



# What are AN-ACC shadow assessments?

**The Australian National Aged Care Classification (AN-ACC) care funding model will replace the Aged Care Funding Instrument (ACFI) from 1 October 2022. This fact sheet provides information on the shadow assessments undertaken by independent assessors to prepare for the transition to the new funding arrangements.**

## Overview

AN-ACC will provide more equitable care funding to providers that better matches resident funding with the costs of delivering care enabling a more efficient, transparent and sustainable system.

Shadow assessments are currently being undertaken, by independent assessors, using the AN-ACC Assessment Tool to ensure a smooth transition to the new arrangements. ACFI appraisals will continue to occur alongside shadow assessments until the implementation of the AN-ACC funding model.

This means providers are required to submit ACFI appraisals for residents who enter into care prior to 1 October 2022 to support the calculation of ACFI funding for all claiming days up to 30 September 2022. Claiming days from the 1 October 2022 will be based on AN-ACC assessments. However, ACFI appraisals and reappraisals will be able to be submitted after 30 September 2022, as per the current business rules, for claim days up until that date.

**ACFI funding arrangements for aged care residents will continue up until 30 September 2022.**

**During the shadow assessment period, AN-ACC assessments will not affect current accommodation, care, claiming or funding arrangements.**

## What are shadow assessments and the shadow assessment period?

Shadow assessments are underway for everyone living in an Australian Government-funded residential aged care facility.

The shadow assessment assigns an AN-ACC classification to a resident that determines the variable component of the AN-ACC care funding model to be paid to residential aged care providers from 1 October 2022. The shadow assessment period commenced in April 2021 and will continue to 30 September 2022. See [What is AN-ACC and how will it work](#) for more information about the AN-ACC funding components.

An AN-ACC assessment considers the attributes or characteristics that drive the cost of care for a residential aged care resident and is not the same as care planning. Providers must continue to prepare care plans for each resident as required under the aged care quality standards.

## When will the Government release the outcome of shadow assessments and where can providers access this information?

Facilities can access their shadow assessment outcomes through the [My Aged Care Provider Portal](#) (where assessments have been completed).

Some assessments have been delayed due to the ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, all residents are expected to be assessed before the AN-ACC funding model commences on 1 October 2022.

Providers for each aged care facility will be able to access their shadow assessment classifications for their residents well before 1 October 2022 to help them estimate their funding levels and assist with transition planning prior to the commencement of AN-ACC.

## Can providers ask for an AN-ACC reclassification?

Providers can request a reclassification of an assessment decision if a resident's original classification is no longer representative of their care need. See [Can I ask for an AN-ACC reclassification](#) for more information on the process and eligibility criteria for seeking a reclassification.

## What support is available to providers to help them with their transition to AN-ACC?

Providers will be able to access a range of support services to help them transition smoothly to the new funding arrangements. The [AN-ACC Transition Support Plan](#) outlines the grant opportunities, services, and resources (including an AN-ACC helpdesk) that are available to providers.

## What can providers expect from the shadow assessment process?

The AN-ACC care funding model aims to make funding fairer and more equitable across the aged care sector. The assessment process removes the paperwork burden, so that providers and staff can spend more time providing residents with safe and effective care.

The shadow assessment process involves independent AN-ACC assessors visiting all residents in Australian Government-funded residential aged care facilities. AN-ACC assessors are delegates of the Secretary of the Department of Health and are bound to a Code of Conduct, alongside other legislation relevant to the delivery of government services to the Australian public.

## What is the AN-ACC Assessment Tool

The [AN-ACC Assessment Tool](#) comprises a suite of tools that focus on the characteristics of residents that drive the costs of care, and includes:

- Technical Nursing Requirements
- Resource Utilisation Groups – Activities of Daily Living (RUG-ADL)
- Australia-modified Karnofsky Performance Status
- Rockwood Clinical Frailty Scale
- Braden Scale for Predicting Pressure Sore Risk
- De Morton Mobility Index (DEMMI) — modified
- Australian Functional Measure (AFM)
- Behaviour Resource Utilisation Assessment (BRUA)
- Entry for Palliative Care

## Who will be completing the shadow assessments?

AN-ACC assessors from six independent Assessment Management Organisations (AMOs) around Australia are conducting assessments during the shadow assessment period on behalf of the Department of Health (the department). These organisations are:

- Access Care Network Australia Pty Ltd
- Australian Healthcare Associates Pty Ltd
- Care Tasmania Pty Ltd t/as Care Assess
- Health Administration Corporation, as represented by NSW Ministry of Health
- Healthcare Australia Pty Ltd
- Serendipity (WA) Pty Ltd t/as Advanced Personnel Management.

## What qualifications do AN-ACC assessors have?

All AN-ACC assessors are experienced aged care clinicians who have satisfied screening and accreditation processes. This includes confirmation of:

- five years plus experience in an aged care setting
- five years plus current unrestricted Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency registration as either a Registered Nurse, Occupational Therapist, or Physiotherapist
- police checks and working with vulnerable peoples checks (if required).

In addition, assessors complete a comprehensive training course on the use of the [AN-ACC Assessment Tool](#) and are required to achieve a pass mark of 75% in their final exam.

The comprehensive training that all assessors receive, as well as the quality assurance procedures in place for the department and the AMOs, ensures all AN-ACC assessments are conducted consistently using the AN-ACC Assessment Tool. See [Are AN-ACC shadow assessments high quality](#) for more information.

The department also holds the current influenza and coronavirus vaccination details of all AN-ACC assessors.

## When will shadow assessments be completed for my facility?

A representative from an AMO will contact facilities in their contracted regions to organise on-site assessments during the shadow assessment period, including for phase 2 of the shadow assessment period when an assessor returns to a facility to conduct initial assessment for residents without a classification as well as requests for reclassifications. AMOs will work with providers to minimise disruption when arranging assessments.

## What does an AN-ACC assessment involve?

AN-ACC assessments are conducted using a range of sources—including speaking with staff and residents, observations, resident notes and care plans—to determine the variable component of the AN-ACC care funding model that will be paid to the resident aged care provider. The [AN-ACC Assessment Tool](#) was developed by clinical experts in health and aged care to ensure funding for providers appropriately meets the needs of residents and costs of their care. It focuses on the characteristics of residents that drive care costs in residential aged care, and considers the resident's:

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

The [AN-ACC Assessment Tool](#) is designed to be robust, concise, and can be undertaken by AN-ACC assessors independently. The [AN-ACC Reference Manual](#) provides a reference to assessors to guide them on how to use the AN-ACC Assessment Tool and supports the training provided.

## How can an independent assessor accurately assess the day-to-day needs of residents?

While the shadow assessments are completed by independent AN-ACC assessors, clinical and care staff are an important source of information that AN-ACC assessors use when completing their assessments. AN-ACC assessors are trained to gather information to inform their assessments by engaging with the resident where appropriate, observation of the resident, clinical notes about the resident and from talking to staff who care for the resident on a day-to-day basis.

## Is consent from residents required?

AN-ACC assessors will inform residents of the purpose of the assessment and that they are required to participate. If a resident is unable to engage with the assessor or experiences distress, the assessor can instead rely on alternate sources of information to complete the assessment including observations, clinical notes, and discussions with staff.

## What do providers need to do to support shadow assessments?

To ensure AN-ACC assessments accurately reflect the needs of residents, assessors require access to the following:

- areas within the facility that are used to provide care
- records relating to residents (including records stored on IT systems)
- access to staff members and residents
- a private area to undertake assessments.

The legislative basis for these requirements is contained in the amended *Aged Care Act 1997* (the Act) and the associated principles. This means that within facilities with dual funded residents, no additional screening is required.

During the shadow assessment period, providers must continue to meet the care needs of residents in line with the Aged Care Quality Standards and follow current funding processes including submitting ACFI assessments and reviews for residents.

## Can staff sit with AN-ACC assessors and observe the assessments?

AN-ACC assessors are employed to undertake independent AN-ACC assessments of residents. Assessors are generally happy to allow facility staff to observe them for one or two assessments, however shadowing assessors for the term of their visit or restricting access to residents and/or notes is considered inappropriate.

## Will there be sufficient assessors to ensure initial assessments and reclassification requests are completed in a timely manner?

There are more than 300 independent assessors employed by the six contracted AMOs available to conduct assessments across Australia. On average, between 4,000 and 4,500 assessments are conducted each week, or approximately 200,000 assessments a year. This means the program is well-resourced to meet any increases in demand for initial assessments and requests for reclassifications.

Importantly, during the shadow assessment period, the department will prioritise scheduling assessments of residents who are yet to receive an initial classification over scheduling assessments relating to reclassification requests. However, providers are encouraged to submit any requests for reclassifications early to ensure they can be completed during phase 2 of the shadow assessment period, when assessors return to a facility to conduct initial assessments and reclassifications. Unlike initial assessments, reclassifications are not conducted automatically and require facilities to trigger a reclassification through the [My Aged Care Provider Portal](#).

## How is information protected?

Any information accessed to complete AN-ACC assessments is protected by the Act and the *Privacy Act 1988*. This includes the contents of records, conversations and observations. This information is protected and can only be used for AN-ACC assessments.

## Are assessments required for residents entering for palliative care?

Residents who enter care for end of life will not require an AN-ACC assessment during the shadow assessment period.

## What happens after the shadow assessment period?

The AN-ACC care funding model will come into effect from 1 October 2022. Assessments and classifications completed during the shadow assessment period will be used to determine the AN-ACC funding that residential aged care facilities receive from the Australian Government. From 1 October 2022, AN-ACC assessors will attend facilities as required based on new resident entry and requests for reclassifications. After providers submit information to Services Australia about new residents entering into their care, it will be transmitted to the Department of Health, where a referral for assessment will be generated for AMOs responsible for servicing assessments in the provider's aged care planning regions. The AMO will have 28 days from the date of the request to complete the initial classification, including for residents located in rural and remote areas.

## Related AN-ACC information

See the following fact sheets for related information:

[AN-ACC Transition Support Plan](#)

[What is AN-ACC and how will it work?](#)

[Can I ask for an AN-ACC reclassification?](#)

[Are AN-ACC shadow assessments high quality?](#)

[How do I calculate my AN-ACC care funding?](#)

## More information and resources

Further information about the AN-ACC care funding model, including general information, is available on the [residential aged care funding reform](#) webpage. The following resources are also available to help providers stay informed about the AN-ACC care funding model and to assist providers with the transition to the new arrangements.

Information source	Description
<b>Resources and factsheets</b>	Resources and factsheets can be located <a href="#">here</a> .
<b>Social media</b>	Follow us on <a href="#">Facebook</a> , <a href="#">Twitter</a> , <a href="#">LinkedIn</a> and <a href="#">Instagram</a>
<b>Subscriptions</b>	Subscribe to the department's newsletters <a href="#">here</a> for aged care updates.
<b>Ageing and Aged Care Engagement Hub</b>	Find current engagement activities and register your interest to be involved in workshops, focus groups, webinars and surveys Website: <a href="https://www.agedcareengagement.health.gov.au/">https://www.agedcareengagement.health.gov.au/</a>
<b>AN-ACC funding and care minutes estimator</b>	Access the online <a href="#">AN-ACC funding and care minutes estimator</a> to help estimate your potential funding levels and care minutes targets. The estimator provides a point in time estimate—it produces high-level results based on your existing AN-ACC resident classifications and has been provided to assist you with your planning and transition activities only. Actual funding levels and care minutes targets will be accurately derived through the AN-ACC ICT system and may vary based on changes to your resident cohort before 1 October 2022.
<b>AN-ACC Funding Helpdesk</b>	For assistance with your AN-ACC funding and care minutes targets, contact the AN-ACC Funding Helpdesk: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Phone: (02) 4406 6002 (available from 9:30am to 4:30pm AEST Monday to Friday)</li><li>• Email: <a href="mailto:ANACCFundinghelp@health.gov.au">ANACCFundinghelp@health.gov.au</a></li></ul>
<b>My Aged Care service provider and assessor helpline</b>	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.
<b>Shadow assessments contact centre</b>	Email <a href="mailto:ANACC.shadow@health.gov.au">ANACC.shadow@health.gov.au</a> if you have any questions about shadow assessments.

Last updated on 1 July 2022