



Home Care Packages Program Assurance Annual Plan 2022–23

Protecting the integrity of Home Care Packages Program funding through evidence-based assurance focused on design, delivery and administration.

Overview	HCP Program risks for Program Assurance			
<p>This Home Care Packages (HCP) Program Annual Assurance Plan (Plan) guides the conduct of the HCP Program Assurance Activities for 2022-23.</p> <p>This Plan has been informed by an environmental scan and risk assessment that considered input from internal and external stakeholders, findings from previous Assurance activities, data analysis, recent and planned HCP Program policy changes and Government priorities.</p> <p>The Department will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Send a notice (letter) requiring information and documentation to be provided by HCP approved providers (providers). Conduct an entry meeting, where requested by providers to discuss the scope of the Assurance Review. Liaise with providers throughout fieldwork, as required. Issue a draft and then final report to providers, which may recommend areas for improvement. This may be discussed in an exit interview. Publish a summary review report which may identify individual providers. Conduct targeted education sessions and engage with providers through the Community of Practice. <p>Providers can expect principles of 'no surprises' and 'natural justice' and review activity aligned to relevant standards</p>	<p>Risk 1 - Care recipients cannot exercise adequate choice due to provider processes or a lack of transparency or accuracy in pricing information / arrangements.</p>	<p>Risk 2 - The HCP Program does not achieve value for money for care recipients or Australian taxpayers.</p>	<p>Risk 3 - HCP Program funds are inappropriately or inadvertently used by a provider or care recipients.</p>	<p>Risk 4 - HCP Program funds are fraudulently used by a provider or care recipients</p>

Areas of Focus

This Annual Plan identifies seven areas of focus for assurance activities in 2022–23. Assurance activities have been planned for the first three areas, with the remaining to be considered as possible areas for assurance reviews.

Planned assurance reviews for 2022-23

<p>Unspent funds – risks 1 and 2</p> <p>Management of unspent funds was an area of focus for 2021-22 that was unable to be reviewed. It is a key concern for the Program as it impacts whether the Government and care recipients are receiving value for money. The recent change to Improved Payment Arrangements also underlines the importance of accurate reporting of unspent funds.</p> <p>This review will assure that up to 50 selected providers have accurately reported the amount of unspent funds held for care recipients and have the financial capacity to cover amounts owing to the Commonwealth (where care recipients exit the HCP Program) or make such funds available to care recipients to use for care and services. The review is expected to be completed by July 2023.</p>	<p>Pricing transparency requirements – risks 1 and 2</p> <p>The inaugural PA review identified that pricing transparency requirements were not being followed by providers. This affects the ability of care recipients to exercise informed choice.</p> <p>This review will assure that all providers have complete, accurate and up to date pricing information on the My Aged Care website. The review is expected to be completed by July 2023.</p> <p>This review may be run annually</p>	<p>Excluded goods – risks 1, 2, 3 and 4</p> <p>Previous assurance activities and stakeholders have identified confusion regarding what is included in and excluded from the HCP Program. This impacts the ability of care recipients to make informed choices about their care, affects value for money for the Program and could mean Program funds are misused.</p> <p>Selected providers will be reviewed to assure that the updated Home Care Packages Program Operational Manual: A Guide for Home Care Providers is followed correctly, as well as existing guidance (to record discussions). This review is expected to commence in the second half of 2023.</p>
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Possible areas for review for 2022-23

<p>Unspent funds of exited care recipients</p> <p>A review activity to identify the Commonwealth portion of unspent funds held by providers where the care recipient has exited the HCP Program.</p> <p>Provider business processes – risks 1, 2 and 3</p> <p>Providers need to have a range of business processes to communicate changes to care recipients, conduct and review care plans, issue monthly invoices and implement changes from the new SCHADS award. A review could assure that these internal business processes deliver the HCP Program requirements.</p>	<p>Third party service delivery – risks 1, 2, 3 and 4</p> <p>Third party service delivery arrangements are where the provider is removed from a direct working relationship with the care recipient yet remains accountable for appropriate use of program funds and value for money for care recipients. A review could be undertaken to assure that providers are managing this responsibility and assess the level of program integrity risks from such arrangements.</p>	<p>Supporting self-managed care recipients – risks 1 and 2</p> <p>Previous assurance activities, and stakeholder feedback, have raised concerns about the level and type of support offered to self-managed care recipients, including development of care plans/budgets and other care management activities. A review could consider whether providers support self-managed care recipients in a manner that supports program integrity and value for money.</p>
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