

Care Pack Applications: Best Practice Guide For Counsellors



This guide is designed to support counsellors in completing strong, trauma-informed Care Pack applications by clearly linking requested items to a client's healing journey and recovery goals.

Purpose

This guidance helps counsellors provide clear, detailed, and trauma-informed information when submitting Care Pack applications for clients. Strong applications increase the likelihood of approval and ensure requested items directly support the client's healing journey.

Ensuring Applications Meet Guidelines

To ensure we can assess applications fairly and efficiently, it is important that Care Pack requests align with the guidelines outlined in this document. Applications that are incomplete, too general, or do not clearly link requested items to a client's healing journey following family or sexual violence may be declined. We share this not as a barrier, but to help minimise delays and ensure Care Packs are provided in a timely and meaningful way to those we support.

Quick Checklist



- Abuse type and impact clearly described.
- Trauma symptoms and recovery goals outlined.
- Client living situation, family, and interests included.
- Requested items are specific, tangible, and trauma-informed.
- Each item clearly linked to healing or recovery.
- Children included if relevant, with ages/genders.
- Language professional, confidential, and supportive.
- No requests for general financial support, food, or unapproved vouchers.

At a Glance

Section	Strong Response (Best Practice)	Weak Response (Avoid)
<p>1. Reasons client engaged in services</p>	<p>“The client engaged following a sexual assault that left her experiencing panic attacks, disrupted sleep, and difficulty trusting others. Counselling focuses on trauma processing, grounding, and rebuilding safety in daily routines.”</p>	<p>“The client is seeking support for Mental Health issues.”</p>
<p>2. Relevant client info (living situation, family, interests)</p>	<p>“The client is a single mother of two children (ages 9 Female and 6 Male) living in transitional housing. She enjoys journaling and walking outdoors, which support grounding and emotional regulation.”</p>	<p>“Client likes to do things for herself and with her children.”</p>
<p>3. Specific request for items/services</p>	<p>“Weighted blanket (~7kg) and aromatherapy items from Priceline. The blanket provides deep-pressure stimulation to reduce night-time anxiety, and aromatherapy supports grounding and relaxation.”</p>	<p>“Any nice things from the would be helpful.”</p>
<p>4. Additional info / context</p>	<p>“The client has been using journaling and art to process trauma. Providing a journal and art supplies will reinforce these coping strategies and support emotional regulation between sessions.”</p>	<p>“Client will like anything.”</p>

Model Care Pack Submission

Reasons client engaged in your service:

The client is a 32-year-old woman who began counselling following an incident of sexual assault by a known acquaintance six months ago. The assault occurred at her home, leaving her experiencing heightened anxiety, flashbacks, disrupted sleep, and difficulty trusting others. She engaged with our services to process trauma, develop coping strategies, and gradually rebuild a sense of safety in both her personal environment and relationships. Counselling has focused on stabilisation, grounding techniques, and re-establishing daily routines that promote emotional safety and self-care. She demonstrates commitment to her healing and is actively participating in sessions

The client lives alone in a small rental property and has limited family support, though she maintains close friendships that she is beginning to lean on again. She has a part-time job and is balancing work commitments with counselling. Her interests include painting, journaling, and walking outdoors, which she finds helpful for emotional expression and grounding.

These routines and hobbies support her trauma recovery by providing safe outlets for processing emotions and reconnecting with her body and environment. She is motivated to continue building independence and self-confidence after the assault and is actively working to integrate coping strategies into daily life.

Relevant information about the clients situation:

Specific Requests for Items or Services:

The client requests a **Self-Care & Comfort Pack** from Priceline and Kmart, including:

- A soft weighted blanket (~7kg)
- A plush robe
- Skincare items (unscented lotion, facial mask)
- Herbal teas
- A guided journal

These items are directly linked to her counselling goals:

- The weighted blanket provides deep-pressure stimulation that reduces night-time anxiety and supports rest.
- The robe and skincare items promote self-nurturing routines, helping the client reconnect with her body in a safe and comforting way.
- The herbal teas and journaling support grounding and reflection practices developed in sessions.

The client has been steadily progressing in therapy, learning to identify triggers, regulate emotional responses, and establish a sense of autonomy and safety. She reports that having tangible, comforting items supports her daily routine and provides a visible reminder that she deserves care and attention.

This Care Pack will directly support her trauma recovery and empower her to continue engaging in the strategies learned in counselling, fostering resilience and self-compassion as she moves forward.

**Additional Information
for context:**

Common reasons for denied requests

Vague Requests	Generic Voucher Request	Financial Assistance
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Too vague: does not specify what items, from where, or how they support recovery.• Lacks connection to counselling goals or trauma recovery.• Could be interpreted as general indulgence rather than therapeutic support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Visa or general-purpose vouchers are explicitly excluded except in very rare, approved circumstances.• No specificity about what the client would use the voucher for, or how it would support healing.• Committee cannot assess therapeutic value without a clear link to recovery goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Food, groceries, and general financial assistance are outside the foundation's remit.• Does not describe the therapeutic or recovery-related benefit of the requested item.• Committee cannot approve requests based on need alone; the focus must be on healing support.

Linking Mental Health Impacts to Family and Sexual Violence

We understand that mental health challenges are often a significant reason clients seek support, and we recognise the complex and lasting impact that trauma can have on emotional and psychological wellbeing. However, Care Pack applications must clearly demonstrate that the client is engaging in counselling or support services specifically due to experiences of family or sexual violence, rather than a standalone mental health condition. Where mental health concerns are identified, counsellors are required to explicitly link these current presentations to the client's experiences of violence or abuse, outlining how the impacts of that trauma continue to affect the client's wellbeing and recovery journey.

Shaping Care Packs Together

We welcome ongoing feedback regarding Care Pack items. As counsellors work closely with clients, you may become aware of items or resources that would be particularly meaningful or supportive to healing. If this occurs, we encourage you to share these suggestions with us so we can continue to review and evolve our Care Packs in a way that best reflects the needs of survivors.

Contact

We greatly value the important work counsellors and support workers do in walking alongside survivors on their healing journeys. Clear and thoughtful Care Pack applications help us ensure support is provided in a way that is meaningful, appropriate, and aligned with each client's recovery goals. If you have any questions about this guidance or would like to discuss a Care Pack application, please do not hesitate to contact us — we are always happy to support you.

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