

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Health and Aged Care

Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs Legislation Committee

Inquiry into the Aged Care Bill 2024 (Provisions)

03 October 2024

PDR Number: IQ24-000145

Impact of the bill to the Multi-Purpose Service program

Written

Senator: Marielle Smith

Question:

How will the Bill impact the Multi-Purpose Service program

Answer:

The Aged Care Bill 2024 supports the continuation of the Multi-Purpose Service Program (MPSP). It allows the existing flexible funding arrangements for the provision of funded aged care services to individuals in rural and remote Australia to continue, with block-funding arrangements to remain in place.

The MPSP will be more effectively catered for under the proposed Bill than the current legislative framework, as one of the *specialist aged care programs* to be delivered. The flexibility of the MPSP will be maintained where possible, while also ensuring that quality and safe services are delivered to individuals through the program.

Under the proposed Bill, for the first time individuals seeking access to services delivered by MPSP providers will need to apply, and be assessed and approved via standard arrangements. It should, however, be noted that:

- Additional alternative entry arrangements are included in the Bill to facilitate immediate access to care, where there may be a delay in assessment processes being completed. These recognise the rural and remote locations in which MPSP providers operate.
- Transitional arrangements continue to be worked through with the aim of ensuring continuity of service for older people already accessing services.
- Prioritisation and classification processes will not impact service delivery by MPSP providers.

All MPSP providers will need to be registered and comply with ongoing obligations set out in the Bill and related Rules, including taking reasonable and proportionate steps to act compatibly with the Statement of Rights. Some obligations will, however, be varied to reflect the context in which MPS providers operate. These arrangements continue to be discussed with providers and jurisdictions alongside the drafting of, and consultation on, the Rules.

MPSP providers will still need to have an agreement in place with the Commonwealth to deliver services under the program, but new streamlined agreements will be put in place with existing providers to accompany the commencement of the new Act.