



# Transition of some Disability Support for Older Australians clients into aged care

## Client fact sheet

### What is changing under the DSOA Program?

From 1 January 2025, the Disability Support for Older Australians (DSOA) Program will refocus to support older people with disability who cannot be supported by the in-home aged care system.

DSOA clients who live at home, access less than \$50,000 per year in funded supports and can receive comparable services in the in-home aged care system will need to transition out of the DSOA Program by 31 December 2024.

On 1 and 2 November 2023, the Department of Health and Aged Care (the department) sent a letter to notify DSOA service coordinators which of their clients will need to transition out of the program.

### I am required to transition out of the DSOA Program by 31 December 2024. What options are available in the in-home aged care system?

Please contact My Aged Care on **1800 200 422** as soon as possible to organise an assessment that will determine which of the following in-home aged care programs will meet your needs:

- Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP), which provides entry-level services
- Home Care Packages (HCP) Program, which supports older people with more complex needs to live safely and independently at home.

You can learn more about [CHSP](#) and [HCP](#) on the My Aged Care website.

## **Will I receive the same level of funding and the same type of supports from in-home aged care?**

If you have been identified as meeting the criteria to transition to in-home aged care, this means you already receive services that can be met through the CHSP or a HCP.

You should **not** see a reduction in your services, only a change in the way they are administered.

You will also benefit from greater flexibility to change your services as required and have access to supports that are not available through the DSOA Program.

## **Can I keep receiving services from my existing support workers?**

Please discuss your options with your DSOA service coordinator. They will tell you if they can continue to support you when you transition to in-home aged care.

## **Are there any exceptions for me to remain in the DSOA Program after 31 December 2024?**

We are only transitioning DSOA clients whose individual care needs can be met through the CHSP or with a Level 1-4 HCP.

If an aged care assessment determines that your disability needs cannot be supported through in-home aged care, you will remain in the DSOA program.

The department will consider other exceptions on a case-by-case basis. If you believe that your individual support needs cannot be supported by in-home aged care, speak to your DSOA service coordinator who should assist with this process.

For more information, please email [CommonwealthDSOA@health.gov.au](mailto:CommonwealthDSOA@health.gov.au).

## **If I do not want to transition to in-home aged care, what other options do I have?**

You have been identified as meeting the criteria to transition to in-home aged care because the services you currently receive can be met through the CHSP or a HCP.

You also have the choice to move to permanent residential aged care. Please contact My Aged Care to organise an aged care assessment to determine your eligibility.

## **What do I need to do and when should I start the transition?**

Please contact My Aged Care on **1800 200 422** as soon as possible to discuss your individual circumstances and start the transition process.

They can also [book a face-to-face appointment with an Aged Care Specialist Officer](#), available at select Services Australia centres.

Please speak with your DSOA service coordinator if you need assistance with this process.

## **What happens when I contact My Aged Care?**

You will need to explain that your DSOA funding is ending on 31 December 2024 and that you would like to apply for the CHSP or HCP Program.

### **If this is your first time contacting My Aged Care, they will:**

- register you to My Aged Care
- conduct an initial screening to determine whether to organise an assessment with:
  - a Regional Assessment Service if your needs can be supported through CHSP, **or**
  - an Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT) for a comprehensive assessment to assess eligibility for a HCP or residential aged care.

### **If you are already registered to My Aged Care, they will:**

- confirm your details are up to date
- discuss your individual circumstances to determine whether to:
  - arrange a Support Plan Review with an ACAT to change your aged care services, **or**
  - if you recently had an assessment that approved you for CHSP or HCP, they can:
    - organise a referral to the CHSP, or
    - opt you into the National Priority System to await allocation of a HCP.

## **I have had an ACAT assessment. Do I need to have another assessment?**

This depends on when you had your ACAT assessment and if your care needs and circumstances have since changed.

If you have recently been approved for a HCP, you may only need to opt into the National Priority System to await allocation of a package.

Everyone's circumstances are different, so please contact My Aged Care on **1800 200 422** as soon as possible to discuss your individual circumstances.

## **I already receive some services from CHSP or HCP. Do I need to have an ACAT assessment?**

Everyone's circumstances are different. Please contact My Aged Care on **1800 200 422** as soon as possible to discuss your individual circumstances.

Even if you already receive some services through CHSP or a HCP in addition to your DSOA funded package, you may need to arrange an ACAT to ensure you receive a comprehensive assessment that will identify and address your individual care needs and goals.

## **What is involved in an aged care assessment?**

An ACAT assessment will determine what type of in-home aged care services will meet your individual care needs and can also assess if you are eligible for permanent residential aged care.

Aged care assessments are done in person, at your own home. The assessor will call you to arrange a time to visit.

The assessor will ask you a range of questions to find out what support you need to help you return or keep the level of independence you need to manage your day-to-day life.

If you choose, a family member, friend or carer can be with you during your assessment.

If you need a translator, let your assessor know and they can arrange one.

For more information to [prepare for your assessment](#) visit the My Aged Care website.

## How long will I have to wait for an assessment and HCP?

Wait times for an ACAT assessment will be different depending on where you live.

If an ACAT approves you for a HCP, you will need to opt into the National Priority System and await allocation of a package. The National Priority System allows for fair allocation of packages based on your individual needs and circumstances.

The estimated wait time for a HCP is between 3 to 6 months.

## What happens if I am not allocated a HCP by 31 December 2024?

To prevent any issues, please contact My Aged Care on **1800 200 422** as soon as possible.

In the event you are not assigned a HCP by 31 December 2024 due to wait times, your DSOA service coordinator's funding agreement will be extended. This will ensure you continue to receive the support you need while you wait for a HCP.

If required, please ask your service coordinator to outline the circumstances preventing you from being allocated a HCP in an email to [CommonwealthDSOA@health.gov.au](mailto:CommonwealthDSOA@health.gov.au).

## Will I need to contribute towards the cost of my care?

You may be required to contribute towards the cost of their care under the CHSP or HCP.

Under the CHSP, clients are expected to contribute towards the cost of their care where they have the capacity to do so. More information can be found in the [National Guide to the CHSP Client Contribution Framework](#) on the department's website.

Under the HCP Program, fees are income tested. The fee is different for everyone. It is based on the individual's income, including their pension. HCP care recipients who receive a full pension or earn an income of up to \$31,504.20 per year will not pay an income tested care fee. More information about fees under the HCP Program can be found on the [My Aged Care website](#) and the [department's website](#).

## Where can I find more information and who can I contact?

Please discuss your ongoing support requirements with your DSOA service coordinator.

You can also contact the DSOA Program Management Team by emailing [CommonwealthDSOA@health.gov.au](mailto:CommonwealthDSOA@health.gov.au).