

Frequently asked questions

About the Independent Health and Aged Care Pricing Authority (IHACPA)

1. Who is IHACPA?

IHACPA is an independent government agency that provides evidence-based pricing advice to the Australian Government on health and aged care services.

We deliver our annual program of work through public consultation and collaboration with the Australian Government, state and territory governments, advisory committees, key stakeholders, and the public.

2. What is our role in the aged care sector?

We provide government with expert aged care pricing and costing advice, to reflect the costs of delivering care. It is government who then decides on the price for aged care services nationally. We provided our initial pricing advice for the residential aged care sector in July 2022.

From early 2025, we will provide government with pricing and costing advice for in-home aged care services under the new Support at Home Program. IHACPA's pricing advice aims to support the government's efforts to make aged care funding more transparent and efficient over time.

IHACPA and the Support at Home program

3. What is the Support at Home program?

In response to the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, government is implementing a new in-home aged care program, known as the Support at Home program. From 1 July 2025, the Support at Home program will bring together current in-home aged care programs to ensure a simpler, more equitable system for older people that helps them stay at home for longer.

The Support at Home program will be rolled out in 2 phases:

- Phase 1: The Home Care Packages Program and Short-Term Restorative Care Programme will transition to Support at Home from 1 July 2025
- Phase 2: The Commonwealth Home Support Programme will transition to Support at Home no earlier than 1 July 2027.

The Support at Home program will involve a new Single Assessment System. Older people who have been assessed as eligible for the program will receive a classification with an associated ongoing quarterly budget. Short-term supports will also be considered where appropriate, including home modifications and assistive technology.

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The Support at Home program will include a service list outlining the services available to older people through the program.

More information on the Support at Home program is available on the [Department of Health and Aged Care's website](#).

4. What is IHACPA's role in the Support at Home Program and how will our role impact on older people accessing aged care services?

IHACPA will provide annual advice to the Australian Government on the unit prices for services on the Support at Home service list. This advice will inform the government's decisions on the prices providers may charge for services delivered.

IHACPA will develop accurate and fair pricing advice that reflects the cost of delivering in-home aged care services. We will make sure prices cover costs of providing the services, such as labour, transport, and administration.

Our pricing advice will differentiate prices by time of delivery (such as standard and non-standard business hours) and day of delivery (including weekdays, Saturday, Sunday and public holidays). IHACPA will also consider the costs of delivering services in rural and remote locations and to older people with diverse backgrounds and life experiences and will recommend additional prices for these services, if required.

IHACPA's pricing advice will seek to support the government's efforts to make aged care funding more transparent and efficient.

5. How is our role in the Support at Home program different to the role of the Department of Health and Aged Care?

Our role in the Support at Home program is to provide annual pricing advice to the Australian Government for in-home aged care services on the Support at Home service list, based on the best available evidence and data.

The Department of Health and Aged Care will continue to be the system operator and will be responsible for overall Support at Home policy and funding.

To find out more about the Support at Home program, please refer to the resources available on the [Department of Health and Aged Care's website](#).

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6. What is the Support at Home service list and how is it relevant to our pricing advice?

The Support at Home service list contains a list of ongoing services that can be accessed through the Support at Home program.

IHACPA will provide pricing advice to the Minister for Health and Aged Care on unit prices for services on the service list. For example, the hourly price for nursing or personal care services.

For more information on what the Support at Home program includes, visit the [Department of Health and Aged Care website](#).

7. When will our pricing advice and the service list prices be available?

The new Support at Home program will roll out from 1 July 2025.

We will provide advice on pricing for the Support at Home service list to the Minister for Health and Aged Care in February 2025, in time for the program's implementation from 1 July 2025.

It is the minister who is then responsible for determining the prices for aged care services. Service list prices will be available prior to the Support at Home program rolling out on 1 July 2025.

8. Are we going to provide pricing advice for the Commonwealth Home Support Programme?

The Department of Health and Aged Care has announced that the transition to the new Support at Home program will be delivered in 2 phases.

The first phase will involve transition of the existing Home Care Packages and Short Term Restorative Care programs into the Support at Home program from 1 July 2025.

The second phase will involve transition of the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) into the Support at Home program no earlier than 1 July 2027.

We will provide pricing advice on the CHSP in time for its transition to Support at Home in 2027. The CHSP will continue to operate as it does currently until 2027.

9. Will we provide pricing advice for the new Assistive Technology and Home Modifications scheme, which is part of the Support at Home program?

The Support at Home program includes some services and supports that are not included on the service list, such as the Assistive Technology and Home Modification Scheme. This scheme provides access to equipment and home modifications to help older people remain safely at home. Pricing of these services and supports will remain the responsibility of the Department of Health and Aged Care.

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IHACPA pricing and costing

10. What will we consider when developing pricing advice for the Support at Home service list?

IHACPA conducts Support at Home Cost Collections to understand the costs associated with providing specific services, for example the cost of delivering nursing services, meal delivery, or assistance with personal care. To learn more about our costing studies, please visit our [website](#).

We also use cost and activity data from existing aged care cost collections managed by the Department of Health and Aged Care, including the [Aged Care Financial Report \(ACFR\)](#), [Quarterly Financial Report \(QFR\)](#) and other relevant data sources, to support unit price development.

IHACPA considers variations to unit prices based on cost differences. For example, the time a service is provided (standard business hours and non-standard business hours) or the day a service is provided (weekdays, Saturday, Sunday and public holidays).

We also apply indexation to unit prices, using a range of Australian Bureau of Statistics indexes relevant to the aged care sector, decisions of the Fair Work Commission and annual wage review decisions.

Furthermore, we conduct annual public consultation to ensure our pricing methodology is informed by a broad range of stakeholders across the aged care sector. This ensures that our pricing advice is appropriate for the aged care sector and is representative of the diversity of aged care stakeholders and organisations.

11. What is a Support at Home Cost Collection and how can aged care providers get involved?

Our cost collections gather cost and activity data from a wide range of Support at Home aged care providers. IHACPA uses cost collections to gain a detailed understanding of the resources and costs involved with delivering in-home aged care services.

We value input from all aged care providers in the in-home aged care sector as part of our aged care cost collections.

For information on cost collections, or to get involved, please email agedcarecosting@ihacpa.gov.au or refer to our [website](#).

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12. Will IHACPA advise government on means testing and participant contributions in aged care?

No. Asset and income means testing, as well as participant co-contributions to aged care services, are not part of our pricing and costing functions. The Minister for Health and Aged Care and the Department of Health and Aged Care are responsible for determining participant co-contributions.

13. Will we consider the prices of other care and support services, like services available under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), when developing Support at Home pricing advice?

We recognise there are comparable services across the care and support sector. For example, some services available on the Support at Home service list are similar to services provided by the NDIS or the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

IHACPA is aware that pricing advice for the Support at Home service list may have flow on effects for other service sectors. We will work to ensure our pricing advice considers any impacts on the care and support sector and enables equal access to quality services for all Australians.

We want your feedback on how we should consider price comparisons, which is also known as price bench-marking, across the care and support sector in our pricing advice. Have your say by responding to our public consultation on the Support at Home service list.

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Consultation on our pricing approach for the Support at Home service list

14. What is the purpose of the Support at Home consultation paper?

The new Support at Home program will roll out from 1 July 2025 and we will provide pricing advice for the new program to the Minister for Health and Aged Care in February 2025.

Our advice will be informed by consultation with a broad range of stakeholders across the aged care sector. This includes providers across the for-profit, not-for-profit and government sectors, older people, families, carers and the general public, including people living in rural and remote locations, aged care workers, peak organisations and industrial bodies, including aged care workers, and government.

The Support at Home consultation paper explains how we plan to determine our pricing advice for the service list. It also highlights key issues and future priorities for in-home aged care.

15. How can I have my say on IHACPA's pricing advice for the Support at Home program?

Our public consultation is open from Monday 23 September to 5pm AEDT Friday 25 October 2024.

Submissions can be:

- completed via the [online submission form](#)
- completed and emailed to: submissions.ihacpa@ihacpa.gov.au
- mailed to: PO Box 483 Darlinghurst NSW 1300

Enquiries about the consultation can be sent to submissions.ihacpa@ihacpa.gov.au

We will carefully consider all submissions received and publish a final consultation report in 2025.

16. Can anyone make a submission to the Support at Home consultation?

Yes, anyone can make a submission to the Support at Home consultation.

We are keen to hear from you about how to improve our approach to pricing the Support at Home service list. We value your experience and perspective as an older person, family member or carer, provider, worker, representative organisation, or someone with an interest in aged care pricing.

We invite you to provide an online submission, take part in our survey or send a submission by mail. We are accepting submissions and survey responses from 23 September to 25 October 2024. Visit our [website](#) to make a submission.

If you have any questions about our consultation, please email submissions.ihacpa@ihacpa.gov.au.

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17. What can I include in a submission on the Support at Home consultation paper?

The consultation paper includes several questions about the pricing of services on the Support at Home service list.

Our consultation paper asks about the pricing principles we propose as the basis for our pricing work. A pricing principle could mean different things to different people. It is important that you share your feedback and an explanation, so we can understand and reflect your views in our pricing principles.

We also want to know your views on the methods we use to develop prices for the Support at Home service list.

Please share your ideas about how improvements to pricing could be developed and implemented. It will help us if you have evidence to support your position, too. You do not have to answer all the questions in the consultation paper to get involved.

More information on the Support at Home consultation paper is available on our [website](#).