



Workforce (Pillar 4 of the Royal Commission response) – Single assessment workforce for aged care

In response to the Aged Care Royal Commission, the Australian Government will invest \$228.2 million to create a single assessment workforce for senior Australians seeking access to aged care. The reforms will improve the quality and consistency of assessments.

This single workforce will provide a better experience for senior Australians as they enter or progress within the aged care system, as one workforce will be empowered and trained to do all of the assessments that they need across both home care and residential care. Assessments will also ensure senior Australians are accurately assessed as to their needs.

- **From October 2022:** this workforce will have responsibility for funding assessments for residential aged care as the transition to the Australian National Aged Care Classification occurs. These independent assessments will mean that aged care providers no longer conduct assessments for funding, ensuring that clinicians working in residential aged care will have more time to focus delivering care to residents.
- **From July 2023:** the single assessment workforce will provide assessments for the new support at home program. The workforce will also include Indigenous specific assessment organisations, which will work to improve assessment outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people accessing aged care when it is needed, addressing historically low take up rates.

Why is this important?

The Australian Government is committed to establishing a more integrated aged care system for senior Australians. There are currently three different assessment workforces:

- Regional Assessment Services for Commonwealth Home Support Programme
- Aged Care Assessment Teams for the Commonwealth Home Support Programme, Short Term Restorative Care, Transition Care, Home Care Packages, Residential Respite and entry to Residential Care, and
- clinicians working in residential aged care for residential care funding.

This means under the current arrangements senior Australians can be passed between assessors as their needs change, and assessments are not consistent.

The reforms will also ensure that better information is collected during assessments to generate service recommendations and referrals based on the needs of each senior Australian. It will also have an increased focus on supporting clients with dementia.

The establishment of a single assessment workforce will underpin further reforms to increase the accuracy and quality of assessments for home care services, and work to improve assessment outcomes for Indigenous Australians.

The reforms will include improved assurance and accountability arrangements, so that the community can be confident Commonwealth funding for aged care is targeted to care need.

This measure supports *Recommendations 25 and 28* of the Royal Commission's final report.

Who will benefit?

Future aged care users will have a more-streamlined assessment experience and receive greater clarity about likely services they will receive at the conclusion of their assessment.

Residential aged care providers will benefit through having clinical resources currently dedicated to completing funding assessments able to be redeployed to provide care for residents.

Organisations with expertise in providing assessment services, such as state and territory governments, not-for-profit, and for-profit assessment providers, will be invited to be part of the assessment workforce.

How much will this cost?

This measure includes additional funding of \$228.2 million over 4 years, from 2021–22, for transition to the new arrangements and new assessments under the Australian National Aged Care Classification.