

## HEALTH CARE HOMES STAGE ONE TRIAL EXTENSION AND REFINEMENT

### QUESTIONS/ANSWERS

#### *Health Care Homes*

Q Why is the Health Care Homes stage one trial being extended?

A The trial is an important part of the Government's primary care reform agenda and will contribute to the evidence base for future reform. Patients enrolled in the trial will continue to receive better coordinated and more flexible care for their chronic conditions. General practices, Aboriginal medical services and providers participating in the trial will get more time and funding to implement the integrated and patient-centred model of care for enrolled patients. As well as better patient care, this blended type of funding approach is needed to support more sustainable, flexible and innovative models of care which are currently not compatible with models funded predominantly through fee-for-service. An extension to the trial will enable the Government to capitalise on investment and progress to date, and to inform longer term system reforms.

Q The current Health Care Homes patient enrolment period ceases on 31 December 2018. Will the enrolment period be extended?

A Yes, the period for patient enrolment will be extended to 30 June 2019 or when 12,000 patients have been enrolled, whichever comes first. This is based on an assumption that the current tier distribution of enrolling patients remains unchanged. If, however, there is a disproportionate increase in tier 3 enrolments (the highest level of patient complexity and payment value), fewer patients may be enrolled to the trial. The patient tier distribution will be closely monitored and updates provided to Primary Health Networks on a regular basis.

Q Will the evaluation of the trial also be extended?

A Yes, the evaluation will be extended to inform the future of the trial beyond 30 June 2021.

Q Can new practices and Aboriginal medical services join the extended trial?

A No. The extension only applies to Health Care Homes currently participating in the trial. No applications are being taken for new practices to participate in the trial.

- Q Do practices currently participating in the trial have to continue until the new end date?
- A Currently registered Health Care Homes will be encouraged to continue in the trial until 30 June 2021 so that their potential and enrolled patients will benefit from the enhanced model of care. However, participation in the trial remains voluntary for both practices and patients.
- Q Are there any changes to funding provided to practices?
- A Indexation will be introduced to the bundled payments to ensure consistency with the Medicare Benefits Scheme.
- Q Have any other changes been made to the program and how patients access services?
- A The Health Care Homes stage one trial will essentially remain the same for Health Care Homes as well as potential and enrolled patients. Patients will continue to access services through their Health Care Home which will work with the patient to flexibly design services that meet the patient's needs.
- Q Is there an extension to the deadline (currently 30 November 2018) for Health Care Homes to be using shared care planning software that meets the minimum requirements developed by the Department?
- A Health Care Homes should now be using electronic shared care planning software. If a Health Care Home is not using electronic shared care planning software, they should be discussing the reasons for this with their Primary Health Network facilitator.
- Q The target for enrolled patients is now 12,000. Why are you no longer aiming for 65,000 patients?
- A Based on current patient enrolment rates, the revised target of 12,000 is achievable by 30 June 2019 and will enable a robust evaluation of the funding model and patient care. Learnings to date, which are also consistent with international experience, has reinforced that implementation of major health reform takes time.
- Q Will the arrangements that have been put in place to monitor practice and provider incentive payments be extended?
- A Yes. The Department will continue to monitor incentive payment levels and will provide top-up payments as required to ensure that no Health Care Home is disadvantaged as a result of their participation in the trial.

Q Will the pharmacy services under the Health Care Homes stage one trial also be extended?

A Yes, the Community Pharmacy in Health Care Homes Trial Program will continue to run as part of the Health Care Homes trial and enrolled patients will continue to benefit from referral to their chosen pharmacy for review of their medications and development of a collaborative medication management plan until 30 June 2021.

Q Will Primary Health Networks receive any additional funding to support Health Care Homes?

A Yes, Primary Health Networks will continue to receive funding to allow the on-going provision of support services to Health Care Homes.