



Australian Government
Department of Health

Increasing Choice in Home Care

Aged and Community Services NSW & ACT Community Care Forum

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Today's presentation

- Overview of the home care reforms
- Timeframes and consultation activities
- Context to the reforms
- Key features
- Business as usual
- Next steps
- Feedback to date
- Questions



Home care reforms

Reforms announced in the 2015-16 Budget and will be introduced in two stages:

- **Stage 1:** February 2017 – funding for a home care package will follow the consumer, allowing eligible consumers to choose their approved provider, as well as flexibility to change their provider.
- **Stage 2:** July 2018 – the Government intends to integrate Home Care Packages and the Commonwealth Home Support Programme into a single care at home programme.



Consultation and communication - 2015

Timeframe	Activities
September-October	Discussion paper – invitation for written submissions and webinar <ul style="list-style-type: none">• www.engage.dss.gov.au• www.dss.gov.au/2015webinars
October	Establishment of NACA Home Care Reforms Advisory Group and initial meeting
November-December	Further meetings/workshops of NACA Home Care Reforms Advisory Group
December	Summary of feedback on discussion paper



Consultation and communication - 2016

Timeframe	Activities
February	Amendments to primary legislation (<i>Aged Care Act 1997</i>) introduced to Parliament
March-April	National 'roadshow' and webinars – programme, IT/system changes and transition activities
April-June	Draft of amendments to sub-ordinate legislation (<i>Aged Care Principles</i>) available for comment
From July	More detailed sector support and communication activities (following passage of legislation)
Ongoing	NACA Home Care Reforms Advisory Group meetings



Context to the home care reforms

The journey towards an aged care system that is consumer focused, flexible and sustainable.

- Building on recent initiatives including:
 - Consumer directed care in all home care packages
 - My Aged Care as the entry point into the aged care system
- Aged Care Sector Statement of Principles
- Aged Care Roadmap



Stage 2 issues

Some of the key issues to be considered include:

- Eligibility and assessment
- Linkage of funding to consumer needs
- User contribution and fees
- Requirements for service providers
- Balance between individualised and block funding
- Change management and transitional arrangements



Key benefits – Stage 1

- Greater choice and flexibility for all home care consumers
- Increased competition leading to greater innovation and quality of services
- Reduced red tape and regulation for providers
- Opportunity for providers to expand their business
- Consistent national approach to prioritising access to care



Key features – Stage 1

- Home care packages will be assigned to consumers, rather than to places allocated to providers
- A consistent national approach to prioritising access to packages (via My Aged Care)
- Portability of home care packages
- Changes to approved provider arrangements



Home care packages will be assigned to consumers

- Home care packages will no longer be allocated to a provider in respect of a specific geographic area
- Packages will be assigned to consumers from a national 'pool' of available packages
- Conditions of allocation will no longer exist



Home care packages will be assigned to consumers

What it means for consumers

- Eligible consumers can receive subsidised home care from any approved provider of home care

What it means for providers

- Providers will no longer have to apply through the ACAR to receive home care places
- It will not be necessary for an approved provider to hold an allocated home care place in order to claim subsidy



Prioritising access to home care packages

What it means for consumers

- Consistent approach for prioritising access to home care packages
- Approvals for home care will no longer be 'broadbanded'
- Consumers will be notified by My Aged Care when they have been assigned a package according to their priority relative to other consumers

What it means for providers

- Providers will claim subsidy in respect of consumers who have been assigned a home care package by My Aged Care and have selected that provider



Portability of home care packages

What it means for consumers

- Consumers will be able to take their package with them to another approved provider if they wish to change providers

What it means for providers

- There will be changes to certain approved provider responsibilities in order to support consumer choice, flexibility and portability



Treatment of unspent funds

- **When the consumer moves their package to a new home care provider**
 - unspent funds move with the consumer to the new provider
- **When the consumer leaves subsidised home care – discussion paper outlines three options for unspent funds:**
 - retained by the existing approved provider
 - returned to the Commonwealth by the approved provider
 - apportioned between the consumer and the Commonwealth contributions, and returned to each party by the approved provider



Changes to approved provider arrangements

What it means for consumers

- Increased number of approved providers able to provide home care, which will support greater consumer choice

What it means for providers

- Suitability criteria to become an approved provider will be simplified and updated
- Existing residential and flexible care providers can become approved provider of home care through a simple 'opt in' process
- Approved provider status will be effective immediately and will no longer lapse



‘Business as usual’

- My Aged Care will continue to provide the entry point to the aged care system
- No change to fee arrangements
- No change to the process for claiming home care subsidy and supplements
- Home care packages will continue to be delivered on a CDC basis



Next steps

What's happening next?

NACA Home Care Reforms Advisory Group

Drafting of amendments to primary legislation

What's happening in 2016?

Primary legislation introduced to Parliament, sub-ordinate legislation exposure draft available for comment

National 'roadshow' and webinar series - implementation and transition arrangements

System design and build for changes to My Aged Care

Communication and sector support for Stage 1

Consultation on Stage 2



Feedback on the discussion paper

100 submissions received – about half from service providers

Key messages:

- Support for the policy objectives – increased choice and control for consumers
- Changes need to be supported by:
 - effective information and communications targeted at providers, ACATs, GPs and other health professionals, consumers and carers
 - more advocacy services to help consumers exercise choice, particularly people from special needs groups
 - sector support and transition activities to assist businesses in adapting



Feedback on the discussion paper

- Concerns about the financial viability of some service providers, particularly smaller providers and those in rural and remote areas
- My Aged Care operations need to be efficient and transparent
- Significant change management and training required to support ACATs
- Majority of stakeholders agreed that unspent funds should move with the consumer to their new home care provider
- Changes need to be closely monitored to ensure that access to care is not adversely affected
- In the longer term, the Government needs to consider uncapping supply



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More information

Discussion paper

www.engage.dss.gov.au

Webinar

www.dss.gov.au/2015webinars

Enquiries

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Thank you
