



How is cognition assessed for residential aged care funding?

Cognitive ability is a significant factor in residential aged care funding assessments (funding assessments). This fact sheet provides information on how cognition is assessed under the Australian National Aged Care Classification (AN-ACC) funding model.

Overview

The AN-ACC funding model provides more equitable care funding to providers that better matches funding for residents with the costs of delivering care, enabling a more efficient, transparent and sustainable system.

Mobility and cognitive ability, and their impact on care costs, are central to the funding assessment process, which determines the variable funding a residential aged care provider will receive from the Australian Government to deliver care that meets each resident's needs.

The AN-ACC funding model was developed by the University of Wollongong, and has been independently researched, trialled, and tested.

Cognitive ability drives time and costs associated with care needs and is central to the AN-ACC classification.

What does the AN-ACC Assessment Tool capture about the resident?

A funding assessment is different to a care planning assessment undertaken by care staff in a residential aged care home. The funding assessment process has been designed to be robust and concise, and undertaken by an independent expert clinician using the [AN-ACC Assessment Tool](#).

The [AN-ACC Assessment Tool](#) has been designed to capture the core attributes that drive care costs in residential aged care, which include: end of life, frailty, functional decline, cognition, behaviour, and technical nursing requirements.

The AN-ACC Assessment Tool considers:

- physical ability (including pain)
- cognitive ability (including ability to communicate, socially interact, problem solve, and memory)
- behaviour (including ability to cooperate, physical aggression, problem wandering, passive resistance, and verbally disruptiveness)
- mental health issues (including depression and anxiety).

Funding assessments are conducted by residential aged care funding assessors (funding assessors) who are experienced aged care clinicians with current registration as a registered nurse, occupational therapist, or physiotherapist. Funding assessors also undergo comprehensive training on how to use the AN-ACC Assessment Tool.

How is cognition assessed in the AN-ACC Assessment Tool?

A key component of the funding assessment process is an assessment of a person's cognitive ability, which includes their capacity to understand and complete a range of movements and tasks. When conducting a funding assessment, funding assessors use a range of strategies to gather information about the capabilities of the person being assessed, including:

- talking with the person (where appropriate)
- observation
- conversation with co-residents and key informants such as family, carers, friends, staff, and external health providers
- reviewing relevant documentation such as medical records, care plans, and wound care/behaviour charts.

The modified De Morton Mobility Index (DEMMI) assessment (which is a mobility tool used to determine the [first branch of the AN-ACC classification](#)) also considers a person's ability to comprehend and complete a task. For example, a person who is physically mobile, but needs assistance because they cannot recall where they are going or why, would be assessed as being in the assisted mobility branch of AN-ACC.

In addition, cognitive ability is assessed via the Australian Functional Measure (AFM) component of the AN-ACC Assessment Tool, which considers a person's capacity to understand and complete a range of movements and tasks, including their ability to communicate, sequence, socially interact, remember instructions, and problem solve.

Evidence of any disruptive or agitated behaviours is assessed through the Behaviour Resource Utilisation Assessment (BRUA) component of the AN-ACC Assessment Tool.

See the [AN-ACC Reference Manual and Assessment Tool](#) for more information.

More information and resources

See [the AN-ACC Funding Guide](#) for comprehensive information on AN-ACC subsidies.

Further information about the AN-ACC funding model, including general information, is available on the webpage [AN-ACC funding model](#). The following resources are also available.

Information source	Description
Resources and factsheets	Resources and factsheets can be located on the health website.
Social media	Follow us on Facebook , X , LinkedIn and Instagram
Subscriptions	Subscribe to the Department of Health and Aged Care's newsletters for aged care updates.
Ageing and Aged Care Engagement Hub	Find current engagement activities and register your interest to be involved in workshops, focus groups, webinars and surveys Website: https://www.agedcareengagement.health.gov.au/
My Aged Care service provider and assessor helpline	For help with the My Aged Care system or technical support for providers and assessors. Phone: 1800 836 799 The helpline is available from 8:00am to 8:00pm Monday to Friday and 10:00am to 2:00pm Saturday, local time across Australia.

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