



# How Aged Care Assessment Teams (ACATs) can help you

## What does an ACAT do?

ACATs help older people and their carers work out what kind of care will best meet their needs when they are no longer able to manage at home without assistance. ACATs provide information on suitable care options and can help arrange access or referral to appropriate residential or community care. The Australian Government engages State and Territory Governments specifically to operate and manage the ACATs.

ACATs assess and approve older people for Australian Government subsidised aged care services.

## How can an ACAT help me?

ACATs generally comprise a range of health professionals who can provide a thorough assessment of your care needs and information on suitable and available care options.

Many people may require community care services to help them to stay in their own home for as long as possible. ACATs can refer you to these services. However, if you have more complex care needs and you prefer to remain at home, ACATs may approve a Community Aged Care Package, (CACCP), an Extended Aged Care at Home Package (EACH) or an EACH Dementia Package. These are Australian Government subsidised packages of coordinated care services provided in your own home.

ACATs can also approve you for Transition Care which is aimed at improving your independence and confidence immediately after a hospital stay. Transition Care can be arranged for up to 12 weeks and provided in either a residential care facility or in your own home.

If you need residential aged care, the ACAT can approve either high level care or low level care, depending on your care needs.

Some aged care facilities will provide high level care only, while some will provide low level care only. Others may meet a wider range of care needs. The ACAT can assist you in finding suitable aged care facilities in your region.

The ACAT can also help arrange respite care. The idea of respite care is to give you and the person who cares for you a break. It can either be care in a day-centre, support in your home for a few hours a week, or a short stay in a residential aged care facility.

## How does an ACAT assess the type of care I need?

ACATs can visit you in your own home or in hospital to discuss your care needs.

Members of the ACAT will ask a series of questions in order to find the best care option for your particular situation. These questions are designed to work out how much and what type of help you need with daily and personal activities.

With your approval, the ACAT will also contact your local doctor to gain more information on your medical history to help with the assessment process.

Once the ACAT has a clear understanding of your care needs, the team can recommend the services most appropriate to meet those needs. The ACAT will write to you to confirm these recommendations.



### How do I find an ACAT to talk to?

ACATs cover all of Australia and are based in hospitals or in the local community. Information about the ACAT closest to you is available:

- by calling **1800 200 422\***
- through the ACAT Finder on the Aged Care Australia website at **www.agedcareaustralia.gov.au**
- from your own doctor.

### Will the assessment cost anything?

No. ACATs are government funded and you will not be charged for visits by team members.

### What are my rights?

- You have the right to be treated with dignity and respect.
- You have the right to information about the assessment process – to be told what is happening and why.
- You have the right to express your own views and ideas.
- You have the right to have someone with you during the assessment if you wish, for example, a carer, close friend or relative.
- You may want to have an interpreter, which the ACAT can arrange.
- If you wish, an independent advocate can help you with advice, or act on your behalf.

### What if I'm not happy with the result of my assessment?

The final decision to accept an ACATs recommendation for a care service remains with you. If you are not satisfied with the assessment or recommendations, you should tell the person in charge of the ACAT.

It should be possible to sort out any problems by talking about your concerns with Team members. However, if you disagree with the ACATs recommendation, you can appeal the decision. You will be sent a letter by the ACAT explaining how you, or someone acting on your behalf, can appeal.

### For more information

For information on aged care please call **1800 200 422\*** or visit the Aged Care Australia website at: **www.agedcareaustralia.gov.au**

#### \*Cost of phone calls

Calls to 1800 numbers are generally free to the caller when made from a land line.

Calls to 13 or 1300 numbers are charged at a low fixed amount to the caller when made from a land line.

All calls made from mobile phones are charged at the rates applicable to each phone provider.

All calls made from public phones are charged at the rates applicable to each phone provider.

All information in this publication is correct as at September 2012

Disclaimer: This document is only a guide to the Government's law and policies, and cannot take account of individual circumstances. The Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing recommends that you seek appropriate professional advice relevant to your particular situation.

For information on Aged Care call **1800 200 422\*** or visit **www.agedcareaustralia.gov.au**