



home**care**today  
Your resource hub for new ideas  
and choices in home care

COTA  
For older Australians



**A STEP BY STEP GUIDE TO BECOMING  
A NEW PROVIDER OF  
HOME CARE PACKAGES**

**May 2017**

## About Home Care Today

Home Care Today is a national resource that aims to support consumers and providers to work together to successfully implement Consumer Directed Care in Home Care Packages.

Home Care Today supports consumers accessing home care by providing information, resources and peer supports to make the most of the benefits and opportunities that CDC can offer.

To providers, Home Care Today offers a range of tools, resources and learning opportunities that will assist them to implement CDC across their organisations.

Home Care Today is an initiative of COTA Australia and is supported by the Australian Government, Department of Health.

## About this guide

This guide has been developed by COTA Australia, Home Care Today. Our key focus has been to resource consumers and providers nationally to implement Consumer Directed Care (CDC) in the context of the aged care reforms. The service provider focus has been with the current 504 Home Care Package providers that operate across Australia.

However, many of the resources that we have developed for current providers are relevant to new providers. Hence we conducted a conference for new providers in May 2016 and have identified past, current and new resources that can assist new providers to firstly consider what they need to do to provide Home Care Packages in the new environment of consumer driven care.

This step by step guide aims to sequentially list and embed the resources that we are aware for each of the steps that we have identified. The guide includes:

- Edited versions of the presentations from the New Providers Conference (held in May 2016)
- Resources available from the Home Care Today website
- Other links that have been used in introducing new providers to Home Care Packages.

## Disclaimer

This guide provides some general practical advice for Home Care Package providers and is not intended as legal or financial advice. This guide should not be the only source of information on this topic for providers or potential providers of Home Care Packages. Home Care Today encourages anyone who has questions about providing Home Care to get the relevant professional advice to discuss their organisation's particular situation.

Home Care Today makes this information available on an as is basis. Home Care Today makes no representations or warranties of any kind with respect to the contents of the information. To the maximum extent permitted by law, Home Care Today disclaims any such representations or warranties as to the completeness, accuracy, merchantability or fitness for purpose of the information.

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Information is open to change as a result of legislative changes or continuous improvement activities. Providers of aged care and new applicants should continue to use the department's website when seeking further information about the application process, legislative changes, operational guidelines and the quality standards.

Go to <https://agedcare.health.gov.au/>

To receive the information for aged care newsletters go to: <https://agedcare.health.gov.au/ageing-and-aged-care-news-and-updates/advice-to-the-aged-care-industry>

## 1. WHAT IS CONSUMER DRIVEN CARE?

From the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2015 all Home Care Packages were required to be delivered under the Consumer Directed Care (CDC) approach. Understanding Consumer Directed care is critical to being a Home Care Package provider.

Please go to the following resources for more detailed information:

 [Home Care Today website - What is CDC?](#)

 [Increasing Consumer Choice Legislation](#)

 [What are Home Care Packages?](#)

**The empowered consumer** is coming and there is considerable evidence already that many are able to negotiate the services that they want and need. Many are doing this because service providers are enabling consumers to be empowered. In the early parts of the reform many service providers were anxious that they would not be able to provide the choice or give the control to consumers. Looking at the rights of the consumer and the rights of the provider led to a legal issues project that has helped to provide insights into the issues and concerns as well as provide a way forward.

 [The Legal Issues Project](#) for further information.

## 2. THE CONTEXT OF THE AGED CARE REFORMS

The current aged care reforms stem from legislation passed in 2012. The reform agenda is primarily focused on providing an aged care system that provides increased capacity for older people to stay at home and have a choice of supports that suits their needs and preferences. The key elements of the aged care reform are:

- A standardised national system
- An approach to care that encourages as much direction by the consumer as possible (Consumer Directed Care)
- A market based system of more providers that will provide more choice for the consumer and a competitive environment for the provider
- An increase focus on user pays

The recently released Aged Care Roadmap is the latest proposal on what the aged care system should look like into the future. This has not yet been endorsed by the Government, however it provides a clear indication of the future direction proposed by key leaders in the sector.

**Please go to the following resources (either in your kit or here as a link) for more detailed information:**

 **Key features of delivering Home Care Packages** by Ronda Held (use video link on website)

 **Understanding the Fundamentals** by Jonathan Pietsch\_(use video link on website)

 **[The Department of Health's information on Aged Care Reform](#)**

 **[Learning Module: An Introduction to Consumer Directed Care](#)**

 **[The Aged Care Road Map](#)**

### 3. THE APPLICATION PROCESS TO BECOME AN APPROVED PROVIDER

The following information includes things to consider when making your application:

- It is important that you read the [Guidelines for Applicants Seeking Approval to Provide Aged Care](#) before you start your application.
- Your organisation must be incorporated and new applicants will be required to provide evidence of incorporation such as a Certificate of Registration of a Company.
- Your organisation must be able to demonstrate how it is suitable to provide aged care.
- Your organisation must not have any disqualified individuals as key personnel.
- You must apply using the approved form.
- Providing an accurate, clear and complete application will assist the assessment of your application. If you are required to provide further information, this will delay the decision on your application.
- For comprehensive information about the approval process go to the department's website [www.agedcare.health.gov.au](http://www.agedcare.health.gov.au).

Please go to the following resources for further information:



**Becoming an Approved Provider and the February 2017 changes to Home Care Packages.** By David Laffan, Assistant Secretary Prudential and Approved Provider Regulation Branch, Department of Health. (in your Kit)

[!\[\]\(5a132f13505a6571904d622757b7a8f0\_img.jpg\) Application for Approval to Provide Aged Care](#)

[!\[\]\(10f8862fc183b400327470ea85afe9ae\_img.jpg\) Aged Care Act 1997](#)

[!\[\]\(e1d6102fe77919492c04879c8450f1f5\_img.jpg\) My Aged Care/Protecting consumer rights](#)

[!\[\]\(73002692dd5e7a64e60946be3158e719\_img.jpg\) Charter of Rights and Responsibilities](#)

## 4. DEVELOPING YOUR CDC MODEL

Anecdotal evidence indicates that most new providers that are considering delivering Home Care Packages are already delivering services funded by the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP). This makes a lot of sense as these service providers generally have a wide base of older people that they are already working with. It would seem to be a logical extension to want to provide Home Care Packages for older people whose needs are increasing as they age. For CHSP providers to become Home Care Package providers also supports the integration of services but they will need to apply to become a Commonwealth Approved Provider under the Aged Care Act 1997.

There are also other providers that are also showing an interest. These include residential aged care services and disability service providers who already have many of the Aged workforce assets that with some changes would be able to deliver Home Care Packages.

The one key feature of Home Care Packages is the function of case management/care coordination (these two terms can be understood synonymously, however some providers see case management as the overarching function and care coordination as the day to day activity that organises care.) This case management/care coordination function is the key feature to how the program is different from the Commonwealth Home Support Program. The nature of Consumer Directed Care also means that there can be different levels of self-direction by consumers. Some consumers require less case management/advice/care coordination than others and this then means they will be able to spend more of their package on direct care workers or requirements that have been specified in their care plan.

In relation to your model development an important question and decision at this early stage for all new providers will be: **Do we provide case management and brokerage services (for direct care) or just provide one or the other?** Some service providers now just focus on providing the case management/care coordination component of the Home Care Packages. They do this because their area of strength has been case management. There are also many other services that provide direct care services. Already now and into the future we are seeing on line services being provided where consumers are able to choose direct care workers. The Better Caring website is one of these.

**Please go to the following resources (either in your kit or here as a link) for more detailed information:**

-  **New Provider Conference Videos** (from the New Service Provider conference held on the 20th May 2016) – (use video link on website)
-  **UK experience of Individual budgets?** By Simon Duffy (use video link on website)
-  **The fundamentals of Home Care Packages** by Jonathan Pietsch (use video link on website)

Other resources include:

-  [Summary of My Aged Care systems changes](#)
-  [Governance - Seven key issues to consider in being ready for February 2017: Interviews with providers, stakeholders and consumers](#)
-  [Home Care Today Co-production resources.](#) These resources encourage you to design your model with consumers.

## 5. THE ROLE OF CASE MANAGEMENT/ADVISORY SERVICES

The changing role of case managers has been observed over the past few years as organisations are preparing for a more competitive market. Case Managers are now required to have multiple skills including marketing, understanding the financial aspects of Consumer Directed Care and having excellent relational skills. The knowledge, skills and attitudes required of Case Managers are changing.

**Please go to the following resources (either in your kit or here as a link) for more detailed information**

 [Workforce Knowledge Skills and Attitudes](#)



[The critical role of the Case Manager/Advisor](#) (use video link on website)

 [CHOICES resources](#)

The CHOICES resources provides case managers/advisors with very useful information on how to make decisions about what resources consumers are entitled to. Many examples are given in what has been an excellent pilot of the Consumer Directed Care approach in rural communities and with CALD and Indigenous older people.

## 6. QUALITY AND VALUE IN HOME CARE

**Consumers are looking for quality in the services** that are being provided for them. The Home Care Common Standards provides the framework for the basic standard of care. There are 3 standards and 18 specific outcomes that the Australian Quality Agency are looking for when conducting quality reviews. The Department is working on combining the current standards for Residential Aged Care, Home Care and the Commonwealth Home Support Program over time, but they currently have different standards.

[!\[\]\(7e49c700e4adaed94ad5398cf2e7059e\_img.jpg\) Home Care Standards - full version](#)

[!\[\]\(5ebcf382a6ee952d6c5b8b948415801e\_img.jpg\) Australian Aged Care Quality Agency, Resources, Tools and Review Process](#)

[!\[\]\(71ceb62b681518c82e95d615e7265d66\_img.jpg\) My Aged Care Rights and responsibilities](#)

[!\[\]\(e10773081adcaeab632f9dd4c8931cd5\_img.jpg\) Go to HCT website Consumers/Frequently Asked Questions](#)

It is worthwhile noting that [Breaking New Ground](#) has software that has the capacity to cover multiple standards (up to 40 different standards) and has the capacity to be your information management quality system. So if you are a provider that is running multiple programs it may be worthwhile looking at what they have to offer.



**The empowered consumer – what are they looking for?** By Annette Whitmee (use video link on website)

## 7. COSTING, PRICING AND INDIVIDUALISED BUDGETS

Service providers have been required to make considerable changes to accommodate individualised budgets for all consumers on a Home Care Package. From 1 July in 2015 all Home Care Package recipients began to receive a monthly statement on how their package funds were being spent. This has meant that services have needed to work through the cost of their services (incorporating all administrative and salary costs) and then needing to price those services. As part of this new provider resource package you can have access to an accounting tool that has been prepared by Saward Dawson. To use the tool you will have to contact Saward Dawson and register your use. Click here to register and access the tool.

**Please go to the following resources (either in your kit or here as a link) for more detailed information**

 [CDC simplified accounting tool](#) (See tool then register)

 **Costing and Pricing of services** – by Jeff Davey (Use video link on website)

 In March 2016 a special webinar for Aboriginal providers was conducted and is available on the Home Care Today website.

[Costing and pricing webinar \(Aboriginal providers\).](#)

This webinar is also relevant for small and medium sized providers.

## 8. MARKETING

Current providers and every new provider are working to define themselves and their markets more clearly. As we move to a more market-based system, Home Care Package providers must know the value of their services to their consumers and be able to communicate it clearly. Developing a strong value proposition for your niche market is imperative to building a sustainable business model and ensures that consumers can get the services they want and need.

In Dale Renner's presentation at the New Service provider conference, he highlighted that being small and niche can work. That it's about identifying your strengths, being big on differentiation and being laser like in your focus. The laser like focus comes from understanding the needs of your potential clients and being able to focus your resources on meeting those needs.

**Please go to the following resources (either in your kit or here as a link) for more detailed information:**

 [Introduction to Niche Marketing Webinar April 2016](#)

 [Marketing tips for expanding into new markets](#) – by Dale Renner (use video link on website)

 Go to the [You Lead website](#) offering more Marketing training expertise.

 [My Aged Care Resources for setting up your profile on the Government service finder](#)

## 9. BUSINESS SYSTEMS

Technology and software systems that assist organisations to deliver services has not been a focus of Home Care Today as there are many varieties in the market place. It is generally very provider specific and depends on the many service types that you are providing.

Home Care Today's focus over the past two years has been on the small to medium sized organisations with a remit to assist them to adapt to the aged care reforms. Two providers have come to our attention that are trying to assist these small and medium sized providers.

Home Care Today is unable to recommend any technology and software providers but we do encourage you to investigate the two providers below and see if they meet your immediate needs. The first is a client management tool that develops the care plan, an agreement and the monthly statement. The second is a software tool that assists providers to manage the quality standards.

- 🔗 **E-tools** provides software that helps small providers to complete an agreement, develop a care plan and to produce the monthly statement that is now required for all people that receive a Home Care Package. <http://e-tools.com.au/product/view/ehcp>
  
- 🔗 Many providers have to meet a variety of quality standards from many different funding sources. [Breaking New Ground](#) has software that has the capacity to cover multiple standards (up to 40 different standards) and has the capacity to be your information management quality system. So if you are a provider that is running multiple programs it may be worthwhile looking at what they have to offer.

## 10. WORKFORCE

The move to a competitive Home Care Packages environment mean less predictability in demand for services. Workforce planning is likely to become more complex with Home Care Package providers needing to have flexible workforce models and availability based on changing demand.

New organisations will need to assess their care staff attraction, employment and retention models to be able to start small, then flex workforce during periods of higher and lower demand. It was also suggested organisations should consider and understand lead times for recruiting and on-boarding of new staff and the maximum and minimum staffing requirements to support likely variations in demand. The experience to date in the implementation of the NDIS has suggested workforce as one the greatest enablers and a significant challenge, as demonstrated by the quote below.

***“Recruiting and retaining a flexible workforce could mean the difference between success and failure for a not-for-profit disability organisation under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). One of the biggest challenges for providers will be engaging, supporting, retaining and continuously upskilling a flexible workforce that will meet the needs and wishes of people with disability. If workers and services are unavailable or rationed, the concept of consumer choice and control will have little meaning.”  
(National Disability Service, 2014)***

Detailed workforce and demand scenario modelling, along with a more mobile and flexible workforce were suggested strategies to assist organisations in planning future workforce needs in the changing consumer driven care environment.

**Please go to the following resources (either in your kit or here as a link) for more detailed information:**

[!\[\]\(8942d28dc4da2a769efbb41dc37c5a1c\_img.jpg\) Direct Care Workers booklet](#)

[!\[\]\(ef57557257cbb5c674d51a9e0a98bb4d\_img.jpg\) For workforce planning you can go to SKILLS IQ Workforce planning toolkit](#)

Further workforce development work is being completed on understanding Consumer Directed Care for direct care workers. An on line module is now available that explains the Aged Care reforms and the changing work roles for direct care workers. This online module can be used as a basic introduction to Consumer Directed Care for all your Direct Care Workers.

[!\[\]\(e10db9d69cb0b265e01951fb48872059\_img.jpg\) Online Learning Module](#)