



Single assessment system – Information pack for potential tenderers

The Department of Health and Aged Care (the department) will be conducting an open tender for organisations with the capability and capacity to deliver aged care assessments under the new single assessment system from 1 July 2024.

This pack provides some useful background and frequently asked questions for organisations that are interested in tendering for the delivery of the single assessment system.

Background

The 2023-24 Budget announced the establishment of a [single assessment system](#) from 1 July 2024 to simplify and improve how older people access aged care.

The new single assessment system is being developed in response to the recommendations of the [Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety](#).

The new single assessment system will commence by 1 July 2024 and will replace the following current arrangements:

- [2 aged care assessment programs](#):

- Regional Assessment Service (RAS): for the [Commonwealth Home Support Programme](#)
- Aged Care Assessment Teams (ACAT) for the [Home Care Packages Program](#), [Short-Term Restorative Care Programme](#), [Transition Care Programme](#), [residential respite](#) and entry to [residential aged care](#)
- [independent Australian National Aged Care Classification \(AN-ACC\) assessors](#) for [residential aged care funding](#).

Organisations can apply to be a part of the single assessment system through AusTender. The tender process will open in early 2024. State and territory governments will continue to play a role in the aged care assessment system and will be engaged through direct negotiation with the Commonwealth.

Assessment Tools

There are 2 assessment tools that will be used to conduct assessments under the new system:

1. [Integrated Assessment Tool](#) (IAT): organisations providing aged care assessment services will be required to use the IAT to determine eligibility for government-subsidised aged care.
2. [AN-ACC Assessment Tool](#): used by assessors who are independent of a residential aged care facility and not familiar with the resident to assess their care needs and assign them an AN-ACC classification.

The Integrated Assessment Tool

From 1 July 2024 the IAT will replace the current assessment process to assess for all Commonwealth government-subsidised aged care programs.

The IAT is designed to facilitate the consistent collection of information for the purposes of conducting assessments. The IAT allows appropriate client information, the carer(s) and their support network as relevant to their assessment to be collected, shared, expanded and updated throughout the client's My Aged Care journey. The IAT underpins the client's support plan.

The IAT allows assessors to develop a detailed and holistic understanding of a client's current circumstances and care needs. The tool helps to identify the client's vulnerability and complexity indicators and forms the basis for support planning and the development of support plans that meet the client's assessed circumstances and requirements. It is also used to assist in determining not only aged care support services but where a client may require other interventions to support them in living independently in the community.

The IAT and its integrated assessment tools may be updated from time to time by the department at its discretion, in consultation with relevant stakeholders.

See the [My Aged Care Assessment Manual](#) for current guidance for assessors in conducting assessments and details of the current assessment process.

The AN-ACC Assessment Tool

The [AN-ACC funding model](#) provides subsidies to approved residential aged care providers based on service type and each resident's care needs.

The AN-ACC classification system was developed by the Australian Health Services Research Institute (AHSRI) at the University of Wollongong, in consultation with clinical experts in health and aged care, and comprises a care recipient assessment model, care recipient classification model, and provider funding model.

The residential aged care funding assessment model, which supports the determination of the AN-ACC classification and funding, focuses on independently capturing the core attributes of a resident's care needs that drive care costs in residential aged care including palliative care, mobility, function, frailty, cognition, communication, behaviour, mental health, wound risk and technical nursing.

The AN-ACC Assessment Tool has been introduced to provide an assessment of a client's care needs and assign them an AN-ACC classification to inform funding needs for the client. The amount of funding to be provided will reflect the AN-ACC classification assigned to the client, based on their independently assessed needs.

Effort Attribution Study

The department engaged Nous Group to conduct an [Effort Attribution Study](#), to review the end-to-end aged care assessment process and to detail the specific activities, activity times taken, and people involved in the assessment process currently performed by ACATs.

ACATs have previously advised that there are a range of activities that occur outside the requirement for assessment services set out in funding agreements to deliver the current [aged care assessment programs](#).

The department has introduced a number of initiatives to reduce the burden (and invisible work) on assessments organisations, including:

- Assessors can now direct clients to [Aged Care Specialist Officer](#) (ACSOs) and [Care Finders](#) that help navigate the aged care system to reduce their burden of undertaking navigation supports and linking supports.
- Assessors have been advised on the new [younger person assessment process](#), creating awareness that their scope of involvement is now reduced.
- Over the 2021-22 and 2022-23 financial years an additional 80,000 [Home Care Packages](#) were released which decreased wait times in the [National Priority System](#) and a decrease in need of a reassessment for clients was also observed.

The Effort Attribution Study observed and documented the activities involved in the end-to-end aged care assessment process.

3 lines of assessment enquiries were investigated during the Effort Attribution Study:

- activities that occur during end-to-end assessment

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- time taken to complete these activities
- how activities are completed including who completed them.

This created a baseline that reflected the variability and complexity of workloads across different locations to underpin future planning.

The Effort Attribution Study involved observations of 30 ACAT outlets nominated by all jurisdictions, covering metropolitan, regional and remote areas. Activities undertaken included: interviewing outlet staff and shadowing of assessors, identifying variation in workload and complexity performed at each outlet. Community-based assessments were in scope of the Effort Attribution Study and the primary focus. Hospital assessments, while out of scope were observed where opportunities existed and included in the report for completeness.

Findings from the Effort Attribution Study will assist in informing the design of the new single aged care assessment system. The report summary is available on the department's website.

Findings/Highlights:

The report acknowledged that an average end-to-end aged care assessment process took 5 hours to complete:

- 1.2 hours (24%) spent on direct assessments (24%),
- 1.4 hours (28%) on support plan activity, and
- 1 hour (22%) on travel.

The remaining time was spent on intake, preparation, travel, service matching and referral, delegate review/approval and assessment finalisation activities.

Within the support plan activity, 'the writing up of the support plan' is the most time consuming. Variability is owed to factors such as ready access to client's records and enabling technologies. Key factors contributing to the duration of this process include the need to:

- transcribe manually recorded information collected during direct assessment into the online tool
- complete documents offline
- check client records
- case conferencing
- complete IAT
- complete their support plan
- confirm details
- submit documents to delegate.

Areas identified where efficiencies could be achieved:

- The streamlining of the intake process and optimising the structure of ACATs.
 - Support planning: assessors are taking more time to complete the support plan (1.4 hours) than conducting the assessment (1.2 hours).

- Improving quality and uptake of technology such as the [MyAssessor app](#) could save time. Reliability and accessibility of the My Aged Care system could help with achieving efficiencies.
- Resources will need to be allocated to enhance aged care assessments for clients with special needs:
 - Additional time required because of language barriers, which may require translators, access to culturally appropriate processes and approaches and lower levels of health literacy.
- Role for the department:
 - Need to clearly define the roles and responsibilities of the My Aged Care workforce including ACATs, care finders and the contact centre.

Useful Links

- [Single assessment system for aged care](#)
- [Aged care assessment programs](#)
- [AN-ACC assessments](#)
- [My Aged Care Workforce Learning Strategy 2023](#)
- [My Aged Care Assessment Manual](#)
- [Aged Care Assessment Quality Framework](#)

Next steps for the tender

When the tender is released, more information will be published on [AusTender](#).

Following the release of the tender, the department will hold an online information session for potential tenderers to ask questions.

For the latest information, subscribe to the [Your Aged Care Update newsletter and alerts](#).

If you have any questions, email SingleAgedCareAssessmentSystem.RFT@health.gov.au.

Frequently Asked Questions

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1. Is the department in a period of probity in relation to the tender?

Probity arrangements are in place to ensure that the tender process is conducted in a manner that is fair, equitable, consistent and defensible.

The department is seeking to ensure that any relevant information is available to all potential tenderers in a fair manner and may be unable to answer specific questions regarding the single

assessment system tender. The department's single point of contact for the tender is SingleAgedCareAssessmentSystem.RFT@health.gov.au.

Note: Current assessment organisations may still contact the department with questions about business-as-usual assessment arrangements.

2. What are the qualifications for individuals to become an assessor?

Details of the qualification requirements for the single assessment workforce will be further explained in the tender release documents.

The [My Aged Care Learning Strategy 2023](#) outlines the current required capabilities and minimum training requirements for the My Aged Care workforce. This strategy is underpinned by a [Quality Learning Framework](#), which details the required training standards to achieve effective learning outcomes for the My Aged Care workforce.

3. Who will be able to apply through the tender?

The department will be conducting an open tender for organisations with the capability and capacity to deliver aged care assessments under the new single assessment system. Details of requirements will be further explained in the tender release documents.

The department will continue to work directly with states and territories to negotiate jurisdictions' ongoing role in the single assessment system.

4. Can an organisation join with other organisations to tender together?

Organisations interested in tendering for the single assessment system should consider the best approach for their circumstances, including working with other organisations.

Details of subcontracting or consortium requirements will be further explained in the tender release documents.

5. Will we get a notification when the tender is released?

We expect that the tender will be released in January on AusTender.

AusTender is the Australian Government's procurement portal and will be the mechanism through which details about any approach to market are released. Organisations interested in participating in the tender are encouraged to monitor AusTender for updates. They can also [register to AusTender](#) to receive a notification when the tender opens.

6. Is there any indication of funding allocations for the new single assessment system?

Details relating to pricing will be further explained in the tender release documents.