Country Health SA Local Health Network

The Consumer’s Guide to the
Home Care Package Program
About this booklet

This booklet provides a guide for people who want help to remain living at home and the people who support them in this goal. It aims to give you an idea of how Home Care Packages work when they are provided using the Consumer Directed Care (CDC) approach.

DISCLAIMER: This booklet provides some general practical advice for people receiving or beginning to receive a consumer directed care based home care package and is not intended as legal or financial advice. This booklet should not be the only source of information for people receiving care. Country Health SA Local Health Network encourages anyone who has questions about getting home care to get the relevant professional advice to discuss their own particular situation.
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HOME CARE: your choice, your way

What is home care?

Home care packages provide assistance for people who need help to stay safe and well at home.

Sometimes you may find that you cannot manage some things around your home like you used to. Home care packages are one type of assistance that you could use, alongside the support of family and friends and other community resources. They can help with personal care, general support around the home, clinical care and support you to stay as health and independent as possible.

If you think you might like to have some assistance, you can make enquiries to see if you are eligible for a home care package.

On the 1 July 2015, the Commonwealth Government introduced a new way to access support services that requires you, or your chosen representative, to make contact with the My Aged Care Contact Centre by phone on 1800 200 422. Country Health staff can support you with this if required. If it is agreed that you are eligible for a home care package, you will be contacted by the Aged Care Assessment Team to determine your needs. (see page 8 for more information).

My choice, my way

All new home care packages come with a lot of flexibility. The Consumer Directed Care approach (CDC) puts you – the consumer – in the driver’s seat if you wish. You will have a lot more opportunity to say how the funds allocated to you in your package are used, so that you can get the things you think will make your life easier.
New choices in home care

With Consumer Directed Care (CDC) you will have a budget allocated for your home care package, which consists of the funds the government has allocated to you, based on your assessed need, plus your contribution and any income tested fees that may apply.

The purpose of the package is to help you stay at home for as long as possible, and, provided that it meets legal and safety requirements, you will get to make informed decisions about how the funds are spent in conjunction with your Case Manager. Country Health SA LHN holds these funds on your behalf and works with you to coordinate the agreed services.

Each month you will get a statement that lets you see exactly the funds you have, how much you can spend and how much has already been spent and on what.

You can decide on the arrangements that will work best for you.

“We were getting a regular package before and the change to CDC gave us a whole lot of new options. We really got to think about what was important to Bob. Firstly, those things that were needed to maintain his health to the best of our ability, but then also the things that were important to him to have a good quality of life, like being able to keep up with some of his previous work interests and getting more involved in the local community.”
If Country Health SA LHN cannot deliver what you need, then you can ask us to try to buy it from somewhere else. That might be another home care provider, a different sort of service provider or from a local business.

Of course there might be some things that aren’t possible, or may not be within your budget, and we might need to come up with an alternate plan.

An important part of CDC is that it’s all about building on what you CAN do rather than focusing on what you CAN’T. It’s about helping you to continue to live a good life at home. Even if you have had some health issues, the right sort of assistance can help you feel healthier and get back to doing more things for yourself.

You also have the option of buying extra services with your own funds if you can afford it and want to have more assistance than is covered by your home care package allocation.

The relationship between you and Country Health SA LHN is really important to achieve what you want. Our role is to work in partnership with you to give you support and advice, as much or as little as you want or need.
Of course there are some things you can’t use your home care package for, like paying your rent or mortgage, buying your groceries or paying for holidays. If you don’t use one or more of the services in your package for a period of time, because you are away or in hospital for example, you may be able to use or allocate some of the funds for other things when you return home. You can discuss how to use or allocate some of the funds for other things with Country Health SA LHN.

**What kinds of assistance can I have?**

The funds in your home care package are to pay for help that keeps you safe and well at home. There are three main kinds of help you can have. We’ve given some examples here, but you can talk to a Country Health SA Case Manager about having other things too.

**Personal assistance**

> dressing, showering and using the toilet
> planning and making meals and assistance with eating

**General support services**

> doing the cleaning and laundry
> doing the shopping and getting to appointments
> encouragement to take part in social and community activities
> relearning skills to help you claim back some of your independence after a set back
> gardening and home maintenance
> changes to your home to make it safer and easier for you to live there
> lots of different kinds of advice about safely staying at home.

**Help to stay healthy**

> nurse visits to undertake clinical care and support
> seeing professionals like physiotherapists, speech therapists, occupational therapists, dentists, podiatrists and dieticians
> providing bandages and other items needed to look after wounds
> support to manage your medications and any regular health checks you need to do
> providing technological devices, equipment and other items that help you to do things like get around, look after your personal hygiene, make yourself understood and generally stay safe.
How can I get a home care package?

The first thing to do is to make contact with the My Aged Care Contact Centre to ask them if you could be assessed for eligibility to a Country Health Home Care Package.

You or your chosen representative can call 1800 200 422.

Eligibility for a home care package is decided by an Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT). The ACAT is made up of skilled and experienced people who will talk with you and your family member, carer or advocate about what is important to support you to continue living at home.

A member of the ACAT team will visit you at home so they can talk to you about your home and your usual routines and supports.

They will need to know from you about your physical and mental health, what’s working well for you, and what you would like help with around your home. They will also need to hear about the things that are important to you, your strengths and challenges and the things you think are most important to allow you to stay in touch with your friends, family and community.

You are welcome to have someone there with you during the ACAT visit and we encourage you to discuss this option with the ACAT team member when you discuss arrangements for the meeting.

“It was a relief really, being able to explain about the things that I was not able to do but wanted to do and know that there was help available.”
How much support can I receive if I am deemed eligible for a Home Care Package?

The ACAT assessment determines the level of support you can get. There are four levels of Home Care Package:

**Home Care Level 1** – a package to support people with basic care needs.

**Home Care Level 2** – a package to support people with low level care needs,

**Home Care Level 3** – a package to support people with intermediate care needs.

**Home Care Level 4** – a package to support people with high care needs.

**Home Care Subsidies and Supplements**

These rates are applicable from 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016.

**Home Care Subsidy Rates**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Home Care Package Level</th>
<th>Daily Subsidy Rate</th>
<th>Annual Subsidy Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 1</td>
<td>$21.71</td>
<td>$7,924.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2</td>
<td>$39.50</td>
<td>$14,417.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3</td>
<td>$86.84</td>
<td>$31,696.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 4</td>
<td>$132.01</td>
<td>$48,183.65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the Home Care subsidy, you may be eligible for one or more supplements – the ACAT team will be able to help you determine if this is the case or not.
What contribution might I be asked to pay towards the package?

While the Government provides funding to Home Care Providers for vulnerable consumers, you may also be asked to make a contribution if you can afford to do so.

To estimate the contribution you may be required to pay, go to the Home Care Fee Estimator website at www.myagedcare.gov.au or call 1800 200 422.

To determine the maximum amount of your contribution you will need to complete the Department of Human Services income test form.

You can ask for a review at any time if your situation changes and you feel you need a higher or lower level of support or your ability to pay situation alters.

“Well it was a bit like getting quotes from a few different painters to paint your house. We talked to three service providers and they could all provide us with what we wanted, but in the end we went with the one that my wife and I felt we would have the best relationship with.”
How do I find a home care service provider?

The My Aged Care website provides a list of all the home care service providers in your area.

If you want you can do your own research at: www.myagedcare.gov.au or you can phone 1800 200 422 to ask for details.

When you find a home care service provider that has a package at the right level for you, you can start the process to receive services.

If there are no home care packages available in your region, you may need to join a waiting list. If this happens, you might be offered a package at a lower level than you need and then be moved up to the right level of support when it is available.

In some situations, like in certain rural areas, your choices might be limited to one or two home care providers. Country Health SA LHN will do their best to support you to find an alternate provider if they cannot assist you immediately.

Developing a care plan

If Country Health SA LHN is your chosen home care provider, the next step is to develop a care plan that outlines your needs and goals.

A case manager will make contact with you and arrange a time to visit and discuss what supports you might require and how they could be delivered to meet your specific requirements.

We encourage you to have a family member or friend at the meeting if you wish.

The role of the case manager

The Case Manager’s role is to work closely with you and your family to understand the detail in the ACAT assessment and tailor make a care plan to best suit your needs within the boundaries of the given budget allocation.

The care planning meeting may include:

- **Goal Setting** – building on your strengths, motivations and desires to identify a short or medium term goal to work towards - this might be walking your granddaughter down the aisle in 6 months’ time, or maintaining your rose garden again.
- **Care Planning** – to ensure where possible all support activities contribute to your desired goal and are delivered by the appropriate providers that, wherever possible, accord with your wishes
- **Discussion** about your individual budget and its possibilities and limitations
- **Advising you about what it means to** have someone coming to your home to help you and your responsibilities to them
- **Advising you about the ongoing management** of the Home Care Package, how to make contact and how the review process will happen to ensure your services change as your care needs and wants alter.

There might be some things you don’t want to share with your Case Manager. That’s absolutely fine. It’s your choice.
Thinking through your choices

The next step is to really think about how you want to live, what your goals are and what’s most important to you to make your life as easy as possible. This will help your Case Manager to better understand you and your needs.

These are some questions you might consider in making your plan:

> What is important to me?
> What do I most enjoy doing?
> What makes my life enjoyable and meaningful?
> What’s good right now and what’s not?
> What’s preventing me from having an enjoyable and meaningful life?
> What’s missing? What would I have, if I could choose anything?
> What sorts of things might help to improve my day to day life?
> What support do I need to remain safe and well?
> Where and when do I want that support to be available?
> How do I want to be supported and by whom?
> How much could I be asked to contribute to my care costs?

Creating a plan

Working through your strengths, goals, interests and preferences will help you to make informed choices about the services and assistance you’d like to receive within the budget allocation boundaries.
Whatever services you decide on will form your care plan including:

> exactly what will be provided
> who will provide it
> the timing and frequency
> the cost of the services you will receive
> your contribution
> your income tested fee (if you’ve entered into Home Care after 1 July 2014)
> the costs your provider incurs in managing your home care package.

It might be the first time you’ve really sat down and thought about these things.

It’s really up to you and your Case Manager (and others too, if you want) to work out the best way to use the funds you have been allocated to achieve what you want.

That may include getting services from another home care service provider or from somewhere else altogether.

You are in control and you get to make the final decisions, but it’s a partnership process to work out how to make it happen. That’s why your relationship with Country Health SA LHN and your Case Manager is important.

When you first get a home care package the decisions you need to make can seem difficult. In the beginning you may let other people make decisions for you but as the service becomes more familiar you may wish to take more control and make more decisions for yourself.

Over time you may need or want to change your arrangements – your Case Manager will work with you to make that happen.

**Deciding how much involvement you wish to have**

You are always in charge of your home care package but can choose to be really involved in managing your home care package or hardly involved at all. You might want to do your own research and make your own inquiries about different services.

You can also choose a representative to act on your behalf (this may be a relative, friend or advocate).

If you or your representative chooses to take charge of some of the administration involved with your package, such as record keeping or making your own appointments, that may reduce the amount you need to pay Country Health SA LHN leaving more funds available for you to spend on other things.

Alternatively you can decide to have your Case Manager take care of arranging most things on your behalf and only get involved in determining those services and developing the care plan.

Once you have agreed your care plan, the management of package and any other details with us it will be set out in a written agreement that we both sign. It is called a Home Care Agreement.
While you get to say how and when the funds for your care package are spent, they are held by Country Health SA LHN.

We will provide you a monthly statement, clearly explaining:

- Income
- your available funds
- your monthly costs
- what you have spent
- the balance of funds remaining

**Your available funds are made up of**

- the Government’s subsidy
- the Government Supplement (if eligible)
- the basic fee which all consumers receiving a Home Care package after 1 July 2014 can be asked to pay
- your income tested care fee (if you’ve entered into Home Care after 1 July 2014) which you may need to pay depending on your accessible income
Expenditure

There are four broad categories of monthly costs that will be itemised in your monthly statement:

> administration costs - including relevant Country Health SA LHN overhead costs, insurance, etc.

> case management costs - for the time they take to set up the care plan and review it regularly, visits, phone calls and follow up the arrangements for your home care package

> service and support costs - the costs of delivering the services and support you have agreed in your care plan, or making purchases on your behalf

> contingency – an optional amount that can remain unallocated in case we need to support you through a difficult period of extra care need that is unforeseen at the time of developing your care plan.
As a consumer, you and your family and carers have rights that must be respected but also responsibilities. These are set out in a document called the Charter of Rights and Responsibilities for Home Care.

Your home care service provider will give you a copy of the Charter as part of your Home Care Agreement.

In general you have the right to:

> receive quality services
> be treated with courtesy, dignity and respect
> be actively involved in decision making
> transparency in the setting of fees and budgeting
> receive care and support in a way that respects your gender, your cultural, spiritual or philosophical background or beliefs, and your sexual orientation
> have information provided to you in a language you understand
> have your services reviewed
> information to assist with making comments or complaints
> privacy and confidentiality of personal information.

“As long as there is respect, you can usually find a way through that everyone is happy with.”
As a consumer of home care services, your responsibilities include:

> respecting the rights of home care workers
> providing sufficient and accurate information to Country Health SA LHN in developing the care plan and Home Care Agreement
> following the terms and conditions of your Home Care Agreement including any payment of fees; and
> allowing safe and reasonable access for home care staff at the times and places set out in your care plan and Home Care Agreement.
The rights and responsibilities of Country Health SA LHN

We have rights and responsibilities as well which will also be clearly described in your Home Care Agreement.

It is the responsibility of Country Health SA LHN to:

> ensure your rights are respected.

> This involves responsibility to meet a range of legal requirements around safety and security and quality of services, staff and procedures.

> provide you with the information you need to make your own decisions.

> support you to work towards your goals and a greater sense of independence where possible.

And like you, Country Health SA LHN and their staff have the right to be treated with fairness, courtesy and respect.

Your Home Care Agreement includes information about how to make suggestions, raise concerns or make complaints, including who to contact at Country Health SA LHN if you are not happy with your arrangements.

If you have any concerns at all we would ask you to raise it with your Case Manager first. If you’d like to do that but don’t feel comfortable yourself, you can always ask someone who can be your representative to raise the issue on your behalf.

You can also make a complaint at any time to the Aged Care Complaints Scheme. This is a free service for people to raise their concerns about the quality of care or services they are receiving from Australian Government funded aged care services.

If need be you can make a complaint without giving your name.
If you raise a concern with the Aged Care Complaints Scheme, they will explain the process, the various options for resolving your complaint and what can be achieved through those options.

You can also ask for an independent advocate to act for you through a program called the National Aged Care Advocacy Program (NACAP). It is funded by the Australian Government to promote the rights of people who are seeking or receiving Australian Government funded aged care services.

Call **1800 550 552** (free call) or go to Aged Care Complaints Scheme website: **agedcarecomplaints.govspace.gov.au**

NACAP can be reached on **1800 700 600** (free call).
For more detail on Australian Government Aged Care Reforms and Home Care programs please go to:

www.homecaretoday.org.au

Resource hub for new ideas and choices in home care funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services.

For more information

Country Health SA Local Health Network
PO Box 287, Rundle Mall
Adelaide SA 5000
Telephone: 1800 200 422
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