

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018, 30 May 2017

Ref No: SQ17-000847

OUTCOME: 6 - Ageing and Aged Care

Topic: My aged Care - Customer Support

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Polley, Helen

Question:

Can you provide the process, advice and any fact sheets or other information that My Aged Care staff use when dealing with customers with concerns about HCP waitlists, access to HCPs, ACAT assessments etc.?

Answer:

My Aged Care staff who deal with customers/clients are the contact centre staff and the Aged Care Assessment Teams (ACATs).

In preparation for the changes to home care that commenced on 27 February 2017, the Department of Health (the Department) developed a comprehensive transition plan to educate and support both My Aged Care contact centre staff and ACATs to assist clients with the changes and address their enquiries. A summary of the support activities and links is below:

Contact centre:

- A detailed program of training was delivered over a six month period, with a focus on building knowledge of the policy and system changes associated with the reforms.

Aged Care Assessment Teams:

- Policy training is provided to give the necessary context for the changes to home care as well as additional guidance materials to support ACATs in making decisions on recommendations for home care.
- System training is provided to support ACATs in navigating the changes and to correctly capture assessment information to support the flow of information in the national prioritisation system.
- The Department delivered information to the sector and specific to ACATs via webinars covering both the policy and system changes.
- A suite of facts sheets, guidance documents and system user guides were developed to support ACATs and these are available on the [Department's website \(https://agedcare.health.gov.au/programs-services/my-aged-care/information-for-assessors\)](https://agedcare.health.gov.au/programs-services/my-aged-care/information-for-assessors).

- In addition, the Department continues to support ACATs with regular post implementation meetings to enable the proactive identification and resolution of key areas of concern. This has resulted in additional material being issued to ACATs, such as the information sheet attached.

In relation to specific enquiries about wait time to be assigned a home care package, My Aged Care contact centre staff use the following information:

Wait time to be assigned a package:

As home care arrangements have recently changed, I am unable to provide wait times for home care packages at this stage. The Department of Health will write to you when a home care package becomes available.

While you are waiting for a package, it may be useful to start researching providers. If you need help, you can use the Service Finder on the My Aged Care website or I can assist you over the phone now.

Why are wait times not available:

Expected wait times are not available because the national prioritisation system is new. The Department of Health needs time to release packages and then analyse the information, for example, how long it takes people to commence using their allocated package. The Department will release a bulk allocation of packages on a regular basis moving forward, allowing this information to be collected. At a later point, most likely in the second half of the year, waiting times may be made available.

In relation to enquiries about access to home care packages, My Aged Care staff use the 'Guide to home care package services', which is available from the Department's website (www.agedcare.health.gov.au/programs/home-care/your-guide-to-home-care-package-services).

In relation to enquiries or concerns about ACAT assessments, the process in place is for My Aged Care staff to transfer clients to the respective ACAT to discuss the matter.