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# Navigating My Aged Care

HANDBOOK

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The content in this workbook is provided for information purposes only. The contents of this workbook does not constitute legal advice and should not be used as such. Every care has been taken in relation to its accuracy, however no warranty is given or implied. Formal legal advice should be sought in particular matters.

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## 1. Introduction

[Carers NSW](#) has developed this handbook to be used as a reference for the 'Navigating My Aged Care' training module, and also as a stand-alone resource when you need a reminder, update or access certain information about aged care services. This interactive handbook will help you to access information that you feel is relevant for your caring role and situation at a specific time. Another advantage of the stand-alone resource is that the information should remain current and up to date due to the links that are included.

The handbook provides information on accessing aged care services: where to start, who is eligible, the assessment process and services available, both at home and residential aged care facilities. The advantages of this handbook are that it can be used as a starting point, when the caring needs of your family member or friend change, and to keep you updated on the current aged care reforms. This handbook provides links to the information on the next five years of aged care reforms. The 5 key pillars of reform are:

- Home Care
- Residential aged care services and sustainability
- Residential aged care quality and safety
- Workforce
- Governance

Aged care reforms will aim to have a positive impact on the availability, speed and clarity of the assessment process to identify the needs of those requiring aged care services. These measures will result in high quality, safe care services and provide dignity and respect to our senior Australians. More information can be found online at [Initiatives and programs aged care reforms](#)

If you need support with your caring role, visit the [Carer Gateway](#) website or call the Carer Gateway Service Provider in your region on **1800 422 737**, Monday to Friday, 8am till 5pm. Emergency respite is available through this phone number, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Carer Gateway is a national support service funded by the Australian Government. It offers tailored supports and services for carers to help manage challenges, reduce stress and plan ahead.

There will be benefits to informal carers with a more integrated approach to their rights and responsibilities with relation to their caring role and their own health and wellbeing needs. The Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety has recommended that by 1 July 2022 My Aged Care be linked to Carer Gateway, so that informal carers need only use one system to secure respite care and the full range of information, training and support services available through both systems. Informal carers of older people should have certainty that they will receive timely and high quality supports in accordance with their assessed need. More information can be found in the [Aged Care Royal Commission final report](#).

## 2. What is My Aged Care?

- My Aged Care is the main entry point to the aged care system in Australia.
- My Aged Care aims to make it easier for older people, their families and carers to access information on ageing and aged care, have their needs assessed and be supported to find and access services.

### Target population

- 65 years and older
- 50 years and older and Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- 50 years and older on a low income, homeless or at risk of homelessness.

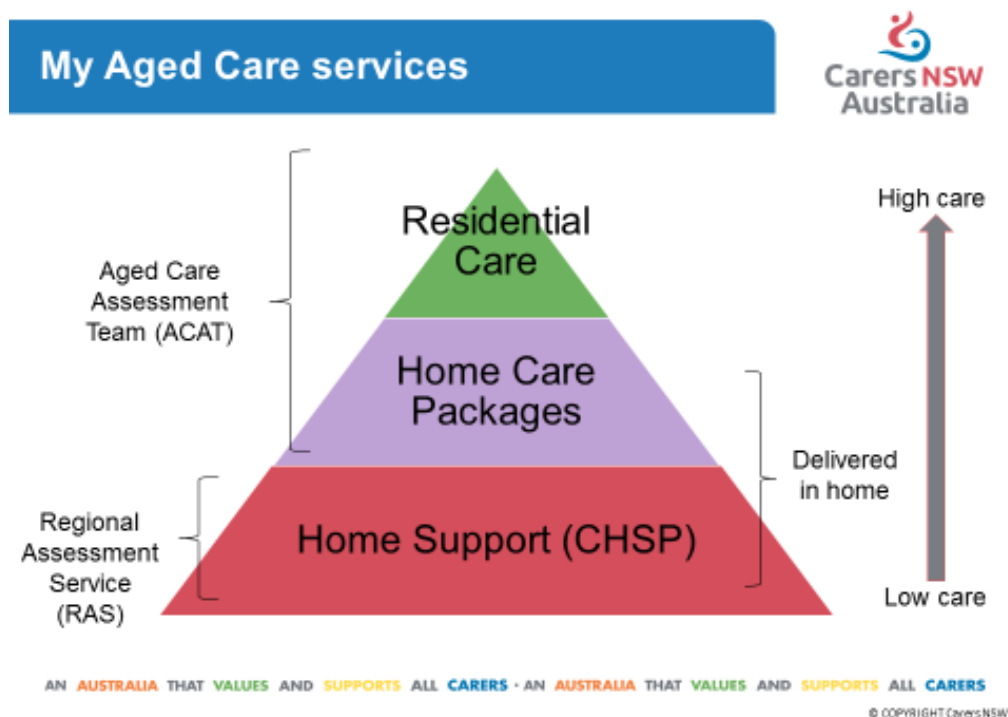
## 3. How to contact My Aged Care?

- My Aged Care Contact Centre Monday to Friday 8.00am – 8.00pm; Saturday 10.00am – 2.00pm. Closed Public Holidays
- National phone number 1800 200 422 (Freecall) [My Aged Care website](#)

## 4. What services are available?

The following diagram displays My Aged Care services:

- **Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP)** – low level support obtained through a Regional Assessment Service (RAS) assessment
- **Home Care Packages (HCP)** – more complex in-home and community support, obtained through an Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT) assessment.
- **Residential Aged Care Facility (RACF)** – high care in a residential aged care facility where they receive 24 hour care if required, obtained through an ACAT assessment.



### (a) Care at home

My Aged Care can help the person that you care for access services at home to improve their wellbeing and help them to stay independent longer. Receiving help with regular activities at the right time can help them to manage better at home. This may be one or two services for a person

with low support needs, like those services available through CHSP. Alternatively, it may be a package of care and support like that available through HCP.

The person you care for may be eligible to receive a range of services and supports to help their day to day activities such as:

- personal care, for example, help getting dressed
- transport
- modifications to your home, for example hand rails or ramps
- nursing, physiotherapy and other care
- meals
- household jobs like cleaning or gardening
- equipment, such as walking frames
- social activities

For more information, view the [CHSP service catalogue](#)

### **(b) Short-term help**

My Aged Care can help you and the person you care for access short-term care services for situations such as:

- recovery from an accident or illness, including after a hospital stay
- when the person you care for has a setback and wants to regain their independence
- when you or your carer need a break (respite care)

Examples include:

- Short-term restorative care (STRC) which is designed to help a person recover from injury or illness. It's a free service funded by My Aged Care, and it aims to get a person moving and helps them retain their independence.

For more information, view the following link: [STRC program](#)

- Transitional Aged Care Program (TACP) provides short-term care to help older people recover from a hospital stay and regain function. Different types of care and support may be provided such as low intensity therapy (physiotherapy, occupational therapy, social work and other allied health care), nursing support and personal care.

For more information, view the following link: [Transition care programme](#)

- Residential respite in an aged care home is available for a few days to a few weeks at a time if a person needs ongoing, continuous carer support for most tasks.

For more information, view the following link: [Short-term residential respite](#)

### **(c) Care in a residential aged care facility**

If you find the person you care for needs ongoing help with day-to-day tasks or health care, a residential aged care facility provides them a supported environment where help is available 24 hours a day.

### **(d) Are you eligible for services?**

A call to My Aged Care can help you understand:

- what services may be available
- how much they cost
- how you can access them

### (e) Who pays for services?

The Australian Government contributes to the cost of aged care services. The person you care for is expected to contribute to the cost if they can afford to. How much they pay may depend on:

- their financial situation
- the number and types of services they receive
- the service provider

Working out how much the person you care for will pay is a key step when deciding what aged care services are right for them. Some of the fees and costs depend on their financial situation. In this situation, the Australian Government uses income assessments or means (income + assets) assessments to work this out. The following section identifies the types of costs and fees they may have to pay, depending on the type of service a person is eligible for.

If the person you care for is eligible for **Commonwealth Home Support Programme** services, it is not necessary to complete a means assessment. Services will start only after consultation and an agreement of the fees and services is reached between both parties. Service providers will charge different amounts for their services, and the person you care for will typically pay an hourly rate for the services they receive, on the days they receive them. There are no exit fees.

For more information, view the following link: [Commonwealth Home Support Programme costs](#).

A person applying for a **Home Care Package** will be asked to pay a basic daily fee, and may also be asked to pay an income-tested care fee. An income assessment determines if the fee needs to be paid.

For more information, view the following link: [Home Care Packages](#)

The following link provides more information on HCP costs and fees:

[Home Care Package costs and fees](#).

A link to the Home Care Package Calculation of your care form can be found at the following site:

[HCP calculation of your cost of care form](#)

When a person moves into a **Residential Aged Care Facility**, they may have to pay a means-tested care fee and accommodation costs. A means assessment determines if a person needs to pay the means-tested care fee and if the Australian Government will contribute to their accommodation costs. Everyone who moves into an aged care home negotiates a room price before moving in.

For more information, view the following link: [Aged care home costs and fees](#).

## 5. My Aged Care representatives

If the older person you care for is capable of providing consent, but would like you to speak to My Aged Care on their behalf, you can be set up as their *regular representative*. In this instance, the person you care for just needs to provide their permission on the phone to My Aged Care.

If an older person cannot give consent for you to speak to My Aged Care, i.e. they do not have capacity to make decisions, you will need to become their *authorised representative*. To become an authorised representative, you will need to give My Aged Care legal documents to show that you can legally act in this role. Examples include Enduring Guardianship and Enduring Power of Attorney.

When My Aged Care receives your completed form, they will register both the person you care for, and you as their representative. They may call you if they need extra information to process the form.



Once a representative has been put in place, they can call My Aged Care on 1800 200 422 to talk about aged care assessments and services for the older person.

The following link explains what a representative can do:

[Details of My Aged Care representatives](#)

This link explains more information about the two types of Representative and a link to the form:

[Appointment of a Representation Form \(PDF\)](#)

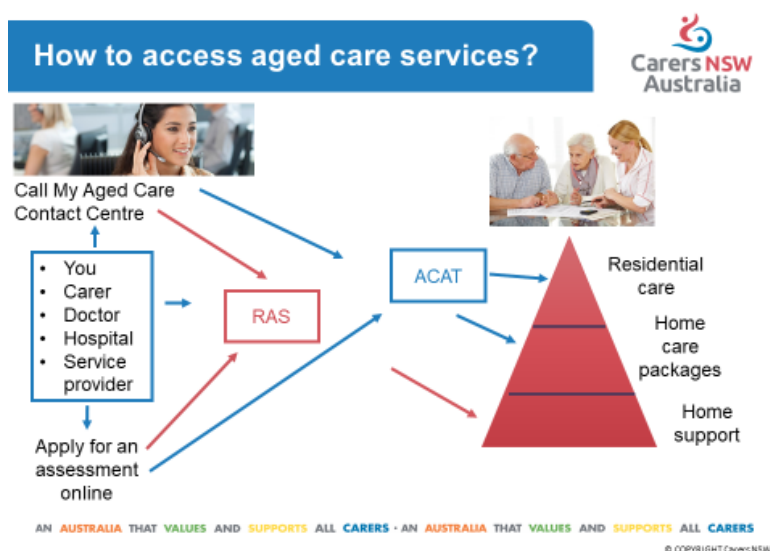
## 6. Assessment process

Before a person can access any government funded services, they must have a My Aged Care assessment to ensure they receive the most relevant care and support.

My Aged Care Contact Centre staff complete an initial needs identification of clients by asking a series of questions over the phone. Screening occurs after a person registers with My Aged Care and has a client record created. Questions will be asked over the phone to help work out a person's needs and care arrangements – this takes at least 10 minutes. You will need the Medicare card of the person you care for. For more information, view the following link: [Contact My Aged Care.](#)

It is also possible to apply for an assessment online, which is quite straight forward and applies to CHSP services, HCP and RACF. [Apply for an assessment online.](#)

The following diagram depicts how to initially contact My Aged Care, the two assessment types being used and the general services they give a person access to if they are eligible.



### (a) Initial contact with My Aged Care

This section explains the initial steps when it becomes apparent that the person you care for may need some aged care services. This is explained in the next steps and illustrated in the diagram.

#### 1. How to begin Contact with My Aged Care?

- The first step is to identify the reason you or the person you care for are contacting My Aged Care



- At this stage determine the best way to make the first contact – through the phone to the contact centre or filling out the form online?
- Will you be speaking on behalf of the person you care for? If so, either ask the person you care for to speak to My Aged Care on the phone or fill in the My Aged Care Representative Form.

## **2. Initial conversation with My Aged Care**

- Provide all relevant details of the person you care for to My Aged Care
- Answer all questions that My Aged Care asks about the person you care for
- Wait for a response from My Care as to whether services are available, and if so, what type.
- The type of services required determine which assessment needs to be undertaken

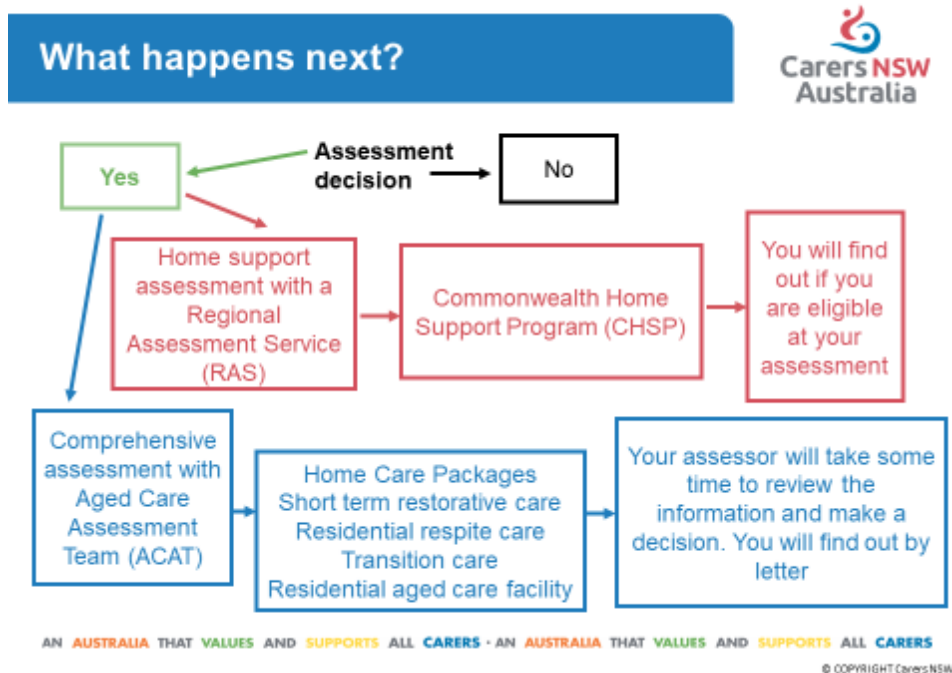
## **3. Assessment process**

- The assessor asks a number of questions to determine a person's needs
- If a person's application is successful, they will be contacted by an assessor who advises them of the outcome of the assessment.
- An ACAT assessment is usually undertaken at home or in hospital and a person will be eligible for a HCP, and/or RACF.
- A RAS assessment is usually undertaken at a person's home and they will hear quickly if they are eligible to receive CHSP.
- A person is advised of the outcome of the RAS assessment at this time.

## **4. What happens next?**

The following diagram displays the outcomes of both a RAS and ACAT assessment.

- If a person is not eligible for a service, the assessor will explain this.
- Those who undertook a RAS assessment and are successful, will be told they are eligible for CHSP.
- Those who undertook an ACAT assessment and are successful will be sent a comprehensive report outlining what they are eligible for (e.g. HCP, STRC, RRC, TC and RACF)



## 7. Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP)

CHSP is intended for seniors requiring one or two basic services, either in the short-term or on an ongoing basis. The assessor will let you and the person you care for know if they are eligible for CHSP services at the assessment, as well as identifying the relevant services. Note the following

### (a) I'm eligible – what's next?

The person you care for will receive a referral code for each service. You can connect with local service providers either by:

- Asking your assessor to make a referral for the person you care for, or
- Making the referral yourself, on behalf of the person you care for.

### (b) Services may not start immediately

The service provider will explain how the service operates, their fee policy, and their complaints policy. They will undertake a risk assessment and ask the older person or you as their carer to sign a service agreement before starting services.

Due to the demand in services, the person you care for may have to wait. It is recommended that you stay in touch with the service provider to be updated as to when the services will be available.

If the services are not available and there is no waiting list due to too much demand, it is suggested you contact Carer Gateway, as you may be eligible for a Tailored support package. For more information, visit the following link: [Carer Directed Support](#)

### (c) Do I have to accept a service provider or service?

A referral to a service provider gives you and the person you care for the opportunity to look elsewhere if you don't feel it is the right service provider for them. Checking several service

providers, asking the questions that matter to you and the person you care for is the way to locate the appropriate provider. . For more information, visit the following link: [Find a Provider](#)

**(d) I'm not eligible – what now?**

The assessor will explain why and discuss the options with you and the person you care for.

**(e) Costs – check with the service provider**

Ask them how much the person you care for will contribute, how often they will pay for the service and what happens if they take a break. Remember you can negotiate the cost with their preferred provider.

If the person you care for can't afford a contribution, speak to their provider as they may have policies to protect those unable to contribute.

**(f) What if my needs change?**

You may notice that the needs of the person you care for change and they no longer need the current service but require a different service. If this occurs, speak to their provider or call My Aged Care.

## 8. Home Care Packages (HCP)

Generally a person with more complex needs than those receiving CHSP, requiring two or more service types and care coordination will be considered for a HCP.

There is a high demand for Home Care Packages. Packages are allocated fairly, based on the approval date and priority letter sent to you by the Aged Care Assessment Team. Those with urgent needs are approved as high priority. This ensures they receive access to care much sooner.

**(a) HCP levels**

The diagram below displays the four levels of home care packages. The Australian Government pays a different subsidy amount for each level of Home Care Package. This amount is paid to the home care provider that you or the person you care for choose.

- **Level 1**

Those assigned a Level 1 HCP are those with basic care needs. They may receive up to \$24.73 per day (\$9,000 per year) to help purchase services and supports needed to stay at home (March 2022).

For more information, visit the following link: [HCP Government subsidy](#)

- **Level 2**

Those assigned a Level 2 HCP are those with low-level care needs. They may receive up to \$43.50 per day to help purchase services and supports needed to stay at home (March 2022).

For more information, visit the following link: [HCP Government subsidy](#)

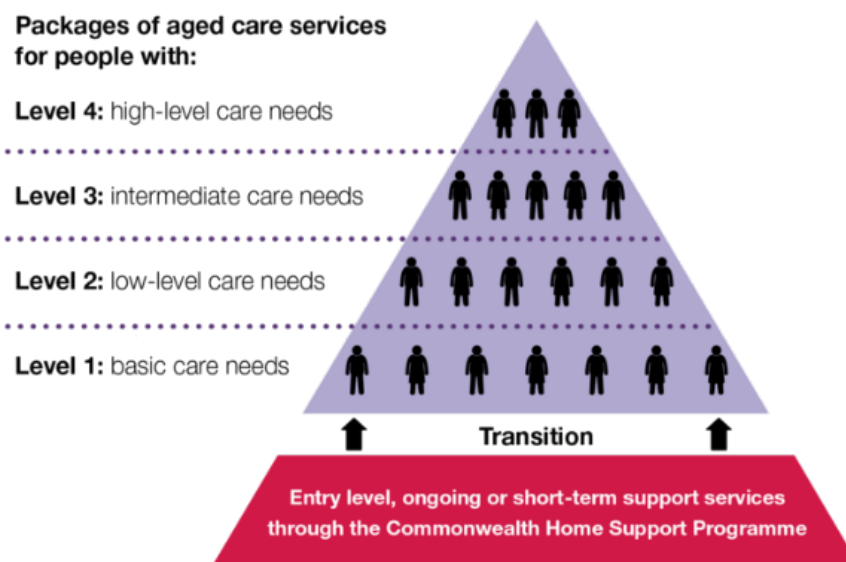
- **Level 3**

Those assigned a Level 3 HCP are those with intermediate care needs. They may receive up to \$94.66 per day to help purchase services and supports needed to stay at home (March 2022).

For more information, visit the following link: [HCP Government subsidy](#)

- **Level 4**

Those assigned a Level 4 HCP are those with high-level care needs. They may receive up to \$143.50 per day to help purchase services and supports needed to stay at home (March 2022). For more information, visit the following link: [HCP Government subsidy](#)



Australian Government. Department of Health. Home Care Packages Program: Operational manual for Home Care Package consumers. Version 1.2 Sept 2021. Page 12, 2.1. What is a Home Care Package?

**(b) Letter of Approval from My Aged Care**

The letter advises the person you care for that they are eligible for a Home Care Package (HCP), including details of the package level, priority and type of care but it does not mean that they can start their HCP yet. While the wait time from receiving this letter of approval and obtaining services is long, it has improved dramatically in the last 9 months (see Expected Wait Time in (d) below).

This letter will also provide advice on what you can do while waiting for a package to be assigned.

**(c) Letter of assignment**

This letter advises that a Home Care Package (HCP) is now available. It also includes a referral code and confirms the level of the HCP that has been allocated. A referral code is one unique number for a person's HCP.

If their ACAT assessment also shows that they are eligible for Residential Aged Care Facility, they will also receive a referral code for residential care.

There may also be CHSP referral codes due to the wait time of Home Care Packages levels 2-4.

**(d) Expected wait time**

The Aged Care Reforms approved by the Australian Government for the next 5 years will ensure that there will be an increase in home care services, resulting in significant reduction in wait times. The early reforms have resulted in a reduction in wait times for levels 2-4, which were previous 12 – 18 months. Note the current wait time in the table below.

### Expected Wait Time – Home Care Package National Queue

Approved Home Care Package level	Wait time from letter of approval
Level 1	3 – 6 months
Level 2	6 – 9 months
Level 3	6 – 9 months
Level 4	6 - 9 months

Last revised 31 March 2022

For more information, visit the following link: [Assessment decision Home Care Packages](#)

#### (e) How can I get help sooner?

Note the following options if a person needs services sooner than their expected wait time. It is important to note that interim packages do not affect someone's position in the queue.

##### 1. Interim Packages

In some instances a lower level HCP may become available. This is called an interim package and may be offered while waiting for your approved package level. For example, you may be waiting for a Level 4 home care package and be offered a Level 1 package in the meantime. If you accept an interim package, it will not affect your position in the queue.'

##### 2. Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP)

Another option is to seek help through the CHSP. Tell the assessor that you would like to explore this option for the person you care for. They will help you find out if they're eligible for specific services. The option to receive services through CHSP is generally discussed at the time of assessment. If not it is recommended that you bring it up with the assessor at the time.

##### 3. Carer Gateway

As with those seeking a CHSP service, if there is still a need for services during the wait time, it is suggested that you, as the carer, contact Carer Gateway, as you may eligible for a Carer Directed Support service. For more information, visit the following link: [Tailored Support Packages](#)

##### 4. Non-government funded services

These services may be an option if the person you care for needs care while waiting for their approval or when an interim package becomes available.

The following link provides information about non-government funded services at home or in an aged care home: [Non-government funded providers](#)

#### (f) What to do while waiting?

Start to gather information so that you're prepared once the person you care for is assigned a Home Care Package.

Here are some things to do while you both wait:

##### 1. Search for providers

Find the local service providers that meet the needs of the person you care for by using the Find a Provider tool.

[Find a Provider tool](#)

2. **Look into the costs**

Understand the fees they may be asked to pay and how much each service provider charges for their services.

[Home Care Packages costs and fees](#)

3. **Visit providers**

Visiting providers can help you both decide whether they are right for the person you care for.

[Connect with Home Care Package providers](#)

**(g) Fees: Home Care Packages**

**Basic daily fee**

The basic daily fee is set by the government at a percentage of the single basic age pension. This fee varies depending on a person's HCP (see table below for details). Every older person receiving a HCP will be asked to pay a basic daily fee if they can afford to do so. Generally, a provider will invoice you or the person you care for weekly or fortnightly or monthly.

From 20 March 2022, the basic daily fee by Home Care Package level is:

Package level	Daily fee	Annual fee
Level 1	\$10.08	\$3,679.20
Level 2	\$10.66	\$3,890.90
Level 3	\$10.97	\$4,004.05
Level 4	\$11.26	\$14,109.90

The basic daily fee is added to the government subsidy to increase the funds available to you in your HCP budget.

The basic daily fee changes in March and September each year in line with the age pension.

For more information, visit the following link: [Home Care Package budgets](#)

**What is the income-tested care fee?**

The income-tested care fee is an extra contribution that some people pay, as determined through an income assessment. This fee is different for everyone. It's based on individual income including your pension. However, full pensioners do not pay an income-tested care fee.

For more information, visit the following link: [Home Care Packages costs and fees.](#)

The following link also gives you information on whether you need to fill out an income and means assessment: [Do I need to complete an income and means assessment?](#)

## 9. Residential aged care facility fees (RACF)

Working out how much a person will pay is a key step when deciding what aged care services are right for them. Some of the fees and costs depend on your financial situation. The Australian Government uses income assessments or means (income + assets) assessments to work this out.

### (a) Basic Daily fee

Based on current rates, the maximum basic daily fee is \$54.69 per day, or \$19,961.85 per year as at 20 March 2022.

This fee helps pay for a person's day-to-day services such as meals, cleaning, facilities management and laundry. Everyone is expected to pay a basic daily fee to cover these services. The basic daily fee is 85% of the single person rate of the basic age pension. The government sets the price on 20 March and 20 September each year, changing in line with increases to the age pension. For more information, visit the following link: [Department of Health website](#).

When a person moves into a residential aged care facility, Services Australia will send a letter confirming their maximum Daily Basic Fee.

For more information, visit the following link: <https://www.myagedcare.gov.au/aged-care-home-costs-and-fees>

### (b) Means-tested fee

Additional care contribution costs based on an individual's income and assets assessment.

The Means-tested Care Fee is an additional contribution towards the cost of aged care. The fee that someone pays will be from \$0 to between \$259.26 per day.

Not everyone will have to pay a means-tested care fee. The exact amount to pay is determined through a [means assessment](#).

## 10. Reforms to aged care

### (a) Support at Home

The Australian Government has announced that it is developing a single Support at Home program for older persons. The new program aims to provide a seamless system of care and match timely services to the needs of older people living at home and in the community. It will be easier to navigate and better support older people and their informal carers. For more information, visit the following link: [Reform to in-home aged care](#).

The main aims are to:

- put the older person at the centre of their care
- better match assessed needs with appropriate care and supports, and
- ensure that services are safe and of high quality.

From July 2023, the new Support at Home program will replace:

- Commonwealth Home Support (CHSP)
- Home Care Packages (HCP)
- Short-Term Restorative Care (STRC)
- Residential respite care

For more information, visit the following link: [Reform to in-home aged care](#)



### **(b) Residential Aged Care Facilities (RACF)**

From 1 October 2022, the single assessment workforce will have responsibility for residential aged care funding assessments as the transition to the Australian National Aged Care Classification (AN-ACC) commences.

The new funding model will apply to all permanent aged care residents in Australia. Residential respite funding will also change from 1 October 2022. On this date the AN-ACC will replace the Aged Care Funding Instrument (ACFI).

The introduction of the AN-ACC funding model will deliver:

- a funding model that better matches funding to resident needs
- a more equitable distribution of funding
- independent assessment of resident need for funding purposes, freeing nurses from funding paperwork
- a new methodology for annual changes in prices/indexation, informed by independent costing studies and advice
- an equitable model for distributing funding uplifts from 1 October 2022, including the basic daily fee supplement, care minutes funding and increased residential respite funding.

[Residential Aged Care Funding Reform](#)

## **11. Support services for navigating aged care**

Findings from the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety indicated that older people continue to have difficulties navigating the aged care system. As a result, across Australia existing supports will continue and some new supports are being put in place, including the following:

### **(a) Aged Care Specialist Officer**

A new My Aged Care face-to-face service commenced at 16 selected Services Australia Service Centres to help older Australian access the government-funded aged care services they need. The plan is to rollout to 80 locations by December 2022.

Aged Care Specialist Officers can:

- give you in-depth information about the different types of aged care services
- determine your eligibility for aged care services
- refer you for a My Aged Care assessment
- provide you financial information about aged care services
- help you appoint a My Aged Care representative
- connect you to local support services

To find out more information about My Aged Care face-to-face services, visit [Services Australia](#) or call 1800 22 475

### **(b) Aged Care Navigator Trials: COTA Australia**

The Aged Care Navigators Trial provides a free, independent and confidential service to older people, their families and carers on:

- the types of subsidised aged services available;

- how to access aged services
- registering with My Aged Care and understanding how the system works
- the supports available in your area
- how to compare services, facilities and prices
- other options if you are on a waiting list for services

For more information, visit the following link: [COTA Aged Care Navigator Trials](#)

For more information or to make an appointment, call 0438 431 817 or 8268 9601 or email to [acsn@cotansw.com.au](mailto:acsn@cotansw.com.au).

## Appendix A: Glossary of terms

Term	Definition
Additional service fee	A person living in an aged care home may be asked to pay an additional service fee if they request or agree to additional services such as newspapers, hairdressing and special therapies such as massage, hydrotherapy. Not all residential aged care facilities include additional services.
Advanced care directive	A written advance care plan which can record the person's preferences for future care and appoint a legal substitute decision maker. This substitute decision maker can make decisions about health care and life management when the person is unable to express their preferences because of illness or injury.
Advance care planning	A process for future health and personal care whereby the person's values, beliefs and preferences are made known so these can guide decision making at a future time when that person cannot make or communicate his or her decisions.
Advocacy group	Advocacy groups use various forms of advocacy to influence public opinion and/or policy. For example, Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN) is the organisation contracted by the Australian Government to provide free, independent and confidential advocacy services to older people using or planning to use Australian Government funded aged care services, as well as their family and carers. Seniors Rights Service offers free legal advice on many legal issues to older people in NSW, as well as a comprehensive referral service.
Age Pension	If a person has reached retirement age they may receive the Age Pension. This is a Services Australia payment which ensures the person has an income for their retirement.
Age Pension (Blind)	If the person you care for is 66 and 6 months or older, and legally blind, they are eligible to receive the Aged Pension (Blind) from Services Australia. This payment is not means tested for pensioner purposes, but it will be counted as income when income tested fees for aged care facilities are assessed. If the person you care for receives the full Disability Support Pension, or Age Pension, they won't receive any additional income from the blind pension.
Aged care	<p>Older persons living in Australia may receive aged care support and services. This is the personal and/or nursing care to support the person to stay as independent and healthy as possible.</p> <p>Aged care can also help if you are caring for someone older by providing support to look after the person you care for. It is delivered through either an aged care facility or in home care.</p>

Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT)	ACAT assessors are teams of health professionals who conduct comprehensive face-to-face assessments of older people who have complex aged care needs. ACATs can approve older people to access residential aged care, Home Care Packages and transition care. An ACAT assessor may include a nurse, social worker and/or other health professionals.
Aged Care Client Record (ACCR)	The Aged Care Client Record (ACCR) is the form completed by the Aged Care Assessment Team following an assessment. It includes information about the older person's assessment and approval to receive a Home Care Package, transition care or help at home or move into an aged care facility.
Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission	The role of the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission is to protect and enhance the safety, health, wellbeing and quality of life of people receiving aged care. If you have a concern about an aged care service call 1800 951 822 Mon-Fri 9.00am – 5.00pm.
Aged care service	An aged care service provides care and services through residential, home or flexible care settings.
Basic daily fee	The person receiving care may be asked to pay a basic daily fee if they are moving into an Australian Government-subsidised residential aged care facility. This fee is a contribution towards the daily living costs such as meals, power and laundry. For some people this is the only fee they are required to pay.
Care plan	A care plan outlines the person's care needs and instructions about how these needs will be met. This plan can be developed by a person's health professional who will seek both your input and the person you care for when developing and updating the care plan.
Care recipient	The care recipient is the person receiving care and support either in the community, their own home or in an aged care facility. The care they receive may include support to take part in social activities, help with physical tasks and/or medical and personal care.
Carer Allowance	If you are a carer providing daily care and attention for a person aged 16 years or older with a disability, a severe medical condition or who is frail aged at home, then you may be eligible for a Carer Allowance. This is a fortnightly payment administered by Services Australia, which may be paid in addition to other payments.
Carer Payment	If you are a carer who is unable to participate in paid employment because of the demands of your caring role, then you may be eligible for income support in the form of a Carer Payment. This payment is administered by Services Australia.
Carer support groups	If you are a carer and would like to meet other carers, then you may like to consider joining a carer support group. These groups provide an opportunity for people with similar experiences to get together and learn from each other by

	sharing experiences, feelings, ideas, concerns, information and problems. They are also a great way to take a break and socialise.
Client	Once registered with My Aged Care an older person becomes a client.
Client record	<p>A Client Record is created by My Aged Care contact centre staff for people seeking access to aged care services. The client record will include client details (and carer or representative details), details about assessments and support plan, and information about service(s) received.</p> <p>Clients will be asked to provide consent to enable their client record to be created and shared with assessors and service providers.</p> <p>Assessors and service providers will update information on the client record, and clients and their representatives will be able to view this information on the My Aged Care client portal, via myGov.</p> <p>A person with a client record with My Aged Care can access it through myGov. The client record allows the client or their Representative to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. update their personal details</li> <li>2. view their assessment information and support plan, which outlines their assessed care needs</li> <li>3. view their recommendations and approvals for services</li> <li>4. view any referrals to service providers</li> <li>5. view their service delivery information</li> <li>6. view a summary of My Aged Care activities recently undertaken</li> <li>7. update their client representatives. These are the people the client has given permission to view their client record.</li> </ol>
Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP)	The CHSP provides entry-level support for older people who require assistance to stay at home. Service providers work with older people to maintain their independence and wellbeing
Consumer Directed Care (CDC)	From 1 July 2015, all Home Care Packages are delivered on a Consumer Directed Care (CDC) basis. CDC allows you and the person you care for to have more control over the design and delivery of the services they receive.
Daily Accommodation Contribution (DAC)	The DAC is the equivalent daily contribution for accommodation costs in an Australian Government-subsidised aged care facility, i.e. the Australian Government helps with the costs. Payment is made on a regular basis, up to a month in advance, similar to paying rent. This payment is non-refundable.
Daily Accommodation Payment (DAP)	The DAP is the equivalent daily payment for accommodation costs in an Australian Government-subsidised aged care facility. In this instance, you or the person you care for pay the full amount. Payment is made on a regular basis, up to a month in advance. This payment is non-refundable.

Enduring guardianship	An Enduring Guardian is a person appointed to make health, lifestyle and medical decisions on behalf of a person who is assessed as incapacitated of making these decisions themselves. This can only be used when a person no longer has capacity and must be signed before a person loses capacity.
Extra or additional optional services	If a person is moving into a residential aged care facility, they may be asked to pay additional fees if they choose higher standards of accommodation or additional services. These vary from facility to facility. An aged care provider can provide the details of these services and the fees that apply.
Financial hardship provisions	If a person living in a residential aged care facility has genuine difficulty in paying their aged care payments and relevant ongoing expenses, they may be eligible for financial hardship provisions provided under the Aged Care Act 1997. Financial hardship assistance may be available if, through matters beyond their control, they do not have the income or assets available to pay their care costs. Every case is considered on an individual basis and based on each resident's financial circumstances.
Home care packages	<p>There are four levels of home care packages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level 1 supports people with basic-care needs</li> <li>• Level 2 supports people with low-level care needs</li> <li>• Level 3 supports people with immediate-care needs</li> <li>• Level 4 supports people with high-level care needs</li> </ul>
Home modification	Home modification services can include installing grab-rails, hand-held showers, easy-to-use tap sets, hand rails, ramps and other mobility aids, installing an emergency alarm and other safety aids, and other minor renovations. Home modifications must be installed by a licensed tradesperson and organised through the aged care provider.
Income-tested care fee for Home Care Packages	People on income higher than the Age Pension may be asked to contribute towards the cost of a Home Care Package. Services Australia will work out if a person is required to pay this fee, and how much, based on an assessment of their income.
Living will	A living will (also known as an advance care directive) lets everyone involved in the care process know the wishes of the person approaching the end of their life in regards to health and medical care. It is replaced by a will once a person has passed away.
Means-tested care fee	A person may be asked to contribute towards the cost of their care if they're moving into an Australian Government-subsidised aged care facility. Services will work out if they are required to pay this fee and how much, based on an assessment of their income and assets.
My Aged Care	My Aged Care makes it easier for older people, their families and carers to have their aged care needs assessed and supported to locate and access services. My

	aged Care was introduced on 1 July 2013 and consists of the My Aged Care contact centre and My Aged Care website.
My Aged Care contact centre	Provides information on aged care, whether for an older person, a family member, friend or carer. The contact centre can also register the person for aged care services, create client records and discuss aged care needs. Telephone 1800 200 422 between 8.00am and 8.00pm on weekdays and between 10.00am and 2.00pm Saturdays. Closed on Sundays and national public holidays. Carers are also able to be the primary contact with My Aged Care.
myGov	myGov is the Australian Government online system that allows people to use services like Medicare, Australian Taxation Office, Centrelink and Child support. By using a myGov account, your security and privacy is protected.
Palliative care	Palliative care helps people live as fully and as comfortably as possible with a life-limiting or terminal illness. Palliative care aims to ease the suffering of patients, their family and carers.
Public Guardian	Promotes the rights and interests of people with cognitive disabilities through the practice of guardianship, advocacy and education. The Public Guardian is a statutory official appointed by the Guardianship Division of the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT) or the Supreme Court under the Guardianship Act 1987.
Registration	The process whereby a client and their representative's details are entered into the system by My Aged Care contact centre staff to create a client record.
Representative	An older person may have a carer or representative who assists them and, in some cases, makes decisions on their behalf.
Resident	If a person is living in an aged care facility, they are known as a resident of that facility.
Resident agreement	If a person is living in an aged care facility, they have the right to choose whether they wish to enter into a written agreement with their aged care facility. A Resident Agreement is a legal agreement that covers the terms of a person's residency, as well as the rights and responsibilities of both the resident and their aged care facility.
Residential aged care facility (RACF)	Accommodation for older people who can no longer live at home. When a person is unable to live independently at home, they may live in a residential aged care home which is funded by the Australian Government. Used to be referred to as 'nursing home'.
Respite care	Also known as short-term care, respite care is a form of support for carers or the person they care for. It gives the carer the opportunity to attend to everyday activities and have a break from their caring role and the care recipient a break



	from their usual care arrangements. Respite care may be given informally by friends, family or neighbours, or by formal respite services.
Self-funded retiree/non-pensioner	If a person funds their own retirement and doesn't receive any Australian Government means-tested pensions, then they are known as a self-funded retiree. They may sometimes be known as a non-pensioner.
Self-management programs	If a person has a chronic disease then they may benefit from self-management programs for chronic diseases. These programs provide support for managing a person's chronic illness, usually by assisting them to change their behaviour in ways that will improve their health.
Short-term care	The two main types of short-term care available are respite care and transition care.
Short-term restorative care	Short-term restorative care provides a range of care and services for up to eight weeks (56 days) to help prevent or reduce difficulties older people are having with completing everyday tasks.
Transition care	An older person who is ready to be discharged from hospital, but needs short-term care after their hospital stay may benefit from transition care (also known as 'after-hospital care'). This type of care is designed to ensure more people return home after a hospital stay rather than move into an aged care facility permanently.
Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS)	Available for both English and non-English speakers. For non-English speakers, TIS National can provide telephone and onsite interpreters. For English speakers, TIS National provides interpreting services to help communicate with non-English speaking people using Automated Telephone Interpreting Service and onsite interpreting.
Veteran and war widow/widower pensioners	Veterans or war widows/widowers who have low care needs to remain in their home for longer may benefit from Veterans' Home Care (VHC). This is a Department of Veterans' Affairs program that provides services including domestic assistance, personal care as well as gardening and home maintenance. VHC is not an entitlement-based program like most other veterans' programs but a fixed budget program.
War widow/widower pensions	War widow/widower pensions are pensions paid by the Department of Veterans' Affairs to widowed partners and dependents of veterans who have died as a result of war service or eligible defence service.

## Appendix B: Resources and Contacts List

### Aged care

#### 10 Questions to Ask

<http://www.10questions.org.au/>

10 Questions is a series of leaflets written by nurses, doctors and experts with experience in aged care. Each leaflet focuses on an individual aspect of care to increase consumer knowledge and make the journey into residential aged care homes easier. The benefits of these leaflets are they are in different languages and the topics will guide carers into an appropriate aged care home. Three examples are:

- 10 Questions to Ask About Staff in Residential Aged Care
- 10 Questions to Ask About GP Services in Residential Aged Care
- 10 Questions to Ask About Your Cultural Needs in Residential Aged Care

#### Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT)

<https://myagedcare.gov.au/assessment>

Tel: 1800 200 422

To find your local ACAT, more information, or how to make an assessment, call the above number or search online.

#### My Aged Care Fee Estimator

<https://www.myagedcare.gov.au/how-much-will-i-pay>

The fee estimator provides an estimate of how much you, or the person you care for, might need to pay towards their Home Care Package or a place in an aged care home, to assist in planning support.

#### Home Care Package costs and fees

<https://www.myagedcare.gov.au/home-care-package-costs-and-fees>

The above link provides information about how much the government contributes to home care packages.

#### Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (The Commission)

<https://agedcarequality.gov.au/contact-us>

Tel: 1800 951 822 Mon to Fri, 9.00am – 5.00pm (except public holidays)

The role of the Commission is to protect and enhance the safety, health, well-being and quality of life of people receiving aged care.

#### NSW Ageing and Disability Commission

<https://www.ageingdisabilitycommission.nsw.gov.au>

NSW Ageing & Disability Abuse Helpline

Tel: 1800 628 221 Mon – Fri, 9.00am – 5.00pm

The NSW Ageing and Disability Commission aims to reduce abuse, neglect and exploitation of older people and adults with disability.

This video outlines the Role of the ADC.

<https://www.ageingdisabilitycommission.nsw.gov.au/tools-and-resources/training/module-one/videos-and-case-studies> (also available in multiple languages).

#### Dementia Australia

[www.dementia.org.au](http://www.dementia.org.au)

National Dementia Helpline: Mon – Fri, 9.00am – 5.00pm (except public holidays)

Tel: 1800 100 500

## **Australian Government Department of Health - Aged Care**

[www.health.gov.au/health-topics/aged-care](http://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/aged-care)

Tel: 02 6289 1555

Tel: 1800 020 103

Call either number Mon – Fri, 8.30am – 5.30pm AEST, except public holidays

The above website can help you find out about the aged care services funded by the Australian Government and how they can support your needs, and the latest information on COVID-19 impact.

## **Australian Government Department of Health – Reforms to in-home aged care**

<https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/aged-care/aged-care-reforms-and-reviews/reform-to-in-home-aged-care>

Reform to in-home aged care to create a single system (i.e. merge CHSP and HCP).

## **Financial hardship assistance**

<https://www.myagedcare.gov.au/financial-hardship-assistance>

Tel: 1800 200 422

If you or the person you care for can't afford to pay their aged care costs for reasons beyond your control, there is financial hardship assistance available to help the person you care for get the care they need.

## **Home care packages fee estimator**

<https://www.myagedcare.gov.au/fee-estimator>

Use this quick calculator to give an indication of the fees that need to be paid if the person you care for receives a home care package.

## **My Aged Care**

[www.myagedcare.gov.au](http://www.myagedcare.gov.au)

### **My Aged Care contact centre**

Tel: 1800 200 422

Mon to Fri 8.00am – 8.00pm

Sat 10.00am – 2.00pm

### **Complaints**

<https://www.myagedcare.gov.au/contact-us/complaints>

### **Support for Veterans**

<https://www.myagedcare.gov.au/support-veterans>

<https://www.dva.gov.au/health-and-treatment/care-home-or-aged-care/aged-care-resources>

## **My Aged Care booklets**

<https://www.myagedcare.gov.au/resources>

This link provides access to all the My Aged Care brochures, booklets, forms, checklists and other useful documents. Some are also available in other languages.

Hard copies are also available upon request: [health@nationalmailing.com.au](mailto:health@nationalmailing.com.au)

## **MyGov**

<https://my.gov.au/mygov/content/html/contact.html>

Tel: 13 23 07 Call myGov helpdesk Mon – Fri, 7:00am – 10:00pm and Sat – Sun, 10:00am – 5.00pm

MyGov is a secure way to access government services online with one login and one password. This helpdesk contact detail is only for assisting with using your myGov account. Enquiries for specific services (e.g. My Aged Care) should instead be made to that service or organisation.

## Seniors Rights Service

<https://seniorsrightsservice.org.au/>

Tel: 1800 424 079

Seniors Rights Service is a community organisation dedicated to protecting and advancing the rights of older people, particularly vulnerable and disadvantaged groups. Seniors Rights Service provides free and confidential telephone advice, aged care advocacy and support, legal advice and rights-based education forums to seniors across New South Wales.

## Services Australia

<https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/residential-aged-care-means-assessment?context=23391>

A person's financial details are assessed to work out how much they may need to pay towards aged care, i.e. home care package or residential aged care home. A person won't need to complete this form if they don't own a home and get either a:

- Means tested payment from Services Australia such as Age Pension or Disability Support Pension
- Department of Veteran's Affairs (DVA) payment.

## Carer services and programs

### Carer Gateway

<https://www.carergateway.gov.au>

Tel: 1800 422 737 Mon – Fri, 8.00am - 6.00pm

The Carer Gateway is a centralised gateway to carers that offers a range of services and supports, online and over the phone and in-person. Services to carers include Emergency Respite Care and Tailored support packages.

### Carers NSW

[www.carersnsw.org.au](http://www.carersnsw.org.au)

Tel: 02 9280 4744

Carers Rights and Complaints: <https://www.carersnsw.org.au/services-and-support/advice-for-carers/rights-and-complaints>

Young Carers: [www.youngcarersnsw.org.au](http://www.youngcarersnsw.org.au)

## Disability services

### National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)

<https://ndis.gov.au>

Contact Centre:

Tel: 1800 800 110 Mon to Fri 8am – 8pm

Email: [enquiries@ndis.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@ndis.gov.au)

## Guardianship

### NSW Health Advance Care Planning

<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/patients/acp/Pages/default.aspx>

Information on using advance care directives, end of life care and enduring guardianship.

### **NCAT NSW Civil & Administrative Tribunal**

<http://www.ncat.nsw.gov.au>

Tel: 1300 006 228 Mon – Fri, 9:00am – 4.30pm, except public holidays

9.00am – 4.30pm Mon-Fri except public holidays 1300 006 228

One stop shop for specialist tribunal services in NSW.

### **The NSW Trustee & Guardian**

<https://www.tag.nsw.gov.au/>

Tel: 1300 364 103 Mon – Fri, 9:00am - 5:00pm, except public holidays (wills, powers of attorney, trusts and estate administration)

Tel: 1300 320 320 for enquiries about **managed clients**

An independent statutory body that provides substitute financial management services for people with decision making disabilities under a court or tribunal order.

They also have useful resources and tools on their website for navigating decision making processes, including wills, executorship, estates, power of attorney and guardianship. This site can be useful for carers, for example the Guardian Support Unit can help you if you've been appointed a guardian for your family member or friend and would like more information on being a guardian.

## **Health**

### **Australia Department of Health**

[www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au) includes COVID-19 information

[www.health.gov.au/health-topics/aged-care](http://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/aged-care)

The above URL helps you find the aged care services funded by the Australian Government and how they can support your aged care needs.

Tel: 02 6289 1555

Tel: 1800 020 103

Call either number Mon – Fri, 8.30am – 5.30pm, except public holidays.

### **National coronavirus and COVID-19 vaccine helpline**

<https://www.health.gov.au/contacts/national-coronavirus-helpline>

Tel: 1800 020 080. The line operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

### **13SICK National Home Doctor Service**

<https://homedoctor.com.au/>

Tel: 13 74 25

Request after hours, bulk billed, doctor home visit.

Booking lines opened from 6pm weekdays, 12 noon Saturday, all day Sunday and public holidays.

Check online to see whether your area offers home visits.

### **Healthdirect**

<https://healthdirect.gov.au>

Tel: 1800 022 222

The above healthdirect helpline number, is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in NSW.

Healthdirect is a government-funded virtual health service that provides access to health advice and information via a website, app and telephone helpline to help people make informed health decisions.

## Helplines and support

### Ageing and Disability Commission

<https://www.ageingdisabilitycommission.nsw.gov.au/commissioner@adc.nsw.gov.au> for general enquiries

### NSW Ageing and Disability Abuse Helpline

Tel: 1800 628 221 Mon – Fri, 9.00am – 5.00pm

### Dementia Australia

[www.dementia.org.au](http://www.dementia.org.au)

Tel: 1800 100 500 Call National Dementia Helpline Mon – Fri, 8.00am – 8.00pm

Helpline.nat@dementia.org.au

### Health Care Complaints Commission (HCCC)

[www.hccc.nsw.gov.au](http://www.hccc.nsw.gov.au)

Tel: 1800 043 159 Mon - Fri, 9.00am – 5.00pm

The HCCC is an independent body that deals with complaints about health service providers in NSW. It acts to protect public health and safety by assessing, investigating and prosecuting complaints about health care.

### Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN)

<https://opan.com.au>

Tel: 1800 700 600 Seven days per week 6.00am – 10.00pm

OPAN helps older people to understand the aged care system, register and resolve aged care issues.

### Seniors Rights Service

[www.seniorsrightsservice.org.au](http://www.seniorsrightsservice.org.au)

Tel: 1800 424 079 Mon – Fri, 8.00am – 8.00pm, Sat 8.00am – 2.00pm, closed Sunday

Seniors Rights Service is a community organisation dedicated to protecting and advancing the rights of older people, particularly vulnerable and disadvantaged groups. Seniors Rights Service provides free and confidential telephone advice, aged care advocacy and support, legal advice and rights-based education forums to seniors across New South Wales.

## Appendix C: Frequently Asked Questions

### Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP)

1. *Do the Referral Codes pay in full for a service provider, or is there a 'gap' to pay?*

#### Possible responses

- A person is expected to contribute to their services if they are able to.
- How much someone contributes depends on their income and the type and number of services needed. The type of service does influence the amount due. For example, simple services like meals might cost a small amount, whereas more complex services like home modification work, will cost much more.
- Service providers charge different amounts for their services, and a person will typically pay an hourly rate for the services received, on the days they are received. There are no additional fees such as exit fees.
- A person has to discuss and agree on the fees with their provider before they receive any services. So, how much a person will pay for their services will vary from provider to provider and by services received.
- Services will not go ahead without you or the person you care for agreeing to the fees first.

For more information, visit the following link: [Commonwealth Home Support Programme Costs](#)

2. *I'm approved for more than one service. Do I need to get them all from the same provider?*

#### Possible response

- No. If a person requires more than one service through the CHSP, they can use a different provider for each service.

For more information, visit the following link: [Connecting with CHSP Providers](#)

3. *How do I go about adding a service to my existing CHSP if my current CHSP does not list this as a recommended service (I do not have a Referral Code for this)?*

#### Possible responses

- It is recommended the person speak to their Service Provider if they wish to stop a service with CHSP and require another. For example, a person would like to stop domestic assistance (house cleaning) and change to Social Support Groups.
- A person may need to contact My Aged Care again if they are experiencing difficulty with their current service provider.
- After discussion with My Aged Care, you or the person you care for may be re-directed to the RAS Assessment team. If the needs of the person you care for have significantly changed, they may be referred for an ACAT Assessment.



4. *I am having trouble finding a service provider for Domestic Assistance that is taking new clients. I have tried multiple services so far who said they are full and do not offer a waitlist. What should I do?*

#### **Possible responses**

- It is suggested that you or the person you care for phone My Aged Care contact centre on 1800 200 422 and explain that you are not able to get any domestic assistance as Service Providers in your area are full and have no waitlists. Provide them with the names of those you have contacted and request their support.
- You are also able to make a complaint to the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (a free service) by visiting [www.agedcarequality.gov.au](http://www.agedcarequality.gov.au), or calling 1800 951 822 Mon – Fri 9.00am – 5.00pm (AEST).

It is best to contact My Aged Care before making a formal complaint, as the issue may be resolved directly.

- If you need support to raise your concern, you may be able to have an advocate work with you to resolve the matter. The Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN) helps people access and interact with Commonwealth-funded aged care services. OPAN is funded by the Australian Government. It is free, independent and confidential. OPAN helps older people and their families and carers get the information they need to make decisions, understand their aged care rights, and resolve problems and confusion. You can visit the OPAN website or phone 1800 700 600 (9:30am to 4:30pm Monday to Friday).
- As the person's carer, you may be eligible for Carer Gateway Tailored support packages, (i.e. assistance of financial support, either with 'One-off practical support' or a 'Carer Directed Package'. Visit the Carer Gateway website for more information or call Carer Gateway on 1800 422 737. <https://www.carergateway.gov.au/carers-directed-support-service>

### **General Questions**

5. *Does CHSP and/or Home Care Packages provide funding for arranging Enduring Guardianship etc.?*

#### **Possible Response**

- Not at this stage.
- A person with capacity is able to complete and sign their Enduring Guardian which can be witnessed free of charge by:
  - Accredited staff from NSW Trustee & Guardian
  - Australian and overseas legal practitioners (solicitors) – check prior that there are no fees
  - Registrars of the Local Court
- Appointing a Power of Attorney is free if a person is:
  - Eligible for a full Centrelink Age Pension
  - Receiving other government benefits, (i.e. Department of Veterans' Affairs Pension) and would otherwise be eligible for a full Centrelink Age Pension
- There may be fees for the following:
  - Power of Attorney
  - Trust fees
  - Financial management fees
  - Private financial management fees
  - Executor and deceased estate fees

- Visit the Trustee and Guardian website for more information  
<https://tag.nsw.gov.au>

6. *Is aged care help for elderly Australians means tested?*

**Possible Response**

- CHSP is not means tested. The hourly fees are very affordable
- If you're applying for a Home Care Package, you may have to pay an income-tested care fee. An income assessment determines if you need to pay this fee.  
<https://www.myagedcare.gov.au/home-care-package-costs-and-fees#income-tested-fee>
- You may also need to undertake an income-tested care fee for RACF,  
<https://www.myagedcare.gov.au/aged-care-home-costs-and-fees>
- Visit the My Aged Care website for further information on [Income and Means Assessments](#)

7. *My spouse and I are 75+ years and in good health, using private cleaners, and gardeners etc. to stay in our home. Could we be looking at My Aged Care for anything?*

**Possible Response**

- You could check My Aged Care information to see whether you do require My Aged Care services.
- You can do this by reading information on <https://myagedcare.gov.au> or contacting the My Aged Care contact centre on 1800 200 422.

## **Home Care Packages (HCP)**

8. *Once the HCP that you've been approved for becomes available, if you aren't ready to take that up at that point, do you then have to re-join the waiting list?*

**Possible Response**

- Once a person receives their HCP Letter of Assignment, they will have 56 days from the date on their letter to start the services. If they don't start using their package within this time, their funding will be withdrawn and provided to someone else. However, you or the person you care for can request a 28-day extension within the 56 days by calling My Aged Care on 1800 200 422.

9. *I would like to change service providers. How does this work?*

**Possible Response**

- If a person changes provider, they must agree on a start date with the new provider and an end date with the current provider. The current provider must report the end date and pay the unspent home care amount. The new provider must accept the referral and report the new entry.
- A person can change providers at any time, if they are moving to a different location or looking for a better fit.
- Check a person's Home Care Agreement for any conditions such as notice periods and/or exit amounts that may apply.

- It is recommended that a person starts researching providers before agreeing on an end date with their current provider.

Visit the Department of Health website for information on changing home care providers:

[Transfer Home Care Packages service](#)

#### 10. Why is there such a long wait time to receive levels 2 – 4 of Home Care Packages?

##### **Possible Response**

- Wait times for HCP has been quite significant for a number of years. Mostly because there have not been enough home care packages available to meet the growing need, particular for levels 2 to 4. The Australian Government had not funded enough HCPs.

The Aged Care Reforms that have commenced and are planned for the next 5 years, include ensuring there are enough HCPs available. In the long term there will be a complete overhaul of aged care services both in the home and in residential aged care homes. But at the moment it is pleasing to see that the wait time for HCPs from May 2021 are now 6-9 months for levels 2 - 4, whereas in May 2020, they were 9 – 12 months and often as far reaching as 18 months.

- As stated earlier in this document, there are still alternatives when waiting for HCP:
  - Accept level 1 HCP service
  - Receive some services from CHSP while waiting
  - As a primary carer, you may be eligible to receive a Carer Directed Support service.

For more information, visit the following link: [Tailored Support Packages](#)

#### 11. How do the fees work for a Home Care Package? Do you pay fees only on the days you need care, or do you have to pay an amount weekly, regardless of how many days you need care?

##### **Possible Response**

- Home care fees are paid for every day that package funds are assigned to someone, not just on the days they receive services. A person may be asked to pay their home care fees on a fortnightly or monthly basis.
- Visit the My Aged Care website for more information on home care package costs: [Home Care Package costs and fees](#)

### **Residential Aged Care Facility (RACF)**

#### 12. My father is unable to live at home independently and we are looking at an aged care home to meet his needs. He received an ACAT assessment five years ago. Will he need another assessment?

##### **Possible Response**

- The ACAT Assessment is still valid however if circumstances or health needs have changed it is best to get re-assessed.
- In other words, all permanent residential care and HCP approvals will always remain valid, unless the ACAT approval was granted for a specific period of time, or the person's needs have changed significantly and require a further assessment to determine their ongoing needs.

13. *Is a Referral Code needed to enter an aged care home?*

**Possible Response**

- Yes. This includes for short-term (respite) and permanent accommodation. A person's referral code is received through an ACAT Assessment and includes a support plan.
- Note that after an ACAT assessment for a person who is looking at a Home Care Package, they usually receive referral codes for Residential Aged Care and also respite in Residential Aged Care.

14. *I'm eligible for an aged care home. What happens now?*

**Possible Response**

- Locate the letter of approval and referral code, which you or the person you care for should have received from their ACAT assessor.
- Visit the My Aged Care website to look at a number of aged care homes in your area to find one that will suit the specific needs of the person you care for:  
[Connecting with aged care homes](#)
- Get an understanding of costs and fees in aged care homes via the following link:  
[Aged care homes costs and fees](#)
- Identify whether a means assessment with Centrelink is needed. If so, it is important to undertake this assessment ASAP. For more information, view the following link:  
[Aged care home costs and fees](#)
- Get in contact with the aged care home of your choice by contacting them directly.