

Introduction

On 5 March 2018, the Government announced funding of \$84.3 million over four years for the introduction of new early intervention services for carers. The implementation of the Integrated Carer Support Service (ICSS) is the third and final stage of the Government's 2015-16 Budget commitment to develop an Integrated Plan for Carer Support Services.

The ICSS will be rolled out in two key stages:

From **October 2018**, new services for carers will be designed, tested and rolled out through the Carer Gateway website, including digital counselling, online peer support and coaching and online education resources.

The online services will be implemented in-line with the Australian Government [Digital Service Standard](#), which aims to ensure the services meet the needs of users. This involves a phased rollout commencing with the design and testing of a prototype service with a small group of carers in October 2018, followed by the release and continued testing of a refined service in January 2019, and a finalised, publicly available service in September 2019.

Post announcement of the Grant assessment outcomes, a network of Carer Gateway service providers will commence nationally, providing carers with access to the full suite of Carer Gateway supports and services.

Implementation Approach

The department's approach to implementation encompasses the following principles:

- 1. Ensuring continuity of services for existing clients and minimising the impact of business as usual activities during transition.***

A key factor in implementing this major reform is the inclusion of a transition timeframe to the new service system, for both carers and service providers.

This will ensure carers and the sector have time to understand the changes and are supported to transition to the new service system.

- 2. Engaging with stakeholders throughout the transition.***

The department will support service providers and carers to understand the changes and engage with the new services. This includes equipping current and future providers (and related sector organisations) with resources to assist carers.

The department will be engaging with stakeholders, and ensuring the sector and carers are informed throughout the transition via a number of mediums including webinars, targeted emails, web updates and direct consultation forums. The department will also undertake national communications activities aimed at promoting the new services.

The department will also continue to consult with the National Disability & Carers Advisory Council (NDCAC) and their Carer Reform Working Group (CRWG) who provide high-level strategic advice to the Assistant Minister for Social Services on implementation issues for carer reform that impact on carers and the carer sector.

3. Supporting carer service providers to transition to the new arrangements.

The department will provide ongoing support to service providers to transition to the new arrangements. The department will undertake a program of establishment and decommissioning activities for service providers in the lead up to the new model going live as well as post go-live support.

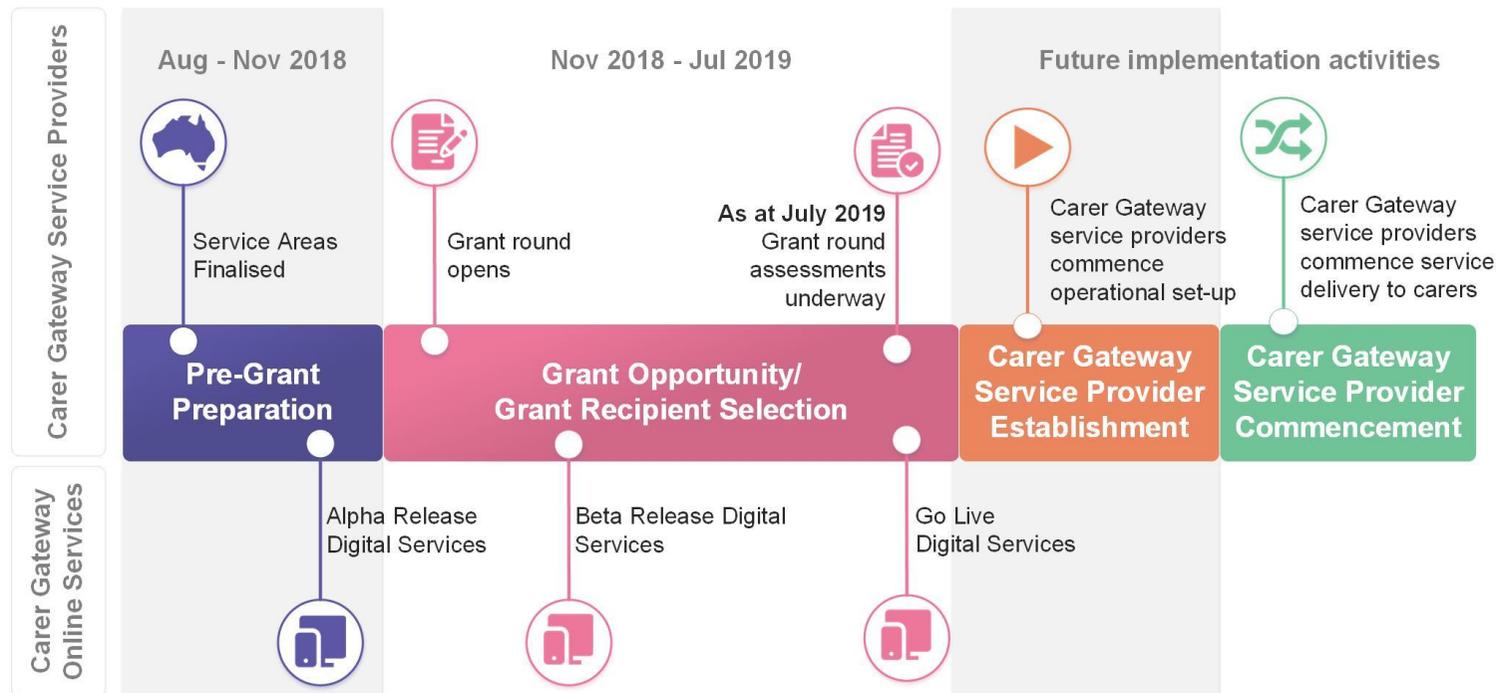
4. Continuously monitor and refine the transition process.

The department will continuously monitor the transition process and refine transition activities where required through regular consultation with the sector to gauge the effectiveness of implementation.

Implementation

The diagram on the following page depicts the major phases planned for the implementation of the ICSS.

Integrated Carer Support Service: Implementation



Summary of Implementation Activities

Carer Gateway Service providers

- The existing carer service delivery model will be replaced with a new Carer Gateway service provider delivery model.

Pre-Grant Preparation

- Release the service area model.
- Engagement with the carer sector to inform them for the upcoming Grant Opportunity.

Carer Gateway Service Provider Establishment

- The new Carer Gateway service providers are on board and commence operational set-up.
- Training and education for the Carer Gateway service providers.
- Key information on transition provided to carers.
- Transition-out activities for existing providers.

National Online Services

- Introduction of new national services: Digital Counselling, Peer Support, Coaching and Education Resources (October 2018).
- Redeveloped Carer Gateway website (July 2019)
- Enhancements to the Carer Gateway website (September 2019).

Grant Opportunity/Recipient Selection

- Grant opportunity open for applications.
- Grant opportunity industry briefing.
- Assessment and selection process.

Carer Gateway Service Provider Commencement

- RDPs commence service delivery (late November 2019).
- National communication activities promoting Carer Gateway.