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Australian Government

**Department of Health,
Disability and Ageing**

Information Brief

MB25-002554

Version (1)

Date sent to MO: 29 October 2025

To: Minister Rae

cc: Minister Butler

Subject: **URGENT DEPT INITIATED INFORMATION BRIEF - ASSESSOR OVERRIDE
OF SAH CLASSIFICATION**

Comments:			
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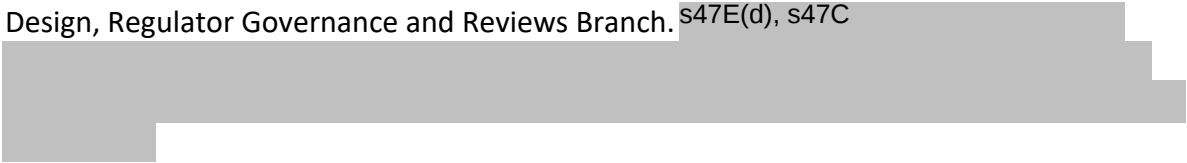
Key Issues:

- This brief foreshadows potential sensitivities that may arise following the publication of the Aged Care Assessment Manual for 1 November 2025. s47E(d), s47C
 - Under the Single Assessment System, aged care needs assessors use the Integrated Assessment Tool (IAT) which comprises questions and validated tools to help determine an older person's care needs. At present, clinical assessors determine a Home Care Package level under a manual process in accordance with guidance provided by the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing (Department).
 - From 1 November 2025, an algorithm will operate to recommend whether a person needs Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) or if they need Support at Home (SaH), and to recommend a specific SAH classification level. The algorithm will provide consistency in how SaH classifications are assigned to individuals. It was developed through analysis of 22,000 participant assessments that were collected in the live trial of the IAT in April-August 2023.
 - In public statements, including responses to media enquiries s47E(d)
- nd Department has regularly indicated that there will be an ability for assessors to override the IAT SaH classification algorithm recommendation (IAT outcome). In accordance with this position, an override functionality has been built into the relevant systems. s47E(d), s47C

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- Guidance provided to the Single Assessment System workforce has reflected this position, indicating that assessors will have the ability to determine a SaH classification that is different to the algorithm recommendation, and that further guidance on use of this override function will be provided before 1 November 2025.
- Delegation instruments to be made under the Act empower clinically-trained assessment delegates to exercise the System Governor's decision-making powers to determine a SaH classification under s78 of the Act.
- The Aged Care Rules 2025 (Rules) provide discretion to facilitate assessors to use the system override function to enable the selection of short-term pathways (Restorative Care and End-of-Life) and residential care. However, the Rules provide no legal discretion for assessors or assessment delegates to override the recommendation of the algorithm for a SaH classification.
- An older person can apply for review of a classification decision through the Department's reconsiderations process. s47E(d), s47C
[Redacted]
- s47E(d), s47C
[Redacted]
- The Department needs to publish an updated Aged Care Assessment Manual (Manual) on 1 November 2025 to reflect the reforms commencing on this date. The Rules reference the version of the Manual as published on 1 November 2025, so any changes to the Manual after 1 November 2025 will need to be reflected in updates to the Rules which will require Ministerial approval.
- To provide clear guidance to assessment delegates about how to lawfully exercise their delegated powers, the Department intends to indicate the following in the Manual:
 - The circumstances in which assessors and assessment delegates are permitted to override the IAT algorithm recommendation are limited to short-term pathways and residential care, and assessors should not use the override functionality to change an individual's SaH classification.
 - The Department will be monitoring the operation of the algorithm outcomes.
- After the Manual is released, assessment organisations (including State and Territory Governments) or individual assessors may criticise this position as being inconsistent with previous Government statements. s47E(d), s47C
[Redacted]
- There is a risk that this late change in messaging to assessment organisations may not filter through to assessor behaviour. The Department intends to hold a short meeting with assessment organisation operations managers in the week commencing 3 November 2025 to reinforce the new guidance, supported through email communications.

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Consultations: This brief has been prepared in consultation with Support at Home Policy and Operations Branch, Assessment and Home Care Transition Branch and the Safeguards Design, Regulator Governance and Reviews Branch. s47E(d), s47C


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Minister	Minister Rae
PDR Number	MB25-002554
Subject	**URGENT** Dept Initiated Information Brief - ASSESSOR OVERRIDE OF SAH CLASSIFICATION
Contact Officer	Rachel Blackwood Ph: S47F Mobile: S47F
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Division/Branch	Ageing and Aged Care Access and Home Support Division
Has Budget Branch been consulted if there are financial implications?	Not Applicable
Ensuring connected products across the Portfolio	Have disability/NDIS linkages been considered and outlined as relevant? YES ☐ NO ☒ N/A ☒ Have aged care linkages been considered and outlined as relevant YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A ☒

Adviser/DLO comments:	Returned to Dept for: REDRAFT ☐ NFA ☐
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