

Home Care reforms information series

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Welcome to Leading Age Services Australia first weekly newsletter on the Increasing Consumer Choice Home Care reform package. This newsletter series will be released to our Members every Monday until 6 March 2017, as well as being available on our [website](#).

The purpose of these newsletters is to provide in depth information on key areas of the reforms. This week we look at the My Aged Care National Prioritisation Process. Next week we will focus on Home Care Agreements for existing and new clients, and the following week we will examine unspent amounts and exit amounts.

MY AGED CARE NATIONAL PRIORITISATION PROCESS

1. National Package Inventory

A National Package Inventory will be created to identify all used and unused Home Care Packages and this will be managed by My Aged Care. From 27 February 2017, this Inventory will be composed of packages that have previously been made available through the ACAR process, however as new packages are released these will be added to this Inventory. Additional information is available on the DoH [website](#) and from the [national prioritisation process](#) factsheet.

2. Home Care Packages

As identified in [the Aged Care Legislation Amendment \(Increasing Consumer Choice\) Principles](#) and to be incorporated into the Approval of Care Recipients Principles 2014, as of 27 February 2017 Home Care Packages will be approved at a specific level (ie. 1, 2, 3 or 4) rather than the current broadband levels (ie. levels 1-2 or levels 3-4).

The following table provides some additional information to clarify these transitional arrangements for clients that currently have an Aged Care Assessment Team approval.

Client circumstance	Before 27 Feb 2017	From 27 Feb 2017	What does the client need to do
Client receiving home care at a level they are satisfied with.	A client is already receiving their services at a level 3 and were approved at a broadband of level 3-4.	They will continue to receive their level 3 services but will be added to the national queue for a level 4 package. They do not need to do anything to be added to this queue.	If they are happy with the level of services they are receiving at the level 3, they can opt to be removed from the national queue. To do this, they will need to contact My Aged Care.
Client currently receiving home care but not at	A client is receiving services at a level 2 but was originally	The client will continue to receive their services at the level 2 but will be	If they are happy with the level of services they are receiving at the level 2, they can opt out of the national

their approved level.	approved for a level 3 – 4.	added to the national queue for a level 4 package. They do not need to do anything to be added to this queue.	queue. To do this, they will need to contact My Aged Care.
Client has an approval for home care but not receiving home care package services.	A client has been approved for a broadband level 1 – 2 but they are currently not receiving any aged care services.	Depending on when this person was approved, they may be automatically added to the national queue for a level 2 package.	If they were approved before the 1 st July 2016, then they will have received a letter from the Department to ask them to contact the My Aged Care to request to be added to the queue (i.e. they need to 'opt in'). Clients approved for home care after 1 July 2016 will automatically be added to the national queue.
Client has an approval for home care but not receiving home care package services. Client is receiving Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) as an interim measure.	A client was assessed and approved for a Level 1-2 home care package, however, the client is receiving CHSP services as an interim measure.	Depending on when this person was approved, they may be automatically added to the national queue for a level 2 package. They will receive a letter from the Department to advise them of whether they need to contact My Aged Care to request to be added to the national queue.	If they were approved before the 1 st July 2016, then they will have received a letter from the Department to ask them to contact the My Aged Care to request to be added to the queue (i.e. they need to 'opt in'). Clients approved for home care after 1 July 2016 will automatically be added to the national queue.

An individual's approval for a specific Home Care Package level will still continue to be determined through a comprehensive assessment undertaken by an Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT).

Clients who have already received a Home Care Package will be transitioned to the higher level in their broadband. Therefore, if a person is currently receiving services at a level 1-2, they will move to a level 2 on 27 February 2017. The Department has recently written to home care clients to notify them of this change. Additional information is available on the DoH [website](#) and from the following Departmental factsheets:

- [Changes to Home Care](#) consumer factsheet
- [Supporting Client Discussions](#) provider factsheet
- [Discussing the Assessment and Approval Process with Clients](#) provider factsheet

The Department has also written to everyone who has been approved for a Home Care Package. People who are currently not receiving services through a package will receive one of two letters:

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1. ACAT approval from 1 July 2016 - this letter will advise that they will automatically be added to the national queue for a package at their approved level.
2. ACAT approval before 1 July 2016 - this letter will advise that the person should contact My Aged Care and request that they be added to the national queue if they are actively seeking a package at this time. This option to 'opt-in' will not have a specific deadline, so people may contact My Aged Care when they are ready.

3. National Prioritisation Process

As identified in the [Aged Care Legislation Amendment \(Increasing Consumer Choice\) Act 2016](#) following an assessment by an ACAT, the person will receive a letter that notifies them of their assessment outcome. If the person is eligible for a Home Care Package, then the level will also be included in the letter. The individual will automatically be placed in the national queue. Their place in the queue will be based on specific criteria:

1. Their need and circumstances:

- this will include the specific Home Care Package level that the ACAT has identified, and
- a specific priority:
 - Medium: someone that requires a Home Care Package.
 - High: immediate risk in health, physical injury, safety or sign of decline that may result in the client needing a hospital or Residential Aged Care. It is anticipated that only a small number of people will be given a 'high' priority.

2. The period of time since they were approved for care by the ACAT Delegate.

When a package becomes available, the individual will receive a letter outlining the details of the available package, including the date that they will need to enter a Home Care Agreement by and their unique referral code. This notification letter will also include an information brochure to provide people with general information on aged care, including how to find a provider and the income assessment process.

It is important to note that subsidies are not available for an individual until they have been assigned a package from the national package inventory and the individual has received a referral code. If services are provided before this time, they will not be subsidised.

People will have 56 days to enter an Agreement, with the possibility of an additional 28 day extension, before the offered package is withdrawn. Additional information is available on the DoH [website](#) and from the following Departmental factsheets:

- [Changes to Home Care](#) consumer factsheet
- [Supporting Client Discussions](#) provider factsheet
- [Discussing the Assessment and Approval Process with Clients](#) provider factsheet

4. My Aged Care - Service Finder

From 27 February 2017, providers will have the option to configure additional information in My Aged Care at different levels. For example, providers could include information about religious specialisations that they offer or the package levels they can offer services at, assuming that a provider has the capacity to accept new clients, as they are no longer restricted to their previous ACAR outcome/s.

A template is now available on the DoH [website](#) that identifies the new data fields that will be available in the Home Care Package service finder from 27 February 2017. The aim of this document is to assist providers in drafting the information they will include on their My Aged Care profile. Please note:

- Providers will be required to update their own profile via the service provider portal from 27 February 2017 - this will not be done by My Aged Care staff.
- The exit amount field is mandatory (it is the only mandatory field). If providers decide not to charge an exit amount, then they must enter \$0.00.

There will also be options to include information on a provider's pricing schedule on the service finder, including the ability to attach a copy of the information. Providers are able to decide whether they wish to include this information or not.

If a provider would like the option to include an exit amount in their Home Care Agreement they must notify the Department of Health (DoH) of their maximum exit amount. Providers will need to complete the [Notification of Home Care Maximum Exit Amount Form](#) and email the completed document to the Department by 24 February 2017.

Please note that if a provider decides not to charge an exit amount, they will still need to enter \$0.00 into the relevant field on the service finder - a prompt to enter an amount will appear on the provider portal from 27 February 2017.

Further information on the My Aged Care service finder is available from the DoH website:

- [Home Care Package service finder](#) factsheet
- [Operational Readiness](#) - Increasing Choice in Home Care Webinar
- [My Aged Care Service Finder functionality](#) - Increasing Choice in Home Care Webinar

5. Important Things to Remember

- The number of Home Care Packages will continue to be capped.
- Whilst a Home Care Package is assigned to an individual, they do not receive the funding directly - this will still be paid to the provider.
- While a person is waiting on the national prioritisation queue for a package to become available at their approved package level, My Aged Care may assign them an interim package at a lower level. The client will still retain their position in the queue for their highest approved level of package whilst receiving services from a lower level package.
- Referral codes issued before 27 February 2017 will be inactivated on 27 February and new codes will be provided.