



September 2012

The Commonwealth HACC Program

About the Commonwealth HACC Program

The Commonwealth HACC Program came into effect on 1 July 2012. Under the National Health Reform Agreement the Australian Government now has full funding, policy and administrative responsibility for HACC services for people aged 65 years and over or 50 and over for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in all states and territories except Victoria and Western Australia.

The Commonwealth HACC Program provides services that support older people to be more independent at home and in the community.

What services are available?

Some of the services provided under the Commonwealth HACC Program include:

- nursing care
- allied health services like podiatry, physiotherapy and speech pathology
- domestic assistance, including help with cleaning, washing and shopping
- personal care, such as help with bathing, dressing, grooming and eating
- social support
- home maintenance
- home modifications
- assistance with food preparation in the home
- delivery of meals
- transport
- assessment, client care coordination and case management
- counselling, information and advocacy services
- centre-based day care
- support for carers including respite services

Who can access Commonwealth HACC services?

Commonwealth HACC services are available to people:

- aged 65 years and over (or 50 and over for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people),
- in all states and territories (except Victoria and Western Australia),
- who are at risk of premature or inappropriate admission to long term residential care, and
- carers of older Australians eligible for services under the Commonwealth HACC Program.

How much will I have to pay?

Some services charge a small fee – check with your local HACC service about the costs of the particular services you need. These vary according to your income and the number of services you use. Special arrangements may be made if you cannot afford to pay.

How can I access services under the Commonwealth HACC Program?

To access HACC services you can contact your local HACC provider directly, such as Meals on Wheels, to discuss your needs and adjust them as your requirements change.

The best way to find out what HACC service providers are operating in your area is to call **1800 200 422***.



What are the benefits of the new Commonwealth HACC Program?

The introduction of the Commonwealth HACC Program will enable the development of a consistent aged care system covering basic care at home through to high level care in aged care homes. Older people will be able to move seamlessly from basic maintenance, support and care services through to more complex care packages or residential care as their needs change.

The changes to HACC will also make it clearer which level of government is responsible for services for different consumers. This should make it easier for people to find information about the HACC services that are relevant to them. The state and territory governments will continue to fund and administer HACC services for people under the age of 65 or under 50 for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

What is the process for raising a complaint under the Commonwealth HACC Program?

Anyone who has concerns about services received under the Commonwealth HACC Program is encouraged to raise these matters with their HACC service provider in the first instance. If you're unable to resolve the matter with your service provider you can contact the Aged Care Complaints Scheme on **1800 550 552*** or visit www.health.gov.au/complaints

Where can I find more information about the Commonwealth HACC Program?

Further information may be obtained by visiting www.health.gov.au/hacc or contacting **1800 200 422*** (for clients) or **1800 057 616*** (service providers).

How will the Living Longer. Living Better. aged care reform package affect HACC?

On 20 April 2012 the Australian Government announced the *Living Longer Living Better* aged care reform package, which provides \$3.7 billion over five years towards building a better, fairer and more nationally consistent aged care system.

Helping older people to stay at home is a key focus of the reforms, with \$955.4 million being allocated to this goal. Of this amount \$75.3 million will go toward drawing together existing programs - including the Commonwealth HACC Program, the National Respite for Carers Program, the Day Therapy Centres program and the Assistance with Care and Housing for the Aged Program into an integrated Home Support program. The Home Support program will come into effect from 1 July 2015.

The development of the new arrangements will be undertaken in conjunction with the sector over the next 12 months. For more information on the *Living Longer Living Better* aged care reform package visit 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