

Receive the
outcome of your
assessment

Research home
care providers &
work out costs

Be assigned
a home care
package

Enter into a
Home Care
Agreement

Manage your
services

Researching Home Care Providers – Considerations and Checklist

WHAT TO CONSIDER

What services are important to me?

You will need to research providers and find out if they offer services that are important to you, particularly if you have special requirements. For example, some providers specialise in services such as a specific language or dementia support.

You may also want to consider where the provider is located as this can reduce travel times and in some cases, reduce the costs associated with travel.

You can find providers in your local area using the 'Find a provider' tool on the My Aged Care website or calling My Aged Care on **1800 200 422** (free call).

You can also visit any Services Australia centre for assistance. In some locations, you can meet with an Aged Care Specialist Officer for more in-depth support. Call **1800 227 475** (free call).

Can I choose who is going to provide certain services for me?

You have a say in the types of care and services delivered to you as part of your Home Care Package, as well as who delivers those services. Discuss any preferences you have with potential providers to understand how they can best support you.

How much will each service cost?

Knowing how much each service costs and what type of services you can receive lets you get the most out of your package.

Each provider must publish their full price list on the My Aged Care website. This includes prices for common services and care management costs.

From 1 January 2023, providers must charge no more than 20% of the package level for care management. This is part of the Australian Government's commitment to reducing excessive administrative and management charges in the Home Care Packages Program. More information is available under 'Agreeing to a Home Care Package' on **myagedcare.gov.au**

You can view and compare pricing information using the 'Find a provider' tool on the My Aged Care website.

Services can include general support such as cleaning and household tasks, light gardening, and personal care such as bathing, showering and dressing. It may also include nursing services, in-home respite, social support or transport services.

Take a copy of your Home Care Package approval letter and support plan as well as your means assessment outcome (if you have it) to potential providers, as this will help your discussions.

How much will I have to contribute to the cost of the services I receive?

If you can afford to, you are expected to help with the cost of your care. Your contribution may be made up of three types of fees:

- a basic daily fee
- a means tested care fee (if your income is over the maximum income for a full pensioner, you may be asked to pay this fee)
- additional fees (any other amount you have agreed to pay for extra care and services that wouldn't otherwise be covered by your Home Care Package).

To get an estimate of the fees you may be asked to pay, use the home care fee estimator on **myagedcare.gov.au**

If you're receiving a pension that is not means tested e.g. blind pension or war widow pension, or you're not receiving a means tested payment, you should call Services Australia on **1800 227 475** (free call) and ask if you need a formal means assessment.

You can also use the income and means assessment tool at **myagedcare.gov.au/income-and-means-assessments**

What other costs can the provider charge?

The only costs a provider can charge, that are not directly related to delivering your care and services, are outlined in the 'other costs' section of the Schedule, published on the My Aged Care website. This must also be included in your Home Care Agreement.

This includes package management, which is the cost for the ongoing administration and organisation activities associated with ensuring the smooth delivery of your Home Care Package, and staff travel costs to visit you.

From 1 January 2023, providers **cannot**:

- charge more than 15% of package level for package management
- charge for package management in a calendar month where no services (other than care management) are delivered, except for the first month of care
- charge separately for third-party services i.e. when receiving services from a different provider
- charge exit amounts.

More information is available under 'Agreeing to a Home Care Package' on the My Aged Care website.

Providers cannot charge separately for any other costs that are unrelated to supporting your care or costs associated with the running of their business.

You should also be clear on what these costs are and the impact to your available Home Care Package funds.

How does the provider ensure quality of service?

You can ask each provider about their screening process and what checks they do before they employ care workers. You can also ask whether they have a training program and what qualifications they expect of their care workers before they are able to work with clients.

Providers are required to offer care and services in a way that meets the Aged Care Quality Standards. If you want to know what these Standards are and how they work, talk to the provider. You can also ask how they obtain and use your feedback.

What processes does the provider have for managing complaints?

Ask the provider what process they have to request a change of care worker, any notice periods and/or cost implications and if there is a complaints process. You direct your own care and have control over who delivers your care, and where and when they deliver it.

Can I bring a family member or carer to my discussion with providers?

There can be a lot of information discussed at your meeting with a provider so bringing a family member, friend or carer with you can be helpful. Ask how your family can be included in your decision making and how the provider will include your family member/carers in your care plan.

CHECKLIST

- Consider what is important to you and how potential providers can deliver the services you need and want to help you manage at home.
- Create a shortlist of providers in your local area:
 - use the 'Find a provider' tool on the My Aged Care website myagedcare.gov.au/find-a-provider
 - compare providers including their prices for some common services you may receive through your Home Care Package as well as other costs including care and package management
 - call My Aged Care on **1800 200 422** (free call) if you need help. You can also visit any Services Australia service centre or call **1800 227 475** (free call) weekdays from 8am to 5pm to make an appointment with an Aged Care Specialist Officer.
- Prepare questions you would like to ask potential providers – use the considerations in the table above as guidance.

- Discuss your options with your family/support network.

NEXT STEPS

- If you have not already done so, work out what you may be asked to contribute to the cost of your care by using the fee estimator tool on the My Aged Care website at myagedcare.gov.au/fee-estimator
- Wait for a letter from My Aged Care advising you of the assignment of your Home Care Package. This will include a referral code for you to give to your preferred provider.
- You can track your progress through your My Aged Care Online Account via myGov. You and your nominated representative/s can also access information about your Home Care Package, including approvals, waiting times and letters. Further information about creating a MyGov account and accessing your myagedcare.gov.au/access-your-online-account

MORE INFORMATION

For detailed information about the Home Care Packages Program, you can read the *Home Care Packages Program Operational Manual for Home Care Package consumers*. Search for 'home care packages manual' on the My Aged Care website.