



Commonwealth Home Support Programme

Frequently Asked Questions – for older people, their families and carers

Q: What is the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP)?

A: The CHSP is one of the changes the Government is making to help older people to stay independent and in their homes and communities for longer.

From 1 July 2015, the Commonwealth HACC Program, National Respite for Carers Program (NRCP), Day Therapy Centres (DTC) Program, and the Assistance with Care and Housing for the Aged (ACHA) Program will be combined under a single streamlined Commonwealth Home Support Programme.

The CHSP will be the entry level of Australia's aged care system for older people who need assistance with daily living to remain living independently at home. Carers of these clients will also benefit from services provided through CHSP.

From 1 July 2015, older people and carers seeking assistance will benefit from an identifiable single entry point for services through the My Aged Care Gateway, and a standardised national assessment process delivered through the My Aged Care Regional Assessment Service.

Providers will benefit from significantly streamlined funding arrangements, with less red tape, simplified grant agreements and more time to deliver important services for older people.

Q: How many people will the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) support?

A: The new CHSP will build on the strengths of the programmes it replaces and will continue to support around 550,000 older people and their carers, every year. Importantly, people receiving services under the existing programmes will continue to receive the same level of support now and when the CHSP begins.

CHSP funding will be around \$1.7 billion in 2015-16, and will continue to grow over the coming years, resulting in more services for more people.

Q: Where will the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) be implemented?

A: The CHSP will be implemented in all states and territories, including Victoria and Western Australia, where it will combine the National Respite for Carers Program, the Day Therapy Centres and the Assistance with Care and Housing for the Aged Program operating in those two states.

The Victorian and Western Australia HACC programmes are jointly funded Commonwealth-state programmes and continue to be administered by the state governments.

Q: Who will the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) provide services to?

A: The CHSP is for people aged 65 years and over (or 50 years and over for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples) who need assistance with daily living to remain living independently at home.

Carers of these clients may also benefit from services provided through the CHSP.

Q: How has the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) been developed?

A: There has been a comprehensive process to develop the CHSP. This has included advice from the National Aged Care Alliance (NACA) and its Home Support Advisory Group through a number of papers and five reviews of Commonwealth HACC Service Groups. These reviews generated a high level of interest and engagement, with over 10,000 people contributing to the reviews through focus groups and online surveys.

The Department released the *Key Directions for the Commonwealth Home Support Programme – Discussion Paper* on 20 May 2014. The Discussion Paper was developed with advice from the NACA and its Home Support Advisory Group. Feedback was sought on the Discussion Paper through a public consultation process that ran for six weeks closing 30 June 2014. The release of the Discussion Paper was supported by a series of sector briefings in capital cities and some regional areas attended by over 2,500 people, and also an online webinar event which attracted 1,100 participants.

Around 400 submissions from all jurisdictions and across stakeholder categories were received. The feedback received informed the final design of the programme.

Further information about the reviews and the feedback received used to develop the CHSP is available on [our website](#).

Q: When will the changes start?

A: The Commonwealth Home Support Programme will begin on 1 July 2015.

Q: Who is the CHSP for?

A: The new CHSP will be the entry level of Australia's aged care system for people aged 65 years and over (or 50 years and over for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people) who need support to remain living independently at home. Carers of these clients will also benefit from services provided through CHSP.

CHSP clients will benefit from being able to access a wide range of CHSP services to support them to stay at home, and a model of service delivery that focuses on and enhance their independence, goals and strengths.

Q: I currently receive services under the Commonwealth Home and Community Care (HACC) Programme; or the National Respite for Carers Programme (NRCP); Day Therapy Centres (DTC) programme; or the Assistance with Care and Housing for the Aged (ACHA) Programme – how am I affected?

A: You will continue to receive the same level of support now and when the CHSP begins.

Q: Will I have to pay for services I receive under the new Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP)?

A: There are currently different arrangements for fees across states and territories for home support services. The CHSP will introduce a national fees policy to address this and to improve the sustainability of the programme. Older people will be asked to contribute to the cost of their care, if they can afford to do so. The fees policy will include appropriate safeguards for those least able to contribute to the cost of their care.

A draft fees policy will be available on [our website](#) early in 2015. We encourage you to read the policy and provide your feedback.

Once the final fees policy is approved, we will provide more information to help you understand the fees policy and how it might affect you.

Q: How can I access the CHSP?

A: The new CHSP will be easy to access—from 1 July 2015, simply contact My Aged Care for an assessment.

You can contact My Aged Care on **1800 200 422** or visit the [My Aged Care website](#)

Existing clients are not required to be assessed by My Aged Care to continue receiving the services they currently receive.

Q: I live in Victoria or Western Australia. Can I access the new Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP)?

A: Yes. If you live in Victoria or Western Australia and receive services under the following programs, you will have access to the CHSP.

- National Respite for Carers Program
- Day Therapy Centres Program
- Assistance with Care and Housing for the Aged Program

If you receive services under the HACC Program in either Victoria or Western Australia, you will not be affected by the implementation of the CHSP at this point in time.

Q: Where can I get more information about the Commonwealth Home Support Programme?

A: Information on the Commonwealth Home Support Programme is available on the [Department's website](#).

The [My Aged Care](#) website will also be updated with information, particularly as we approach closer to 1 July 2015.

My Aged Care

Q: What is My Aged Care?

A: My Aged Care is an information and service resource for aged care which makes it easier for older people, their carers and family members to obtain timely and reliable information on aged care.

[My Aged Care](#) is an Australian Government contact centre (1800 200 422) and website www.myagedcare.gov.au. The phone line is open from 8am-8pm Monday to Friday and from 10am-2pm Saturday throughout Australia.

From July 2015 the second stage of My Aged Care will be introduced. The second stage will include:

- a central point of access for information, assessment and referral to Commonwealth funded aged care services;
- a central client record – accessible by clients and their representatives, assessors and service providers via web-based portals;
- a standardised national approach to screening and assessment of clients seeking access to aged care services;
- electronic referrals for assessment and/or services;
- enable the scheduling of a face-to-face assessment through the My Aged Care Regional Assessment Service (RAS) for people seeking access to the Commonwealth Home Support Programme;
- recording of assessment outcomes on the central client record;
- development of a Support Plan for clients which reflects their agreed strength, needs, goals and aspirations and which accompanies service referrals; and
- recording service delivery information on the central client record.