



Commonwealth Specialist Dementia Care Program – Important information about Length of Stay, Security of Tenure, and Fees

Signing a Specialist Dementia Care Program Agreement with your provider. What is this?

As a condition of entering the Specialist Dementia Care Program (SDCP), the person (or their representative) must accept a suitable mainstream place when the Clinical Advisory Committee determines they are ready to transition out of the program.

The person (or their representative) will need to sign an agreement that indicates they have read and understood the information on this fact sheet.

The provider will assist with any questions about the admission to the Specialist Dementia Care Program.

The Specialist Dementia Care Program offers transitional support. What does this mean?

The SDCP offers temporary, transitional care to stabilise and reduce a person's behavioural and psychological symptoms with the aim of enabling them to transition to a less intensive care setting.

A person's stay in a SDCP unit is not permanent. When the person's behavioural and psychological symptoms stabilise, the SDCP provider will support them to leave the program and move to a less intensive care setting.

It is expected that the usual length of stay in a specialist dementia care unit will be up to 12 months, although this will vary for each person.

Planning for transition-out will commence from admission and involve the SDCP provider, client, and their family and carers. Parties should identify at admission if the person's (or their representative's) preference on discharge is to:

- 'step down' to a mainstream place within the SDCP provider's broader residential aged care facility
- return to a previous residential aged care service
- move to a new residential aged care service.

What is 'security of tenure' (a guaranteed place) for a typical Residential Aged Care admission?

When a person enters a resident agreement, the aged care facility must provide them with a safe and secure environment and the agreed levels of care for as long as they need. This is called 'security of tenure'. The resident agreement would include detailed information about this.

More information about general security of tenure provisions is available on the [My Aged Care](#) website.

A person's stay in the Specialist Dementia Care Program unit is not permanent. What does this mean?

The length of a person's stay in a SDCP unit will depend on the person's response to the level of care provided under the program. A person keeps their place in the SDCP unit only until such time as they no longer need the specialist dementia care provided under the program.

The SDCP provider will regularly talk to the person and their carer/s about their care needs and discuss likely transition-out times so there is a smooth transition from the unit to a lower intensity care setting. Transition planning will commence on and prior to admission.

This may be within a 'step-down' unit within the same aged care facility, or the person may choose to move to another aged care facility or a different care setting.

The SDCP unit will have a Clinical Advisory Committee which will review the care needs and the progress of all people within the unit. The Clinical Advisory Committee will determine a person's need to remain in the unit, or their ability to move to a less intensive care setting.

When the Clinical Advisory Committee determines a person no longer needs the level of care provided under the SDCP, the provider will work with person and their family to transition the person to another care setting.

What if the person has been admitted to the specialist dementia care unit from another aged care home? Will they be able to return?

If a person has left one aged care home in order to enter a specialist dementia care unit, they would no longer have security of tenure (their place) in the original home. However, once a person is ready to transition out of the specialist dementia care unit, they may of course talk to the original aged care home to see if there is a suitable vacancy.

What fees are payable in a specialist dementia care unit?

The arrangements for fees and payment for care in a specialist dementia care unit are the same as in mainstream residential care. Residential aged care recipients are required to contribute to the costs of their care and accommodation, with fees dependent on their ability to pay (means testing).

Could a person's fees and payments change if they move into a specialist dementia care unit?

There will be no change to basic daily care fees or means tested care fees as a result of a person moving from mainstream residential aged care to a specialist dementia care unit.

Residential aged care recipients may also be required to pay an accommodation contribution (determined by their means test) or an accommodation payment up to the amount published by the residential aged care provider on My Aged Care.

As a result of moving from a mainstream residential aged care service into a specialist dementia care unit a person could be asked to pay more or less towards their accommodation compared to what they were previously paying.

What happens if the person has previously paid a refundable accommodation deposit to another aged care home?

If a person is currently in another residential aged care home and has previously paid a refundable accommodation deposit (RAD), this will be refunded, in accordance with the Aged Care Act 1997, when they leave their existing residential aged care service to enter the specialist dementia care unit. The person can then choose to pay a daily accommodation payment (DAP), RAD, or combination of both to the SDCP provider. This is consistent with other moves between residential aged care services.

However, the person could also agree for the original provider to transfer the lump sum RAD directly to the specialist dementia care unit provider.