



Improved Carer Assessments

Field Test – Frequently Asked Questions

Background

The Department of Social Services (DSS) and the Department of Human Service (DHS), or Centrelink, are working in partnership to field test a new assessment process for Carer Payment and Carer Allowance.

The Field Test

The field test will involve asking some carers claiming carer payments to complete both their official claim that will be used to assess a claim for payment AND a voluntary field test.

Frequently Asked Questions

Do I have to complete the field test form?

No. You do not have to complete the field test form. However, the field test form gives you the opportunity to have your say and help us improve the questions we ask of people claiming Carer Payment and Carer Allowance.

Haven't you already conducted field testing?

Yes. An initial field test was conducted from September 2016 to January 2017. Since initial field testing, the majority of carers now make claims for Carer Payment and Carer Allowance online. We therefore need more carers to donate their time and complete a field test to be sure that the new assessment questions are reliable and describe the care being provided, and to test these questions in the online space. For these reasons, we are extending the field test.

Why do I need to provide personal information for the field test?

The field test asks for your Customer Reference Number (CRN), your date of birth, the date of birth of the person you care for, and some other basic information. This is so we can check how well the field test questions work for people of different ages, backgrounds, and caring situations. If you have already provided this information to DHS for your claim for Carer Payment or Carer Allowance, you will not need to provide it again for the field test.

How will the information I provide be protected?

DSS and DHS takes privacy seriously and will only collect, hold, use and disclose personal information in accordance with [the Privacy Act](#), the [DSS Privacy Policy](#) and the [DHS Privacy Policy](#).

All forms and information collected during the field test will be destroyed at the end of the process. Further information can be found dss.gov.au/carerfieldtest.

What if I don't have a Customer Reference Number (CRN)?

You can find your Customer Reference Number (CRN) on letters or cards Centrelink has sent to you. If you don't have a CRN, when you commence a claim for Carer Payment or Carer Allowance one will be provided to you.

What is the difference between a metropolitan, regional and remote area?

To work out whether you live in a metropolitan, regional or remote area you can enter your address or postcode in the Department of Health search tool; doctorconnect.gov.au. The search facility asks you to choose a layer. The layer you should choose is *ASGC Remoteness Areas (2006) layers*. If you prefer, you can call the helpline on **1800 456 555**.

What is the definition of 'help' in the field test?

Help means any physical assistance, guidance, redirection or supervision **you** give to someone because of their disability, including disability resulting from a mental health condition, or medical condition. Help includes prompting the person to do daily activities.

Help does not include any care provided by another person.

What if I provide help to more than one person?

You need to complete a form for each person you provide care for.

What if the help I provide changes from day to day or week to week?

Please indicate the level of help you provide on most days or most weeks, this includes where the care you provide changes from weekdays to weekends.

What if help is provided by someone else?

These questions are about the care **you** provide, **not** the care provided by others.

What if aids or medication used by the person I care for affect the level of help I have to provide?

These questions are about the care you provide. If the person usually uses aids, equipment or medication, select the level of help that you usually provide when the person is using their aids, equipment or medication. Where relevant, indicate the help you provide to assist a person with the use of their aids (for example, a visual aid or mobility device) or the preparation and administration of medication. If the person or child's use of aids or medication minimises the help you have to provide, please consider this in your responses. For example, a care receiver with a hearing impairment may need "complete help" communicating with others. In contrast, a care receiver with a hearing impairment who uses hearing aids may need "some help" or "no help" depending on their individual circumstances.

What if the help I provide isn't covered in the field test form?

If you do not feel that the help you provide is adequately covered in one section, continue through the field test as it may be covered elsewhere. There is space at the end of the Carer Report to add in other information on the types of care you provide that have not been covered in the field test. You can also provide comments in the Carer Feedback questions at the end of the Carer Report about anything you like or don't like about the field test.

I don't have to provide certain types of care now, but I know I will have to in the future. How should I respond?

These questions are about the type of care you provide **at the time of completing the field test**. Do not include care that you are not currently providing.

Some questions refer to aids, equipment or technology. What does this include?

This means any aids, equipment or technology that assists an individual with a disability or medical condition to carry-out daily activities. It can include devices or systems that allow the individual to perform a task that they would otherwise be unable to do, or increases the ease and safety with which a task can be performed.

The field test asks how often the child or person I care for is out of my care. Why doesn't this include when the child or person is in hospital?

There are separate arrangements in place for when a person being cared for is in hospital. These arrangements are not included in the field test.

What if my health professional doesn't want to fill out the field test?

The field test is voluntary for carers and health professionals. You may wish to show your health professional the fact sheet available at dss.gov.au/carersfieldtest. We want health professionals to have a say in how their part of the form is designed. You can also let your health professional know when you make an appointment that you have forms to fill in.

Do I have to pay my health professional to fill out the field test?

The time taken to complete a Health Professional Report may be claimed by the treating doctor under the appropriate Medicare item when included as part of that consultation. You may only be able to claim the consultation fee for other health professionals under private health insurance. If the health professional does not bulk bill, your consultation fee may be more because of the extra time taken to complete the report.

Will I hear back about the results of my field test?

No, you will not hear back about the results of your field test because we will not be keeping your personal information. The field test is used for testing purposes only. It will be used to inform future arrangements for eligibility for Carer Payment and/or Carer Allowance but the field test is no indication of whether a person will be eligible or not.

Centrelink will process your official Carer Payment and/or Carer Allowance application and get back to you once a decision has been made. The field test has no effect on your eligibility.

Do you have other questions or need help to complete the field test form?

You can call the Carer Payments Field Test Helpline **1800 456 555**.