



Understanding Home Care Packages

What is a Home Care Package?

The Australian Government provides in-home support as people age. The Home Care Packages Program provides individualised coordinated care and services for people over 65 with complex ageing related care needs. It assists you to live safely and independently in your own home for as long as it is safe and appropriate to do so. The program supports you with daily activities that you used to do for yourself but may need assistance with now.

It is not a general income support program like the Age Pension.

Steps to getting a Home Care Package

There are a few steps to getting a Home Care Package.

Step 1: Assessment

You need to be assessed as eligible to receive a Home Care Package by an Aged Care Assessment Team. Read more about the process at www.myagedcare.gov.au/assessment or call My Aged Care on **1800 200 422** to organise an assessment.

Step 2: Package assignment

Once you are approved for a package, you are placed in the National Priority System (NPS) queue, to await assignment of your package. Your place on the NPS is based on the date you were approved and level of priority. Information on estimated wait times is available at www.myagedcare.gov.au/help-at-home/home-care-packages.

You will be sent a letter when you are assigned a Home Care Package.

Step 3: Choosing your provider

Once assigned a package, you will choose a provider who will manage your ongoing assessed care needs and goals. You will enter into a Home Care Agreement with your chosen provider, and together you will create an agreed care plan.

You can use the 'Find a Provider' tool on My Aged Care to compare providers in your area at www.myagedcare.gov.au/find-a-provider.

Step 4: Income assessment

You may need to contribute to the cost of your care by paying a basic daily fee and/or an income tested care fee.

Services Australia will do an income assessment to check if you need to pay the income tested care fee. This fee does not apply to full pensioners. Services Australia also assesses claims for financial hardship support if needed. To have your income assessed, please complete the SA456 form at www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/sa456.

A provider cannot waive or remove income tested care fees and must charge the maximum fee for non-pensioners who do not complete an income assessment.

What types of services are included in a Home Care Package?

Your chosen provider can help you understand what can be included in your Home Care Package. Your services must be based on your assessed care needs, agreed care plan and individual package budget.

Service type	Services included
Bathing, hygiene and grooming	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To help you maintain your personal hygiene and grooming standards.
Nursing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To help you treat, manage and monitor medical conditions at home.
Allied health such as podiatry and physiotherapy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To help you maintain movement and mobility.
Meal delivery and food preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To help you continue to eat well, including enteral feeding.
Help with impairments and continence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To help manage particular ageing-related conditions and maximise your independence at home.
Cleaning, laundry and other chores	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To help you keep your home clean and tidy.
Home or garden maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To help you keep your home and garden in a safe condition, including hazard management for all reasonable areas of access.
Changes to your home	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To help increase or maintain your ability to move around your home safely and independently.
Aids to stay independent	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To help you with mobility, communication, reading and personal care limitations, including some support for trained assistance animals.

Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To get you out and about to attend medical appointments and community activities.
Social outings, groups and visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To help you stay social and interact with the community.
Respite care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To support your carer (e.g. spouse, family, friend) to take a break from their usual care arrangements.
Care management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To assess your ongoing care needs, provide care planning and continuity of care.

What types of services are excluded from a Home Care Package?

Service type	Services excluded
General income purchases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home services that people are expected to pay throughout their lives regardless of age, e.g. general house upkeep costs Food, vitamins and some supplements (does not include enteral feeding) Private transport and associated costs like petrol Beauty therapy and some alternative therapies Pet care, including companion dogs Household bills Insurances, including private health gap payments Entertainment costs including internet, laptop, phones and subscriptions Home appliances and whitegoods unrelated to ageing General furniture and furnishings, unless designed specifically for functional decline.
Accommodation costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home purchase, mortgage repayments, rent and holiday costs Home modifications for aesthetic reasons Home modifications that require planning approval General household maintenance, servicing, cleaning, replacement costs (e.g. heating and cooling systems and end of lease cleaning).

<p>Already funded government services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical care, including gap payments • Ambulance services • Medications, prescribed and over the counter • Dental care, including dentures • Prescription glasses • Hearing services that are already funded by other government programs.
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Where can I find more information about Home Care Packages?

Resources

- To learn more about Home Care Packages, visit the My Aged Care website at: www.myagedcare.gov.au/help-at-home/home-care-packages.
- Further information is available in the Home Care Packages Program Manual for Care Recipients at: www.myagedcare.gov.au/media/129647.
- More information about entering a Home Care Agreement is available at: www.myagedcare.gov.au/agreeing-home-care-package.
- More information about Home Care Package costs and fees is available at: www.myagedcare.gov.au/home-care-package-costs-and-fees.
- For more detailed guidance about inclusions and exclusions, read our frequently asked questions at: www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/HCP-inclusions-exclusions-faqs

My Aged Care and navigation

- You can call the My Aged Care contact centre on **1800 200 422** at any time to book an assessment or discuss a change in your care needs.
- You can organise an appointment with an Aged Care Specialist Officer (ACSO), which provides My Aged Care face-to-face services. To book an appointment, call **1800 227 475**.
- Care finders help older people with limited external support to interact with My Aged Care and access aged care services or other relevant supports in the community. Find out more at www.myagedcare.gov.au/help-care-finder.

Advocates and financial information

- The Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN) provides free, independent, confidential advocacy assistance, including financial advocacy, for people seeking or using aged care services nationwide. Learn more at www.opan.org.au or call **1800 700 600** between 8am to 8pm, Monday to Friday and 10am to 4pm Saturday.
- Learn more about the income assessment process at www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/home-care-package-means-assessment. If you have questions or concerns about the income assessment process, you can call Services Australia on **1800 227 475** or visit your nearest service centre at findus.servicesaustralia.gov.au.