Next Steps for Home Care Reform: Support at Home

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We pay respect to their Elders past, present and emerging and acknowledge the important role Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people continue to play across our communities, lands and seas.

ACCPA's position on Support at Home

ACCPA position on getting Support at Home right

- Aged Care Minister has announced that the Support at Home Program will not commence until July 2024
- Building on the work of the Support at Home Alliance, ACCPA is advocating for the new government to reconsider the proposed model
    - Specifically, we have recommended to Minister that the Government trial alternative funding models
- We welcome the Department of Health & Aged Care's willingness to engage constructively with the sector
- We recognise this is complex program design work
    - ACCPA will continue to work with the Support at Home Alliance and the University of Wollongong on an alternative activity-based funding model
    - We are also working with consumer, professional and union groups via the National Aged Care Alliance

Support at Home Alliance

Support at Home Alliance members

- Aged and Community Care Providers Association

- Australian Community Transport Australia (ACTA)

- Community Options Australia

- Community Transport Organisation (NSW)

- Ethnic Communities' Council of NSW

- Home Modifications Australia

- Local Community Services Association

- Local Government NSW

- Meals on Wheels Australia

- Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV)

- NSW Neighbour Aid & Social Support Association

- Sector Support and Development Network (national)

NB: Australian Health Services Research Institute, University of Wollongong contributed to the development of the activity-based funding model for home care

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Alliance *Seamless Aged Care* position paper

- Alliance position paper titled *Seamless Aged Care: How to set up Support at Home right, first time*
- Based on engagement with members of alliance partners who provide home and community care services, either through the Home Care Packages program, Commonwealth Home Support Program or both
- Intended as a contribution to development of the new Support at Home Program
- Alliance will continue policy development and advocacy
- University of Wollongong has completed proof of concept research on extension of activity-based funding to community transport
- Next step is research on extension to meals

So What's the Difference?

Similar themes, different models

- (Pretty much) everyone thinks home care reform is essential

- There is overlap in the plans outlined by the Department of Health & Aged Care (as outlined in its January 2022 paper) and the sector (as outlined by the Support at Home Alliance)

- Often there is argument about how to implement change and the nature of consultation, but general agreement about the direction of reform

- There is a **fundamental difference** between the Support at Home Program models proposed by Government and the sector

Key themes of Support at Home Alliance

- *Support at Home Program* with similar funding model to residential care, allowing *seamless integration*

- *Activity-based funding model* with mix of a base care tariff to ensure *capacity* to provide services and an individual care payment based on care delivered or *activity*

- Assessments for Support at Home Program would be *calibrated to level of need and align with AN-ACC for residential care*

- *Activity-based funding model* would determine allocation to funding class. Services could be variable within funding allocation

- Care management would be *integrated within the funding model*, either via the base care tariff or the casemix component

- *Base care tariff* would be paid at different levels according to the real costs incurred to ensure capacity to deliver services to particular communities

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Support at Home Alliance refinement areas

- Support at Home (SaH) Alliance members are actively considering the following four areas as we refine our proposed model:

  1. Balance between block and activity-based funding mechanisms

  2. How to manage provider entry and exit within SaH model

  3. How SaH model can enhance consumer choice and control

  4. Application of regulation for quality and market stewardship

National Aged Care Alliance –
16 September 2022 Letter to Minister Wells re Support at Home

NACA 17 propositions on Support at Home

1. The Alliance supports a defined and phased transition and planning period with key milestones and goals which are clearly and regularly communicated to the aged care sector

2. The Alliance supports the Australian Government moving towards an uncapped community and home support and care system that facilitates service commencement no longer than 30 days from registration

3. The Alliance supports consumer choice and transparency of information that balances both dignity of risk and provider/worker duty of care. This accounts for consumer supports being delivered by multiple service providers and ensures compliance with Aged Care Standards, general duty of care obligations and state/territory legislation

NACA 17 propositions on Support at Home

4. The Alliance supports self-management being a spectrum of decision making and available to consumers as an option. This will include assessments to inform suitability due to capacity and desire of consumers to self-manage. Options of support must be available for those that need assistance to self-manage and protections for whom self-management has been agreed as not suitable

5. The Alliance supports funding of community and home support and care services that are not limited to an individualised allocation of resources, but also supports local care ecosystems

6. The Alliance supports a pricing framework (including supplements or grant programs) for demonstrated thin market populations (including regionality, small diverse / disadvantaged populations and ensuring a particular service/workforce is maintained) to support service access and equity. Prices must be set so that professionals and workers are incentivised to remain within the aged care system and not financially incentivised to transition to other systems where greater financial return for a comparable service is currently available

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NACA 17 propositions on Support at Home

7. The Alliance supports the redesign of the in-home aged care assessment processes to ensure access to early, evidence based reablement and preventative allied health services, rather than waiting for adverse events and/or functional decline to prompt referrals

8. The Alliance supports prioritising the implementation of a single assessment service from 1 July 2023. There should be a single, nationally consistent, and appropriately skilled assessment workforce, that is independent from service delivery, and comprises of an integrated multidisciplinary team of health professionals, working within a competency framework. Assessors should be able to provide case partner / linkage services within the assessment model

9. The single assessment tool and training for and capability of the new assessment workforce should be trialled through a shadow assessment process which adequately captures the diverse needs of older people. The Alliance recognises that service and price categorisations, along with the single assessment tool, will need to be finalised prior to the full implementation of the single assessment workforce

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NACA 17 propositions on Support at Home

10. The Alliance agrees with a support plan approach based on a standardised assessment of need, used to inform an individually tailored support plan co-designed and agreed to by the consumer and assessor. Review of support plans requested by care partners or consumers must be timely and seamless without the need for a full reassessment

11. The Alliance supports care partnerships as a valued core function, that facilitates the implementation of, and in some circumstances initiates the reviews of, support plans

12. The Alliance supports an enhanced service list approach responsive to consumer needs and preferences; worker skills, training, scope of practice; provider obligations; support for carers and volunteers; and facilitating consumer choice. The service list approach should be considered separate to the agreed pricing model

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13. The Alliance supports the Department's codesign approach to build a more effective and equitable Goods, Equipment and Assistive Technology (GEAT), and Home Modifications program. These programs enable older people to maintain their functional independence for as long as possible in the various home settings in which older people live. The Alliance encourages the unique and distinct characteristics of the GEAT versus the Home Modifications programs be retained. The Alliance recommends the programs be expanded from 1 July 2023, before the full Support at Home program is implemented

14. The Alliance supports the Government's announcement to build a positive worker registration scheme not later than 1 July 2024, as part of the new Aged Care Act, and earlier if possible

NACA 17 propositions on Support at Home

15. The Alliance supports reforms to encourage a direct employer/employee relationship for the delivery of aged care services, while recognising that brokerage and subcontracting may remain a necessary element of workforce supply in particular circumstances. Appropriate regulatory safeguards must be extended to indirect models of engagement to address specific risks. Within the Alliance, it is not universally accepted that an "on demand" workforce is appropriate in the care sector

16. That the Support at Home program takes into consideration the diversity of consumers and incorporates the Aged Care Diversity Framework principles and recommendations in the program

17. The Alliance supports the implementation of an annual report and analysis in all regions from 1 July 2023. The analysis should consider regional demand, supply availability, workforce needs and availability (including allied health planning), and population/consumer outcomes

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UTS Ageing Research Collaborative – *Support at Home: a commentary on the design of the proposed unified program*
https://opus.lib.uts.edu.au/handle/10453/162149

UTS Ageing Research Collaborative – conclusions

- Current programs have a diversity of client cohorts, services and providers
- The program should have a clear set of principles which guide its design
- Consumer choice and control does not substitute for provider accountability
- Integrated assessment is welcome but requires careful calibration
- Service and price lists enhance transparency but can limit responsiveness to clients' changing needs
- Program sustainability requires appropriate client contributions
- Achievement of the program's objectives starts with the right design

  "Further research into the benefits and costs of the various pricing models during this recently extended consultation period would help to ensure the efficiency, effectiveness, equity and sustainability of the final arrangements."

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Where to next?

Where to next for Support at Home?

- Next DoHAC paper will be critical
  - It will be vital for sector to engage in robust co-design
  - We encourage proper trials of alternative funding models
  - Consumer contributions must be addressed
- But there are some key things service providers can do now
  - Understand your unit costs
    - Use free model developed by Carrie Hayter Consulting with input from ACCPA: https://www.carriehayter.com/training/calculate-the-cost-of-providing-home-support-services
  - Know what your community needs
  - Evaluate your workforce capacity
  - Prepare for additional governance requirements under a new Aged Care Act

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Thank you!