



Australian Government

Department of Health and Ageing

***Living Longer Living Better* aged care reforms**

FACT SHEET

Home Care Packages

What support is available through the Home Care Packages Program?

If you want to stay in your own home as you get older, but need help with a range of services like cleaning and preparing meals, gardening, assistance with showering, or with transport so that you can go shopping or attend appointments, a Home Care Package may be for you.

A Home Care Package provides a co-ordinated package of services tailored to meet your specific care needs.

Home Care Packages are funded by the Australian Government through the Home Care Packages Program – a new program that is starting on 1 August 2013.

What is a Home Care Package?

A Home Care Package provides services that can:

- help you to stay at home for as long as possible
- give you choice and flexibility in the way that care and support is provided to you.

There are four levels of Home Care Packages which are designed to give you the care you need now, but can also be changed if your needs increase later.

Home Care Levels 1 and 2 help people with basic or low level care needs; Levels 3 and 4 help people with intermediate to high care needs.

The Australian Government pays a subsidy to an approved home care provider so that it can provide care and services to you. The amount of funding depends on the level of the Home Care Package that you are receiving.

What types of services are provided?

- **Personal care:** such as help with showering, dressing, mobility, meal preparation and eating, and fitting sensory communication aids.
- **Support services:** such as help with laundry, house cleaning, gardening, basic home maintenance, home modifications (related to care needs), and transport to help you do shopping, visit your doctor or attend social activities.
- **Clinical care:** nursing, allied health and other therapies.
- **Other services:** such as remote monitoring technology (where appropriate) and assistive technology, including devices that assist mobility, communication and personal safety where these services are identified in your care plan.

Additional government funding is also available to support people living at home with dementia through a new Dementia and Cognition Supplement. Veterans with a mental health condition accepted by the Department of Veterans' Affairs as associated with service, may be eligible for a Veterans' Supplement.

There are also supplements to assist people who have an ongoing medical need for oxygen support, and people who require enteral feeding.

The supplements are available with any of the four levels of Home Care Packages. Your home care provider will apply for these supplements if you meet the eligibility criteria. With the Veterans' Supplement, your eligibility will be determined by the Department of Veterans' Affairs and your home care provider will not have to apply for the supplement, if you consent to disclose your eligibility for the supplement to them.

If you are eligible, the funding will be paid to your home care provider so that you can receive additional care and services.

What is Consumer Directed Care?

Some Home Care Packages will be delivered on a Consumer Directed Care (CDC) basis. CDC is a new way of providing home care. It gives you more control and choice about the types of care and services you access, how the care is delivered and who delivers it to you.

Under CDC, you will determine the level of involvement you would like to have in managing your own package. You will be provided with a personalised budget so you can see how much funding is available for services and how the money is being spent.

Initially, around 10% of Home Care Packages will operate on a CDC basis, but this will increase over the next two years. From July 2015, all Home Care Packages must be delivered on a CDC basis.

How do I get a Home Care Package?

You will need to be assessed as eligible by an Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT), or an Aged Care Assessment Service (ACAS) in Victoria, to receive help at home through a Home Care Package. The assessment team is made up of a range of health professionals to help you work out what your care needs are, and whether a Home Care Package would assist you.

There is no minimum age requirement for Home Care Packages, but younger people such as those with younger onset dementia, will still need to be assessed as eligible by an ACAT.

If you are eligible for a Home Care Package, you will be put in touch with home care providers in your area. There may be a waiting period for packages in some areas.

Once you have been offered a package by a home care provider, a care plan will be developed for the services you need. You and your provider will agree on the services you need within the amount of the funding available for the package.

What does a Home Care Package cost?

The Australian Government pays for the bulk of aged care in Australia, but as with all aged care services, you may be asked to contribute to the cost of your care if you can afford to do so.

If you are asked to pay a care fee, the amount will vary according to your income. If you are on the basic rate of pension, your maximum contribution would be 17.5% of the single pension. People on higher incomes may be asked to contribute a higher amount.

How do I get started?

For more information about Home Care Packages for consumers, you can:

- call the national contact centre on 1800 200 422 or
- visit the website at www.myagedcare.gov.au

Further information

Additional information about the Home Care Packages Program is available on the *Living Longer Living Better* website at: www.livinglongerlivingbetter.gov.au