged Care.

Priority will be given to:

* Aboriginal peoples
* people from diverse cultures for whom English is not their first language
* people who identify as LGBTIQA+
* unpaid carers
* people who are financially disadvantaged
* people living in disadvantaged locations and communities.

### How Community Connections works

CCP funded Partners working together across South Australia provide short-term support usually for up to 12 weeks or connect participants with longer-term support if needed.

This may include helping someone to take part in local community activities and find new support groups or connecting them with the services that align to their needs.

### When is it appropriate to refer to Community Connections Program?

If you have someone in mind who would benefit from connecting with community, local services, and/or is in need of strengthening their social connections, please contact your Regional Coordinating Partner (RCP) or any of the partners in your region. Whether you are looking for support for yourself, a friend or a family member, or you are a service agency wanting to refer somebody to the program, the RCP in your area can be a good first point of contact.

### Contacting a Regional Partner (RCP)

Talk to a CCP Partner about how the program can help a participant reach their goals. RCPs are a great place to start the journey as they have strong relationships in the community as well as with program partners across their respective region. These partners can work with the participant to find an appropriate service or community group to reach their agreed goal or work with a participant to build their confidence and skills in engaging with their community.

**Southern and Northern Adelaide Regions**

Anglicare SA

North 0481 476 561 or South 0481 455 461

**Western Adelaide, Fleurieu and Kangaroo Island, Limestone Coast, Murray and Mallee Regions**

Skylight Mental Health 8378 4100

**Eyre and Western, Far North, Yorke and Mid North Regions**

Centacare Catholic Country SA 1800 759 865

**Adelaide Hills, Barossa, Light and Lower North Regions**

Lutheran Community Care 8269 9300

**Eastern Adelaide Region**

Uniting Communities 8202 5291

Find out more at [dhs.sa.gov.au/how-we-help/community-connections](https://dhs.sa.gov.au/how-we-help/community-connections)

### When the Community Connections Program is not the best referral pathway.

To ensure a participant’s experience is as positive as possible, it is important to understand the eligibility criteria and intent of CCP before referring a participant. For example, although CCP can assist in identifying and connecting people with services that can support them, such as the NDIS, Carer Gateway, or My Aged Care (as part of the program’s aim to connect to appropriate services), it is not the responsibility of CCP Partners or primary intent of the program to support applications for these Commonwealth service schemes.

If a person is in an acute state of crisis, a referral to an appropriate crisis support service, such as [other DHS services](https://dhs.sa.gov.au/contact/dhs-programs) or those listed by [[SA government emergency](https://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/public%2Bcontent/sa%2Bhealth%2Binternet/services/primary%2Band%2Bspecialised%2Bservices/helplines%2Band%2Bdirectories/helplines%2Band%2Bhealth%2Bservice%2Bdirectories) services](https://www.sa.gov.au/topics/emergencies-and-safety/crisis-helplines-and-support), is the first step. CCP is not an emergency or crisis service.

 A referral to CCP can be made once the crisis support is in place and the participant is ready to engage in a social or community connection. If you participant is dealing with a crisis situation, CCP is not to be your first point of contact. Also, referrals from other agencies for crisis support will not be accepted by CCP – CCP is not an emergency or crisis service. CCP has a focus of providing social and community connections for people who are isolated or requiring social support.

## How to refer a person to the Community Connections Program (CCP)

There are several ways of making the referral to Community Connections Program (CCP) happen. As previously advised, contacting your Regional Coordinating Partner (RCP) is a good first step, call the relevant RCP for the region you are in.

A referral can also be made to any of the Community Connections Partners, particularly if the organisation is already familiar or is located close to where a person lives or can get to more easily. Referrals can happen in four main ways:

* referral from a service provider
* from the person themselves, or
* from a family member or friend.

Our experience is that referrals facilitated through a more connected approach better support the introduction or transition of a participant. The CCP Program Partners are encouraged to use the following three methods:

**Warm Referral (preferred)** - A ‘live’ three-way conversation in the presence of the participant (whether face to face or by telephone) in which the referring organisation provides an introduction, explains what has already been done and why they are being referred. This provides an open and transparent process in which information can be exchanged between the CCP Partner, the participant, and the other service. Issues can be clarified immediately. The participant does not need to repeat their story. The process relies on someone being available at the other service at the time the participant is referred.

**Facilitated Referral** - The participant is helped to access the other service, for example, the referring organisation makes an appointment with the other service on the participant’s behalf, asks the other service to make contact with the participant(s) or a caller is transferred to the other service. The other service is made aware of the participant and the participant is helped to access that other service. The participant may need to wait for a response from the other service.

**Active Referral** - The referring organisation, with the participant’s consent, provides the organisation receiving the referral with information collected about the participant and/or with its professional assessment of the participant’s needs. The participant does not need to repeat their story and the agency receiving the referral has relevant information about the participant. However, there is a risk that the information is communicated out of context and misinterpreted by the service receiving the referral, especially if not done as a ‘warm’ referral.