Welcome to the 15th edition of Leading Age Services Australia's Home Care Reforms Information Series, which is also available on our website along with previous editions. Please email homecare@lasa.asn.au if you have specific topics or questions you would like addressed in future editions. This newsletter is aimed at informing and supporting members in response to issues that have emerged with the Increasing Choice Home Care (ICHC) reforms implemented from 27 February 2017.

HOME CARE PACKAGE ACTIVATIONS AND ACERS – JULY 2017

Members continue to encounter difficulties with home care package activations from the national queue within the allocated 56-day assignment to activation period. Timeframes for the Department of Human Services (DHS) processing of the Aged Care Entry Record (ACER) relative to the 56-day assignment-activation period appear to be contributing to these difficulties. In some cases, this may have led to cessation of a package on completion of the 56-day assignment-activation period, even though an ACER is submitted indicating the date the package is activated within the 56-day assignment-activation period.

In response to these current ACER processing issues, providers working with consumers to activate a new home care package are encouraged to:

1. submit ACERs promptly after a consumer enters into a home care package agreement within the 56-day assignment-activation period
2. contact the MAC Contact Centre to request the consumer's 56-day assignment period be extended by 28 days to allow additional time for the ACER to be processed by DHS and registered in My Aged Care (MAC).

KEY MY AGED CARE UPGRADES FOR HOME CARE PROVIDERS

The Department of Health (DoH) has released a summary of MAC system changes that were introduced on 24 July 2017 and are listed on their website. All guidance documentation (including user guides and quick reference guides on the DoH website) has been updated to support this system release. Key changes for home care providers to note are listed below:

Key Requirement	Improved My Aged Care Provider Portal Functionality
Access to the MAC Provider Portal	Changes to the user interface of the MAC Provider Portal have been made so there is consistent user experience across all screens, with the portal working across various browser applications and devices.
Allocation of referral codes to service outlets	Team leaders and administrators assigned at the organisation level are able to retrieve referral codes and select which outlet receives the referral. Once a home care package is activated, service ID information submitted on the Aged Care Entry Records should align with the service outlets to which a referral code is allocated.
Provider workload management	Workload management reports can be generated by team leaders and

	administrators for each outlet or combined outlets to track referrals etc.
Requesting a support plan review	There is functionality to request a Support Plan review that has been added in the MAC Provider Portal. There is now a 'Review Requests' tile to support the automation and streamlining of support plan review requests from providers to assessors, with the provider having the ability to view and track the progress of any submitted review requests. Attachments can be added to the review request and an urgent review can be requested to occur within 10 days. To ensure assessors can effectively prioritise requests for support plan reviews, only reviews with a genuine urgency should have the box ticked for response in less than 10 days.
Printed Support Plans	Printed versions of client support plans will now only show goals and recommendations that are currently relevant.
Enhancements to tasks and notifications	Ability for administrators to mark tasks and notifications as important to assist providers with their internal client information management in the MAC Provider Portal. Enhanced sort and filter options in the 'tasks' and 'notifications' tabs to streamline user navigation in the MAC Provider Portal. Notifications will only be visible in the portal for 30 days to improve usability of the notifications feature.
Exit Amounts	Providers can now view a history of changes they have made to their maximum exit fee amounts.

HOME CARE TODAY – WEBSITE CLOSED FROM 31 JULY 2017

In 2013, the Department of Health and Ageing funded the Home Care Today project to help home care package consumers and providers understand and implement consumer directed care.

Home Care Today has released many resources to support the implementation of the home care reforms and transition to consumer directed care. Their website has provided a central location for practice tools, videos, training modules, webinar recordings and consumer-focused information. This website is closed from 31 July 2017 as the Home Care Today project ends.

To ensure consumers and providers have continued access to the Home Care Today resources after 31 July 2017, they will remain available on COTA Australia's website.