



Australian Government



myagedcare



Hospital fact sheet - June 2016 update

Referring patients to aged care services

Since 1 July 2015 hospitals have been able to refer patients to My Aged Care to access aged care services. This has been made possible through a combination of phone calls (1800 200 422), faxes (1800 728 174) and use of a webform (hosted on the My Aged Care website).

In June 2016 a new webform is being introduced specifically for health professionals to improve their use of My Aged Care. Its introduction and design reflects feedback from health professionals and acknowledges the value of collecting professional information from hospitals and other health professionals to support older people's access to aged care services.

Watch the video on the new health professional webform

Find out more about the new health professional webform on the Department of Health's YouTube site: www.youtube.com/watch?v=YFjibUjwiBU

This fact sheet provides hospitals with information to assist in referring older patients (aged 65 years and over and 50 years and over for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people) to aged care services – particularly through the use of the new health professional webform. These arrangements apply to hospitals in all states and territories (except Western Australia).



For further information, go to My Aged Care
1800 200 422 | www.dss.gov.au/myagedcare

Do referral arrangements for post-acute care change?

No. Hospitals should continue to access post-acute care for services that are required as a result of an inpatient episode.

My Aged Care should not be used for referrals for services that should be provided to older people through the health system. However, a client can continue to receive non-health related Commonwealth Home Support Programme services in conjunction with post-acute care health services, for example following a hospital stay.

How do patients access aged care services?

The aged care reforms have highlighted the importance of an independent and holistic assessment of an older person's needs prior to the commencement of aged care services. Accordingly, in order for older people to access aged care services, they will need to be referred for an assessment. The type of assessment is dependent on the type of services they need to access:

- An Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT) assessment is needed if a patient requires access to a Home Care Package, Transition Care, residential care or residential respite.
- A Regional Assessment Service (RAS) assessment is needed if the patient requires Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) services.

The RAS or ACAT assessor will assess the client to determine the client's needs and develop a support plan with the client. The assessor will then refer the client to the appropriate aged care service provider(s). All referrals are based on the client's expressed preferences for any particular service provider.

How should hospitals make referrals for an assessment?

Comprehensive Assessments (ACAT)

Where hospitals have arrangements in place to refer patients directly to an ACAT they may continue to do so.

Hospitals should otherwise refer patients to My Aged Care where an ACAT assessment is required. We recommend the use of the webform to refer patients to My Aged Care on the basis of its efficiency and speed for the health professional, contact centre and client.

Home Support Assessments

Hospitals need to refer a patient to My Aged Care where a RAS assessment is required.

While hospital referrals to My Aged Care can continue to be made by phone, fax and webform, we strongly recommend referrers utilise the health professional webform.

You can access the health professional webform via the 'Contact Us' page on the My Aged Care website or via MyAgedCare.gov.au/referral.



Advantages of using the health professional webform

There are advantages when using the webform compared to fax:

- Confirmation that My Aged Care has received the referral (this is not possible where a fax referral is used);
- Receipt of a confirmation number to support follow-up of the referral (this is not possible where a fax referral is used);
- Ability to print and save the webform as a Portable Document Format (PDF);
- Information collected on the webform is automatically populated into a client record providing valuable information to support the assessment; and
- Improved and more efficient processing of the referral within My Aged Care.

Following up on referrals

Hospitals can follow-up on webform referrals by calling the My Aged Care contact centre and quoting the confirmation number they received when the online referral form was submitted.

If using fax to refer to My Aged Care, please wait at least 48 hours after the referral has been submitted before following up to ensure that processing has commenced.

Can hospitals refer patients for urgent services?

While an assessment of a client's needs is required in order for the client to access ongoing aged care services, the Department acknowledges that there are specific circumstances where a client needs to urgently access aged care services while awaiting an assessment.

Hospitals can seek to refer a patient directly to a service provider in circumstances where:

- There is an urgent need for a service based on the patient's circumstances which, if not met immediately, may place the patient at risk; and
- The services where this is likely to happen are: nursing, personal care, meals and transport.

These services would be of a time-limited duration with a longer term commitment only occurring after assessment.

How do hospitals make referrals for urgent services?

The preferred method for hospitals to access urgent services for their patients is by contacting the service provider directly. The service provider will, if able, provide urgent care for the patient and subsequently refer the patient to My Aged Care for an assessment of ongoing service needs.

Hospitals can also call the My Aged Care contact centre on 1800 200 422 to make referrals directly to services. The contact centre can make an electronic referral to these services as well as concurrently referring the patient to the appropriate assessment.



Note that acceptance of the referral for urgent care will be based on the service provider's capacity to take on new clients and the relative needs of clients awaiting services.

Are there other instances where a hospital may contact a service provider directly?

Hospitals can contact service providers directly in the following situations:

- Where a patient had services in place prior to entering hospital and needs only those services to recommence on discharge; or
- Where a patient needs access to a Multi-Purpose Service or the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flexible Aged Care Programme.

Where can I find more information?

More information about My Aged Care, including guidance material, fact sheets and videos, is available at www.dss.gov.au/MyAgedCare.



For further information, go to My Aged Care
1800 200 422 | www.dss.gov.au/myagedcare