Making Consumer Directed Care (CDC) your business

CDC gives consumers greater control over their lives by allowing them to make choices about the types of care and services they access and the delivery of those services, including who will deliver the services and when. It will also provide greater transparency to the consumer about what funding is available under their package of care and how those funds are spent through the use of an individualised budget.

Under a CDC approach, consumers will be encouraged to identify goals, which include independence, wellness and reablement.

CDC will also allow consumers or their carers to determine what level of involvement they would like to have in managing their own or loved one’s package. This could range from involvement in all aspects of the package, including coordination of care and services, to a less active role in decision-making and management of the package.

Developing the care plan

When you offer a Home Care Package to a consumer, you will need to assist with the development of a consumer’s care plan and individualised budget. You will be required to give the consumer a copy of the agreed care plan before, or within 14 days after care and services commence. All care and services provided to a consumer through a Home Care Package must be able to be accommodated within the package budget.

You will need to advise the consumer about what care and services can be provided, either in-house or through existing brokerage arrangements. The consumer’s choices should not be limited to that list. For example, if a consumer has a particular service, care worker or service provider they would like to use, they are able to request that you include them in their care plan.

As additional costs may be involved when setting up sub-contracting and brokerage arrangements, you should make these additional costs clear to the consumer prior to signing the Home Care Agreement.
There are some services that cannot be purchased using package funds. For more information on excluded items, please refer to schedule 3, part 2 – excluded items, of the Quality of Care Principles 2014.

**Personal goals and identified care needs**

Consumers are encouraged to think about their goals. Identifying goals will help guide the consumer’s choice of care and services to best support their needs. A goal could be something like maintaining a healthy lifestyle, or achieving independence in mobility.

Identified care needs are the areas of a consumer’s life where they have been assessed as needing extra care and support. Care needs may be identified when a consumer is assessed by the Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT), and also through discussion with you during the care planning process.

During the care planning process, you will need to take into account any supports the consumer already has in place, such as carers, family members, local community and other services. A Home Care Package is intended to meet needs that are not already being met by these other supports.

Once the care plan and individualised budget have been agreed, you must give a copy to the consumer for their records.

A consumer’s care needs can change over time, and the care plan can be amended to meet those changing needs. The care plan must be reviewed at least once every 12 months to ensure the package is still suitable to meet the needs of the consumer. The consumer can ask for a review of their care plan at any time if their care needs change. There may be additional costs involved if the consumer requests an unplanned review, and you can give advice about this.

The care plan cannot be changed without the consumer’s agreement. You must give the consumer a copy of any agreed changes to the care plan for their records.

The agreed position and the responsibilities of the service provider/care worker and the consumer/carer should be documented and included in the Home Care Agreement between you and the consumer.

**Assistance with care planning**

A consumer may wish to have another person, such as a carer or family member, with them to help them during the development of their care plan.

A consumer has the right to call on an advocate of their choice to represent them in their dealings with you. Services provided by an advocate may include:

- establishing or reviewing the Home Care Agreement, care plan and individualised budget
- negotiating the administration costs you (the approved provider) may charge to the package budget
- presenting any complaints the consumer may have.
If requested, the approved provider must allow an advocate acting for the consumer access to the home care service.

If a consumer needs an advocate, one may be made available through the National Aged Care Advocacy Programme (NACAP) by calling 1800 700 600.

**Translating and Interpreting Service**

For consumers who speak a language other than English as their first language the Department of Social Services provides free interpreting services through the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National).

TIS National is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week and provides both telephone and onsite services. Bookings can be made online via www.tisnational.gov.au. Alternatively, providers can call 131 450 for immediate telephone interpreting or 1300 655 082 for on-site bookings.

The intention of the service is primarily to assist consumers to understand their Home Care Package, including the Home Care Agreement, the individualised budget and monthly statements. If a provider or a consumer is unsure of circumstances when they can utilise these interpreting services, they can contact the Department of Social Services via email to ageing.and.diversity@dss.gov.au.

If you are unable to provide carers that can communicate in the same language as the consumer, you may negotiate with them to include any costs for a translator in the care plan. If there are costs associated with translator services and the package funds are used to purchase, or contribute towards the costs for a translator for the consumer, it would be appropriate for the provider and the consumer to discuss how this service would impact the package budget and the capacity to deliver other care and services.

The agreed position and the responsibilities of each party should be documented and included in the Home Care Agreement between the home care provider and the consumer.


When accessing TIS National, you will need to quote your service’s unique client code. If you are unsure of your client code, you can contact TIS National on 1300 655 820.

**Further information**


Information on Home Care Packages for consumers is available by:

- calling the My Aged Care national contact centre on 1800 200 422 or
- visiting the My Aged Care website at www.myagedcare.gov.au.

Resources to assist consumers and providers to transition to Consumer Directed Care can be found on the Home Care Today website – www.homecaretoday.org.au.