Support at Home Program Overview

For senior Australians, their family and carers
January 2022

The new Support at Home Program starts July 2023. The new program will support senior Australians to remain independent and in their own homes for longer.

Support at Home will reform the delivery of in-home aged care. This includes assessment, provider funding, and regulation of the market. Support at Home will put a greater focus on reablement and restorative care. It will provide more clarity to senior Australians and providers with individualised support plans and clear service inclusions.

This is in line with the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety's recommendation 35 to implement a new aged care program and recommendation 118 to introduce a new funding model for care at home.

The department will consult on aspects of the Support at Home Program in early 2022, including:

- aged care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- the assessment model
- care management, including self-management
- the service list, price list and funding model
- goods, equipment, assistive technologies and home modifications
- the evaluation framework

Sign up to the [Ageing and Aged Care Engagement Hub](#) to be notified when these consultations are commencing.

- the provider payment platform.

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Current home care and what's proposed for Support at Home

Steps on the journey

I need help	I get in touch with My Aged Care	My needs are assessed	I find a provider and get support	My needs change

Step	Current	Proposed
I need help	In-home aged care consists of the following programs: 1. Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) 2. Home Care Packages (HCP) Program 3. Short Term Restorative Care (STRC) Programme.	**Single Support at Home Program** The Support at Home Program will replace the current three in home aged care programs (on left) and better integrate residential respite into home care assessments and service plans.
My needs are assessed	Senior Australians are assessed and then placed in either CHSP or one of the four broad HCP levels.	**Individualised Support Plans** Senior Australians would receive Individualised Support Plans, based on their assessed aged care needs and personal circumstances. The Individualised Support Plan outlines the service types and the frequency and duration in which a person would receive them. The senior Australian and assessor would adjust the services in their Support Plan to ensure that individual care needs are met and a person's preferences are taken into account.

Step	Current	Proposed
My needs are assessed	The National Screening and Assessment Form (NSAF) is used to support assessments. Components are used by My Aged Care Contact Centre staff, the Regional Assessment Service (RAS) and Aged Care Assessment Teams (ACATs) when screening and assessing aged care needs. The NSAF uses a range of assessment tools and is reliant on assessor judgement. This can lead to inconsistent assessment outcomes among senior Australians. RAS conduct home support assessments for CHSP and ACATs conduct comprehensive assessments for HCP, residential aged care, transition care and residential respite care. Residential aged care providers also do assessments for funding.	**A single assessment process and assessment team** The **Integrated Assessment Tool** will replace the NSAF. It will better match services to a person's support needs, and will be used for all aged care programs, including home and residential care. Assessors determine the tailored mix of services that the person requires within the range permitted for the class. From July 2023, the single assessment system will provide assessments for Support at Home. The system will also include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander assessment organisations, to help increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in aged care, addressing historical low take-up rates.
My needs are assessed	CHSP recipients can access up to $1000 for goods, equipment, and assistive technologies (GEAT) and up to $10,000 for home modifications. HCP recipients need to 'save up' package funds to purchase GEAT and home modifications.	**Access to equipment and modifications to live safely and independently** Senior Australians will not have to 'save' package funds to get access to GEAT and home modifications. The new assessment process would consider a person's need to access GEAT and the need for minor home modifications. Support would be made available following assessment.
My needs are assessed	The STRC program offers people eight weeks of restorative care. The program targets senior Australians who can restore skills or capabilities and is limited to people outside of the HCP program.	**Assessments focus on independence** Support at Home will integrate the existing STRC program and offer short-term or restorative services to senior Australians who would benefit from them. Short-term services would be available for up to 12 weeks for those who need them to help people improve or maintain independence without the reliance on ongoing services.

Step	Current	Proposed
I find a provider and get support	HCP recipients must select one approved provider to take full responsibility for the delivery of care under their package. This can involve delivering the full suite of care in-house or managing a series of sub-contractors to deliver care.	**Greater choice and flexibility** The **new regulatory model** would enable senior Australians self-manage their care, including using multiple service providers if they choose. The Support at Home Program would offer services and a choice of provider, where available, to all senior Australians, regardless of their geographic location. A grant program would offer financial support to providers operating in 'thin markets'. This could include providers in regional, rural, and remote areas, as well as providers delivering specialised services to consumer groups with low consumer numbers.
I find a provider and get support	Care management services are not separately funded in CHSP. Charges for care management reduce the amount of funds available for other services in the HCP.	**Care management** Care management would be a separately funded service offered to senior Australians with a more complex mix of services who need oversight and coordination of their care.
I find a provider and get support	CHSP providers are paid in block grant arrangements. HCP providers receive subsidies based on how many people are under their care each month. Until recently, providers and senior Australians using HCPs accrue unspent funds. From 1 September 2021, HCP providers are paid only for the care, services and goods they actually deliver each month to care recipients. Senior Australians with an HCP can still accrue unspent funds in a Services Australia Home Care Account.	**Greater transparency and consistent funding** Support at Home would bring all in-home aged care providers under **one funding model**. Providers would be funded at the point-of-delivery, with greater transparency for senior Australians and reduced administrative costs. A **new payments platform** would allow senior Australians and providers to view the person's Support Plan and pay for services at the point of delivery. Under Support at Home, senior Australians would not be able to save or accrue funds. Support at Home providers would be paid for services that are delivered to consumers.

Step	Current	Proposed
I find a provider and get support	The CHSP has an established Service Catalogue, which groups services into different types. The HCP program doesn't have a service list and relies on the *Aged Care Act 1997* to guide which services may be accessed. There are discrepancies among providers as to the type of services offered.	**Greater clarity of services** The Support at Home Program would have a **Service List** to provide greater clarity on the services available to senior Australians at a Commonwealth Government subsidised cost.
I find a provider and get support	The *Aged Care Act* and regulations are focused on approved providers rather than safeguards for senior Australians. The regulatory framework does not differentiate home services providers based on the risks associated with their services and there is a lack of alignment between aged care and other areas of the care and support sector.	**Improved safety and quality of care** A regulatory model is being developed to align with the risk of the service delivered by a provider. For example, complex services would be more regulated. The model will support the delivery of safe and high-quality aged care services in the home care environment The model would be clear and easily understood to ensure efficiency and effectiveness and align with regulation of other areas of the care and support sector, where appropriate.
I find a provider and get support	Over half of people living in residential aged care have a diagnosis of dementia. Dementia is becoming more prevalent in home care settings as well. Many aged care providers do not have the skills and capacity required to care adequately for people living with dementia.	**Supports for people living with dementia** The new assessment tool would include a focus on dementia and psychosocial factors to better support senior Australians who have a formal diagnosis and people who may be exhibiting early signs consistent with dementia. Referrals would support more timely diagnosis and enable people with dementia and their carers to access early intervention supports.

Step	Current	Proposed
I find a provider and get support	There are barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's access to the aged care system. There are currently not enough Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and other people with high levels of cultural competency, employed across the aged care system.	**More equitable access to aged care and culturally safe services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people** A new national service will offer face-to-face support for senior Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and their families to help them access care, make sure that care is delivered in an environment of cultural safety, and provide guidance to providers on cultural safety and working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The service will include end-to-end support to navigate and access aged care services, and assistance to connect with other community supports. An Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander single assessment system delivered by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific organisations, will support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to access the aged care services that they need.
I find a provider and get support	There is no formal way to link carers of senior Australians to services and often carers don't know where to go for support. Carers are required to undertake separate intake and assessment processes if they are seeking supports for themselves as well as for the person they care for. The Carer Gateway and My Aged Care are two distinct systems operated by the Department of Social Services and the Department of Health.	**Support for informal carers** The Carer Gateway will enable carers to book respite services in advance and provide assistance through counselling, coaching, peer support and skills training. There is also access to specialised dementia carer education. The new assessment tool would compile information about the carer and the assessment would be reflective of the support provided by their informal carer.