Special Edition: Participant Care Need

This special edition of the E-News is dedicated to communicating the changes the Authority has made for reviewing a participant’s care needs and how attendant care services are requested. The importance of attendant care in the Scheme, and recent trends in care needs assessments, have led the Authority to work on this area and revise the forms and procedures for how care is assessed and documented.

New procedures to request attendant care services

The Authority is launching the new forms for reporting and requesting attendant care services for Scheme participants. These forms are now available on the Authority’s website: [http://www.lifetimecare.nsw.gov.au/Forms_to_request_services.aspx](http://www.lifetimecare.nsw.gov.au/Forms_to_request_services.aspx).

The new forms should be used for all new care requests and any review of care needs currently being undertaken. The old form will no longer be accepted from 31 October 2011.

The Care Needs Assessment has now been split into two documents:

- Care Needs Report and
- Attendant Care Service Request.

The Care Needs Report documents the participant’s overall reasonable and necessary care need, and the Attendant Care Service Request documents the attendant care services the participant would like the Authority to pay for.

The new forms focus on rehabilitation and independence and are set out more clearly, with the aim that service providers will find them easier to use. They have been well received by service providers.

Key points to remember about using the new forms are:

- When requesting attendant care for a participant, you need to send both forms to the Authority: the Care Needs Report and the Attendant Care Service Request
- When a participant is not requesting any attendant care to be funded by the Authority, send only the Care Needs Report to the Authority.

Update on LTCS Guidelines: Attendant Care

The Authority has revised Part 8 of the LTCS Guidelines on Attendant Care, which has been renamed to Attendant Care and Domestic Assistance. The Authority has also written a new Guideline, Part 18: Approved Attendant Care Providers.

The Authority is awaiting confirmation of the date of gazettal of these new Guidelines. This will be announced in a future edition of the LTCS E-News which will outline the key changes.

Assessing Care Needs workshops

The Authority has run training sessions for service providers on assessing care need and the procedural changes in September 2011. Sessions were held in Sydney, Parramatta and Newcastle. The training covered:

- the Authority’s new procedures for assessing and documenting care needs and requests for attendant care
- how to document assessment of a participant’s care needs in the new Care Needs Report form
- how to request services in the new Attendant Care Service Request.

The workshops have had positive feedback from attendees. All sessions have featured opportunities to work through sample care needs forms, and learn from colleagues through discussion about good and not-so-good features of assessment of care needs.

An additional date has been set for this training in Sydney on Tuesday 18 October 2011. Click here to email Applications to register. Places are limited. Provide the name, venue and date of the workshop that you are interested in attending along with your contact details. The Authority encourages all service providers who undertake care needs assessment for Scheme participants to attend this training.

The Authority is also registering interest for a further date for this training in Sydney or Parramatta in November 2011. A date has not yet been confirmed. Click here to email Applications to register your interest for this session. Provide the name, preferred venue and the preferred date of the workshop, along with your contact details.
Participant travel and attendant care: what is funded?
The Authority will pay for reasonable and necessary travel for the purposes of approved treatment and rehabilitation, for example, travel to a therapy session. For more information, the Participant Travel Policy is on the Authority’s website at: http://www.lifetimecare.nsw.gov.au/Guidelines_and_Policies_for_Professionals.aspx

Where a participant has an attendant care program, the Authority will pay for the attendant care worker to assist the participant with travel to approved treatment and rehabilitation. This may be in an attendant care worker’s car, or travelling with a participant on public transport or in other forms of transport. In these circumstances, service providers should include a request for this travel in the Attendant Care Service Request.

Requests for the attendant care worker to provide travel assistance to the participant should reflect the participant’s rehabilitation goals in their Community Living Plan. Once a participant no longer requires travel assistance for treatment and rehabilitation, the travel is regarded as an everyday living cost and therefore the Authority is no longer able to fund this travel.

There will always be some travel that is not related to treatment and rehabilitation purposes, and this travel will be at the participant’s own expense. This means that there may be circumstances where the Authority pays for attendant care support but not all of the participant’s travel, even when a participant needs attendant care 24 hours per day.

Snapshot of Attendant Care in the Scheme
Attendant Care is anticipated to be the largest cost to the Scheme and approximately 70% of Scheme costs. Whilst expenditure on attendant care has not reached this level, it is growing each year, as demonstrated in this table:

Attendant Care expenditure per financial year

Council of Attendant Care expenditure per financial year

Currently, around 1 in 3 Scheme participants have an attendant care program. The size of attendant care programs varies, depending on the individual needs of participants. The hours vary from 2 hours per fortnight to 29 hours per day. The current average program size is 52 hours of attendant care per week.

The Authority has a panel of 22 approved attendant care providers, who are contracted to provide attendant care services to Scheme participants. The panel is split into four groups based on each provider’s experience in delivering services and if they have registered nurses. The groups are as follows:

- Brain Injury Recovery Providers
- High Clinical Needs
- Physical Assistance and
- Registered Nursing Services.

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