

Carer Gateway service areas

A key element in implementing the new Integrated Carer Support Service (ICSS) is defining the service areas that the new Carer Gateway regional delivery partners will operate in when they commence from September 2019.

In finalising a decision on these service areas, the Department of Social Services (the Department) has undertaken extensive analysis and consultation, including public consultation in April 2018 through a discussion paper.

Key suggestions from stakeholders included:

-
- Refer to the Background section of this document for more details on how the service area model was developed.
-
- aligning service areas to an existing Government service delivery boundary structure, with a strong preference for the Primary Health Network regions
 - containing service areas within state and territory jurisdictional boundaries
 - avoiding artificial division of metropolitan service delivery areas

The consultations also indicated the carer provider sector has the capability, capacity and willingness to establish and manage consortia required to deliver across large service areas.

This stakeholder feedback has informed a decision on service delivery areas, as described below.

The future service area model

There will be 16 Carer Gateway service areas under the new model (a map and table outlining the areas is provided on the following pages).

The new model provides clearly defined service areas that align to existing Primary Health Network regions.

Each service area is based on groupings of Primary Health Network regions. The grouping matches like-for-like areas (e.g. metropolitan with metropolitan and rural with rural) to achieve a lower number of service areas overall.

A smaller number of service areas means each service area has a higher number of carers, making service delivery more viable for providers. It also encourages 'economies of scale' in the administration of services, which in turn maximises the amount of program funds that can be directed to support carers.

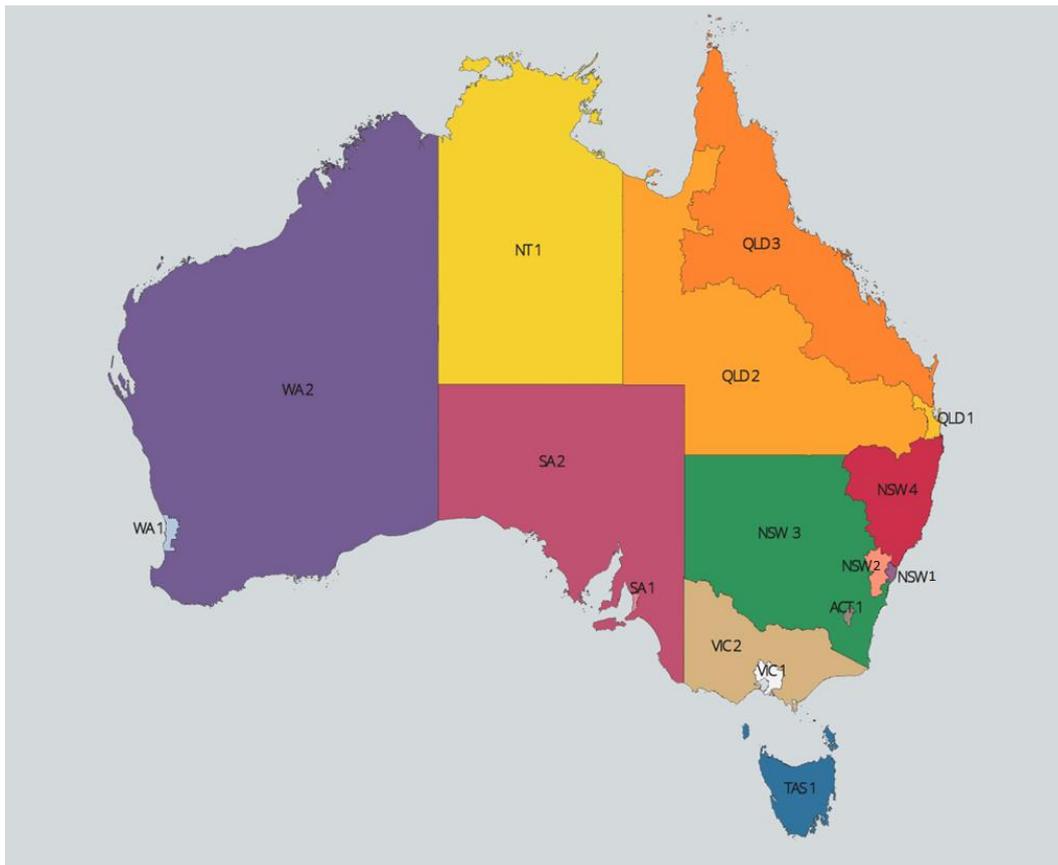
Alignment to Primary Health Network regions was a key piece of feedback provided by stakeholders during the public consultation process on future service areas.

The new service areas are within state and territory borders, removing added complexity that occurs when services deliver across jurisdictions.

The new model also responds to a number of other key themes that emerged from the consultation process:

- Recognises rural and remote regions have quite different characteristics that are best served by treating them as distinct areas for service delivery.
- Aligning to Primary Health Network boundaries provides the opportunity to leverage the needs assessment process undertaken by the Primary Health Networks, which may provide insights into carer needs within the service area. As well as an opportunity to identify hidden carers via the health services linked to Primary Health Networks.
- Provide the opportunity to leverage existing patterns of service partnerships or communities.

Service area map



Carer Gateway Service areas

Note: the carer population data provided in this table is based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Survey Disability Ageing and Carers data 2015.

Service Area	Corresponding PHNs	Carer Population
ACT 1	31 - ACT	44,700
NSW 1	1 – Central and Eastern Sydney 2 – Northern Sydney 3 – Western Sydney	345,054
NSW 2	4 – Nepean Blue Mountains 5 – South Western Sydney	175,074
NSW 3	6 – South Eastern NSW 7 – Western NSW 10 - Murrumbidgee	167,783
NSW 4	8 – Hunter New England and Central Coast 9 – North Coast	215,535
QLD 1	17 – Brisbane North 18 – Brisbane South 19 – Gold Coast	253,254
QLD 2	20 – Darling Downs & West Moreton 21 – Western Queensland	64,741
QLD 3	22 – Central Queensland, Wide Bay, Sunshine Coast 23 – Northern Queensland	163,130
VIC 1	11 – North Western Melbourne 12 – Eastern Melbourne 13 – South Eastern Melbourne	526,051
VIC 2	14 – Gippsland 15 - Murray 16 – Western Victoria	216,939
SA 1	24 - Adelaide	177,676
SA 2	25 – Country SA	66,116
WA 1	26 – Perth North 27 – Perth South	149,032
WA 2	28 - Country WA	54,570
TAS 1	29 - TAS	85,508
NT 1	30 - NT	11,520
Total		2,716,683

Background

In designing the future state service areas for the Carer Gateway, the Department undertook analysis and consultation with stakeholders across the carer sector.

Previous analysis and consultation on the current service area model found that currently:

- Since the cessation of the Aged Care Home & Community Care (HACC) program, the 52 HACC Planning Regions are no longer recognised or maintained by Government
- there are a large number of service areas resulting in the fragmentation of services across numerous providers
- there are service gaps in some regional and rural areas
- there is a non-standardised approach to allocation of services.

The analysis and consultation process

The Department conducted detailed service analysis and mapping work that focussed on carer population and location, and data on current carer and mainstream services.

This work resulted in the drafting of two options based on Australian Bureau of Statistics Statistical Area level 4 regions.

The Department then undertook a public consultation in April 2018 to validate these two options via a [discussion paper](#) released on the Department's engagement website (DSS Engage).

The Department received 42 submissions from a mix of carers, service providers, peak bodies and other Government departments.

Further consultation was undertaken with representatives from all state and territory government departments and a number of peak bodies to further understand any concerns in relation to the proposed service areas.

In consolidating the feedback from the consultation process the Department undertook further analysis and modelling to finalise the service area model.