

Aged Care Fees, Charges and Expenditure policy

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to explain the fees and prices NPARC will charge for aged care service delivery. The client fees policy aims to meet the requirements for Standard 1: Consumer dignity and choice to promote transparency of fees information and effective communication to support the:

Consumer outcome

I am treated with dignity and respect, and can maintain my identify. I can make informed choices about my care and service and live the life I choose.

Organization statement

The organization:

- (a) Has a culture of inclusion and respect for consumers?
- (b) Supports consumers to exercise choice and independence
- (c) Respects consumer privacy

DEFINITIONS

HCP Fees	Description
<i>Daily care fee</i>	The daily care fee is a daily fee charged to the client as an additional contribution to the HCP. The maximum daily care fee is capped by law at 17.5% of the single persons age care pension.
<i>Income tested care fee</i>	This fee is set by Department of Human Services (DHS) or Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) if the amount earned is greater than the maximum that can be earned on a full pension.
<i>Care management fee:</i>	<p>This is the fee for managing a person’s aged care. Options must be provided to the client to have their package fully managed or self-managed.</p> <p>The fully managed care fee includes the following services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing your Home Care Agreement and Care Plan • Coordination and scheduling of services • Ensuring your care is aligned with other supports • Providing a point-of-contact for you or your support network • Ensuring the care, you receive is respectful of your culture; & • Identifying and addressing risks to your safety. <p>Self-managed care fee includes the following services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arranging care aligned with external support services • Providing a point-of-contact for the client to external service providers. • Identifying and addressing risks to client safety.
<i>Package Management fee</i>	This is a that is charged to cover the overhead costs associated with service delivery.
<i>Exit fee</i>	This fee covers the administrative costs of transferring the client to another service provider.

POLICY

- Information about NPARC pricing, fees and charges, and expenditure will be included in the client agreement and Home Care Package client handbook.

Pricing

- NPARC will maintain a home care pricing schedule that meets the requirements to present pricing information and the case management, package management and exit fees.
- NPARC will published the Fees and Charges Schedule on the NPARC and My Aged Care website.
- The fees and charges schedule will be reviewed every 12 months.
- Fees and charges will be made available in the client information packs and explained during the contracting process.

Fees and Charges

- A Basic Daily Care fee contributions is not mandatory, but the NPA Community Aged Care and Disability Service will explain the benefit of making additional contributions to the aged care package.
- The Community Aged Care and Disability Service will look for opportunities to generate revenue with aged care clients through client activities and other business arrangements to pay for the client contribution for the CHSP program and items excluded from the HCP
- Home Care Package client service charges are costed against their Home Care Package and monthly expenditure reports will be provided to Home Care Package clients.

Expenditure

- Only services and equipment documented in the individual client's care plan will be approved for expenditure from the Home Care Package.
- NPARC will not reimburse invoices for unapproved services or goods from the HCP.
- NPARC will apply the inclusion and exclusion criteria as defined in the Home Care Program Guidelines to ensure that aged care package funds are only being spent on approved item that contribute directly to the clients aged care.
- An assessment by a qualified professional is required to inform decision making about capital or high-cost service expenditure.
- A Home Care Package Screening tool will be applied to assist with decision making for capital purchases or any purchases that fall in the grey area between the inclusion and exclusion criteria.
- Items that will not be purchased from Home Care Package funds are shown in Table 1

Table 1: Specified exclusions, Home Care Package expenditure

Excluded item (category)	Example of excluded items
Use of the package funds as a source of general income for the care recipient	Household bills, the purchase of a car or petrol, funeral cover, household furniture, solar panels, servicing gas heaters, water tanks, phone and/or internet plans or entertainment activities such as screening subscriptions
Purchase of food, except as part of enteral feeding requirements	Any food, food supplements, vitamins

Excluded item (category)	Example of excluded items
Payment for permanent accommodation, including assistance with home purchase, mortgage payments or rent	Rates, home, relocation expenses and contents insurance
Payment of home care fees	Basic daily fee, income tested care fees and additional fees
Payment of fees or charges for other types of care funded or jointly funded by the Australian Government	Services that can be covered under the public health system, such as hearing aids and dentures.
Home modifications or capital items that are not related to the care recipient's care needs	House renovations that exceed what is necessary for functional safety, independence, wellness and reablement. Such as household security alarms, replacing gutters.
Travel and accommodation for holidays	Airline or bus tickets
Cost of entertainment activities	Club membership, tickets to sporting events cash payments or gift cards
Payment for services and items covered by the Medicare Benefits Schedule or the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme.	Prescription medicine, nonprescription medicine, vitamins, nutrition supplements

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The roles and responsibilities of staff for implementation and compliance with this policy are outlined in Table 1.

Table 1
Fees and Charges policy

Staff member	Responsibility
Executive Manager, Corporate Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve the schedule of fees to be charged for aged care services • Approve variation to fees on an annual basis
Aged Care and Disability services Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the fees and charges schedule is maintained on the NPARC website • Explain fees and charges to new clients • Explain income tested care fees if relevant to the client • Explain client agreement to clients and execute client agreements • Arrange for assessment for equipment purchases and home modifications • Prepare monthly statement of accounts

PROCEDURE

Client agreements

1. Make a time to meet with the client to discuss the services they have been approved to receive.
2. Discuss the services that can be delivered under the headings for which the client has been approved.

3. Discuss the standard client agreement explaining NPARC approach to service delivery and the fees to be charged based on the schedule of fees for HCP clients.
4. Discuss the basic daily fee and negotiate contribution with the client (if appropriate)
5. Enter all fees and services into the client agreement to create a client budget.
6. Ask the client to sign the agreement. If they are not sure leave the agreement with the client to give them time. It is illegal to coerce a person into signing an agreement.
7. Ask the client to complete Centrelink or automatic bank deduction forms if relevant

Decision making about expenditure

1. Check the signed care plan and HCP guidelines to ensure that the request for expenditure is consistent with care needs and within guidelines for expenditure.
2. If the capital purchase is included in the care plan, seek assessment from a relevant allied health or clinical specialist to determine the type of equipment or modification required. Consider if need can be met through other means e.g hire of equipment.
3. If the request for purchase is a capital item or not clearly defined in the expenditure guidelines use the “Home Care Package Purchase Screening Tool” to assist with decision making and documenting reason for decision.
4. Provide a copy of the reason for the decision to purchase or not purchase the equipment, service or purchase requested. to client.
5. Scan the “Home Care Package Purchase Screening Tool” into the clients eTool file as evidence of assessment and decision making

Review of fees and charges

In March and September each year the Commonwealth Department of Health will review daily care fee charges and subsidy allocations for HCP packages.

1. In March review the pricing schedule to determine if costs have increased for service delivery.
2. Update the pricing schedule and submit to the Council for approval
3. Once approved upload onto the My Aged Care website and update the fees information sheet included in HCP client information packs.

OTHER RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Documents related to this policy	
Related policies	Client Intake policy Care planning policy
Forms or other Council documents	HCP agreement CHSP agreement

RELEVANT STANDARDS

Aged Care Quality Standard 1: Consumer dignity and choice

Aged Care Quality Standard 8: Organisational Governance