

Home Care Packages

Fact Sheet

About Home Care Packages

A home care package (HCP) is a coordinated package of care and services to assist older Australians (over 65) to live independently in their own home for as long as they can.

To be eligible for a HCP, first the person must undergo an Aged Care Assessment. The assessor will discuss care needs and support systems to determine the appropriate level of package required.

There are four levels of Home Care Packages to help meet different levels of care needs. A package allocates funds that may be spent by the recipient on services and support over a 12-month period.

Home care package funds can be used for:



personal services



meal prep and diet



continence
management



mobility aids



nursing and
allied health services



transport and
personal assistance



management of
skin integrity

Remedial massage is classified as an allied health service for the purpose of providing home care. It is included under the HCP Program if there is an assessed care need for the service.

A care recipient can access remedial massage under the program when the service is:

- required due to age-related functional decline and/or entrant cannot access disability supports
- in line with best practice guidance for treatment
- delivered by an accredited provider
- not concurrently being funded by another government program.

Reference: <https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-04/home-care-packages-program-inclusions-and-exclusions-faqs-for-providers-version-1.pdf>

Recognition Criteria for Remedial Massage Therapists

To be eligible to provide remedial massage through the HCP program, therapists must:

- hold a minimum of a Diploma of Remedial Massage from a Registered Training Organisation
- be a member of an accredited association and/or currently hold provider status with the private health funds.

About Home Care Package Providers

Home Care Package Providers are approved companies that work with care recipients to plan, organise and deliver Home Care Packages.

A package provider will develop a care plan for the recipient that outlines their goals and the services that may help them achieve these goals, then source providers of these services on behalf of the recipient.

These approved providers are responsible for quality assurance, including vetting the qualifications and eligibility of remedial massage therapists. Getting established to supply remedial massage services through a Home Care Package provider is a little like registering with the private health funds. You can work with multiple HCP providers and you will be issued with a separate supplier number for each organisation.

Some mobile massage companies will advise that you have to work through them to service home care package clients. This is not true. You can register directly with the Home Care Package provider.

Location of Services

The Department of Health and Aged Care does not stipulate where remedial massage services should occur. Services may be provided in the home or in a clinic environment.

The location of the service will depend on the individual circumstances and care needs of the care recipient. This should be managed by the provider when developing the care plan and scheduling services.

Treating an existing client through a Home Care Package

If your client has advised they are on a Home Care Package and would like to receive massage as part of their care plan:

- ask for the contact details of their care manager
- contact the care manager and request to be registered as a service provider
- supply the provider with requested documentation. This may include:
 - copy of your qualifications, insurance and evidence of provider status with the private health funds
 - copy of your association membership
 - your ABN
 - national police check
 - immunisation status
- request a work order that will indicate the number and frequency of remedial massage treatments approved
- make a time to provide the massage in the client's home
- invoice the company for the service provided.

If the Home Care Package provider states that remedial massage can only be provided by AHPRA-registered practitioners, ask them to check their [Community of Practice](#) for updated information about provision of remedial massage or contact the Department of Health directly on hcoperations@health.gov.au.

The Department of Health will be publishing updated remedial massage criteria on their website soon.

Sourcing new clients through a Home Care Package provider

You can search for Home Care Package providers in your local area [here](#).

Once you have a list of local providers:

- introduce yourself and request to be registered as a Remedial Massage Service provider
- supply the provider with requested documentation. This may include:
 - copy of your qualifications, insurance and evidence of provider status with the private health funds
 - copy of your association membership
 - your ABN
 - national police check
 - immunisation status
- await their call or a work order
- make a time to provide the massage in the client's home
- invoice the company for the service provided.

If the Home Care Package provider states that remedial massage can only be provided by AHPRA-registered practitioners, ask them to check their [Community of Practice](#) for updated information about provision of remedial massage or contact the Department of Health directly on hcoperations@health.gov.au.

The Department of Health will be publishing updated remedial massage criteria on their website soon.

Some points to note:

- You must have a work order before you see the client or you may not be paid.
- Be aware of WHS issues. The client may not be able to lie on your treatment table so the session may need to be adapted; you may need to treat them on a chair, on their bed, in their wheelchair or on a recliner.
- Do not under charge. You need to account for travel time and the time to prepare invoices etc. \$130 per hour seems to be a common base rate (as at April 2024).
- If you have any concerns about the client, such as a noted decline in mobility, report back to the case manager. They can organise to review the client's care needs and provide appropriate support.
- It's always best to do a phone interview with the client before attending and get a feel for any medical conditions and medications so you have time to do some research if required.
- A detailed understanding of local, systemic, or total contraindications and medication side effects is essential.

Older people receiving Australian Government-funded aged care in their own home have the right to safe and high-quality care that supports their identity, culture and diversity, and to have control and make choices about their lives, including where those choices carry a risk.

These rights are protected under the Charter of Aged Care Rights, and it is the responsibility of aged care providers, aged care and healthcare professionals, family members and carers of older people to acknowledge and respect their rights.



The poster features the Australian Government Department of Health and the Australian Government Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission logos at the top. Below the logos is a photograph of an elderly man smiling. The title 'Charter of Aged Care Rights' is prominently displayed. The main text states: 'All people receiving Australian Government funded residential care, home care or other aged care services in the community have rights.' This is followed by a list of 14 rights, numbered 1 through 14. At the bottom, there is a section titled 'If you have concerns about the aged care you are receiving, you can:' with three bullet points providing contact information for an aged care advocate, the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission, and the agedcarequality.gov.au website.

Charter of Aged Care Rights

All people receiving Australian Government funded residential care, home care or other aged care services in the community have rights.

I have the right to:

1. safe and high-quality care and services;
2. be treated with dignity and respect;
3. have my identity, culture and diversity valued and supported;
4. live without abuse and neglect;
5. be informed about my care and services in a way I understand;
6. access all information about myself, including information about my rights, care and services;
7. have control over and make choices about my care, and personal and social life, including where choices involve personal risk;
8. have control over, and make decisions about, the personal aspects of my daily life, financial affairs and possessions;
9. my independence;
10. be listened to and understood;
11. have a person of my choice, including an aged care advocate, support me or speak on my behalf;
12. complain free from reprisal, and to have my complaints dealt with fairly and promptly;
13. personal privacy and to have my personal information protected;
14. exercise my rights without it adversely affecting the way I am treated.

If you have concerns about the aged care you are receiving, you can:

- talk to your aged care provider, in the first instance;
- speak with an aged care advocate on **1800 700 600** or visit opan.com.au for support to raise your concerns, or
- contact the **Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission** on **1800 951 822** or visit its website, agedcarequality.gov.au. The Commission can help you resolve a complaint about your aged care provider.