



Care and Support. Home support and care options

There are several government-funded programs that support frail older people to remain living at home for as long as possible:

- Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP)
- Veterans' Home Care (VHC)
- Home Care Packages

The first two programs provide a basic level of support. Home Care Packages provide for more complex care needs. You can only receive assistance from one of the above programs at any one time.

What is the Commonwealth Home Support Program?

The Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) is funded by the Commonwealth Government for people over 65 (or over 50 if of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background).

The program provides the most basic level of services on an ongoing basis or intensive support in the short term to support recovery. The scheme funds a range of organisations to provide support services including:

- shopping
- home modification
- home maintenance
- safety and security
- cleaning
- day care
- allied health services
e.g. podiatry
- disability aids
- social support
- personal care
- nursing care
- respite care
- meals
- transport

Some of these services are provided by organisations that are 'household names' like Meals on Wheels, Domiciliary Care and Royal District Nursing Service. Local councils and community health services in country areas are also providers of home support services as well as a number of not-for-profit organisations.

My Aged Care is national service that provides information on Commonwealth-funded aged care and support services. This gateway will check your eligibility for CHSP services and will refer you to a provider covering your area. If necessary My Aged Care will refer you to a Regional

Assessment Service for a face-to-face assessment. Tel. 1800 200 422; www.myagedcare.gov.au

If you have concerns about a CHSP service, speak to the provider first. If you are over 65 (or over 50 if of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background) the **Aged Rights Advocacy Service** can provide information about your rights and advocate on your behalf. Tel. 8232 5377 or 1800 700 600 (SA Country callers).

What about complaints?

If you are not happy with the services provided you have the right to complain. If you have spoken to the CHSP service provider and the issues are still unresolved you can contact the **Aged Care Complaints Commissioner** if you are receiving CHSP services. Tel. 1800 550 552

What is Veterans' Home Care (VHC)?

VHC is funded by the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) to provide basic home support services for eligible veterans and war widows. Services may include personal care, domestic assistance, home and garden maintenance and respite care.

Veterans can choose to receive services through the CHSP program or VHC. Once in receipt of VHC Veterans can only receive a CHSP-funded service if that service is unavailable through VHC. Eligibility is based on assessed need.

To arrange an assessment tel. 1300 550 450.

What are Home Care Packages?

Home Care Packages include a range of home care and support services that are tailored to meet the individual needs of people. Packages are flexible and may include assistance with: personal hygiene and dressing, domestic tasks, preparing meals, shopping, transport, gardening and social support, restorative care.

Consumer Directed Care (CDC)

From 1 July 2015 all Home Care Packages are to be delivered on a CDC basis. This means allowing consumers to make choices about the types of care and services they access and the delivery of those services, including who will deliver the services and when.

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Under a CDC approach, consumers are encouraged by the service provider to identify goals, which could include independence, wellness and 're-ablement' (assistance with regaining function or finding different ways of performing tasks of daily living). These will form the basis of the Home Care Agreement and care plan. The consumer decides the level of involvement they wish to have in managing their package.

What types of care packages are available?

Four levels of Commonwealth-funded Home Care Packages are available:

- Level 1 - For people with basic care needs
- Level 2 - For people with low level care needs
- Level 3 - For people with intermediate level care needs
- Level 4 - For people with high level care needs

How do I find out if I am eligible?

To be eligible for any of the packages of care, your care needs must first be assessed by an Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT). The assessment is free of charge. A member of the ACAT will visit you to determine if you are eligible and which type of care package is the most suitable for you. The team will decide if your care needs can be met within the scope and funding of the program and that you have a genuine desire to remain at home.

Contact My Aged Care on 1800 200 422 to be referred to an ACAT.

If you are eligible you will receive a letter of approval from My Aged Care informing you of the level of the package. You will be placed on a national priority queue for packages and informed when a suitable one becomes available. The time you wait before you are assigned a home care package is based on your needs and circumstances as well as the time you have spent waiting for care.

When a home care package becomes available, you will get a letter from My Aged Care to let you know you have been assigned a package. You have 56 days to find a service provider and enter into a Home Care Agreement from the date of your assignment letter. To find a provider of Home Care Packages call My Aged Care or search the website www.myagedcare.gov.au.

How much will I have to pay?

You will be asked to pay the basic care fee, which is 17.5% of the maximum basic rate of pension (not including pension supplement, rent assistance etc.). Full pensioners only pay the basic care fee.

If you are part-pensioner or self-funded retiree, depending on your assessable income you may also be asked to pay an

income-tested fee. Centrelink will assess whether you need to pay based on the information you provide using the form *Aged Care Fees Income Assessment*. Annual and lifetime caps apply to the income-tested care fee.

If you cannot afford to pay the fees that have been set you can apply for hardship assistance (conditions apply). You will need the form *Financial Hardship Assistance - Home Care / Respite Care* and the booklet *Information You Need to Know about Applying for Financial Hardship Assistance in Home Care / Respite Care*.

What are my rights if I receive a Home Care Package?

The *Charter of Rights and Responsibilities for Home Care* lists your rights. Some of these rights are:

- to be involved in identifying the community care most appropriate for your needs
- to receive services as described in the plan that take account of your lifestyle, other care arrangements and cultural, linguistic and religious preferences
- to be offered a written agreement that includes all agreed matters
- to choose a person to speak on your behalf for any purpose.

The Aged Rights Advocacy Service (ARAS) can provide information about your rights and help you resolve your concerns. Tel. 8232 5377 or 1800 700 600 (SA country callers).

What about complaints?

If you are not happy with the services provided, you have the right to complain. If you have spoken to the package provider and the issues are still unresolved, you can contact the Aged Care Complaints Commissioner on tel. 1800 550 552. This is a free service.

What if I am not eligible for these services?

If you are under 65 years of age (50 if indigenous) and have a disability you may be eligible for some State-funded support services. Contact Disability SA's Information and Referral Service on 1300 786 117.

If you wish to consider private services contact Catalyst Foundations for information on providers operating in your area. Tel. 8168 8776, 1800 636 368 (SA country callers)

Support for carers

If you are caring for a relative or a friend who is frail, has a disability, severe chronic condition or a mental illness, your local Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centre can assist with planning and coordinating respite care and with accessing carer support services. Tel. 1800 052 222.