
Submission template

Discussion paper:

Future reform – an integrated care at home program to support older Australians

Submissions close on 21 August 2017

Instructions:

- Save a copy of this template to your computer.
- It is recommended that you read the relevant pages in the discussion paper prior to responding.
- You do not need to respond to all of the questions posed in the discussion paper.
- The numbering of the questions in the template corresponds to the numbering in the discussion paper.
- Please keep your answers concise and relevant to the topic being addressed.
- Upload your completed submission on the [Consultation Hub](#). Alternatively, if you are experiencing difficulties uploading, you can email your submission to: agedcarereformenquiries@health.gov.au

Thank you for your interest in participating in our consultation.

Tell us about you

What is your full name?

First name Beris

Last name Campbell

What is your organisation's name (if applicable)?

Homeshare Australia & New Zealand Alliance Inc.

What stakeholder category/categories do you most identify with?

<input type="checkbox"/> Commonwealth Home Support Program ¹ service provider	<input type="checkbox"/> Peak body – consumer
<input type="checkbox"/> Home Care Package service provider	<input type="checkbox"/> Peak body – carers
<input type="checkbox"/> Flexible care provider	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Peak body – provider
<input type="checkbox"/> Residential aged care service provider	<input type="checkbox"/> Seniors membership association
<input type="checkbox"/> Aged care worker	<input type="checkbox"/> Professional organisation
<input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer	<input type="checkbox"/> Disability support organisation
<input type="checkbox"/> Regional Assessment Service	<input type="checkbox"/> Financial services organisation
<input type="checkbox"/> Aged Care Assessment Team/Service	<input type="checkbox"/> Union
<input type="checkbox"/> Consumer	<input type="checkbox"/> Local government
<input type="checkbox"/> Carer or representative	<input type="checkbox"/> State government
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advocacy organisation	<input type="checkbox"/> Federal government
	<input type="checkbox"/> Other Click here to enter text.

Where does your organisation operate (if applicable)? Otherwise, where do you live?

<input type="checkbox"/> NSW	<input type="checkbox"/> SA
<input type="checkbox"/> ACT	<input type="checkbox"/> WA
<input type="checkbox"/> Vic	<input type="checkbox"/> NT
<input type="checkbox"/> Qld	<input type="checkbox"/> Tas
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nationally	

May we have your permission to publish parts of your response that are **not** personally identifiable?

Yes, publish all of my response

No, do not publish any part of my response

¹ Includes Home and Community Care Providers in Western Australia

Section 2. Reform context

2.3 Reforms to date

Comments

We would welcome your views and feedback on the February 2017 (*Increasing Choice*) reforms.

Refer to page 6 of the discussion paper

HANZA Inc made a submission to the Key Directions for the Commonwealth Home Support Programme Discussion Paper, *June 2014* seeking acceptance and expansion of the Homeshare programme as a new development and new service type for the Home Support Programme.

Much to our disappointment Homeshare is not listed on MyAgedCare to 'increase peoples choices' nor has it been included in this discussion paper. The Homeshare programs in Victoria have transitioned into the CHSP as part of the agreement in Victoria. We believe, as stated in 2.4 "consumer expectations are changing ... and Baby Boomers ... will have different expectations ... they will want the choice to remain living at home in their communities for as long as possible." Homeshare's principle objective is to do just that. Homeshare is a positive choice, rather than living alone.

It is important to realise that Homeshare has been operating in Australia for 17 years. Over 500 matches have been achieved. Over 50% of these have enabled an older person – many in their 90s – to remain safely at home avoiding or delaying residential care or lengthy hospital stays. In their study of the economics of Homeshare², The Australia Institute estimated the long running (17 years) Wesley Homeshare program generated net benefits of over \$11 million including savings in residential care services and hospitals. Homeshare has demonstrated success, safety and efficiency in Australia, as it has in many other countries. However, this success will be jeopardised, and the opportunity for growth lost, if Homeshare is not acknowledged by the Commonwealth and supported within MyAgedCare.

Section 3. What type of care at home program do we want in the future?

3.1 Policy objectives

Question

Are there any other key policy objectives that should be considered in a future care at home program?

Refer to page 9 of the discussion paper

Homeshare fits very well under the policy objective:

Building on the strengths of the existing programs, we also want to:

- continue to support volunteers and social connectedness in communities
- encourage innovation and increased use of technology
- support the sector to develop the skills and capacity to deliver quality care
- build stronger connections between the aged care, health and disability systems.

² Campbell, R. (2015) *On for young and old: The economics of Homeshare*. The Australia Institute. Retrieved from: <http://www.tai.org.au/content/homeshare-report>

Section 4. Reform options

4.2 An integrated assessment model

Question

What do you believe could be done to improve the current assessment arrangements, including addressing variations or different practices between programs or care types (e.g. residential care, home care and flexible care)?

Refer to page 12 of the discussion paper

Click here to enter text.

4.3.1 New higher level home care package | 4.3.2 Changing the current mix of home care packages

Questions

Would you support the introduction of a new higher package level or other changes to the current package levels?

If so, how might these reforms be funded within the existing aged care funding envelope?

Refer to pages 12 – 14 of the discussion paper

We would like to draw attention to the value that Homeshare can add to home care packages. During the development of Homeshare in Victoria there were many matches made with householders who had packages. Homeshare added considerable value to the package and allowed the package to focus its limited resources on the expensive items such as personal care and allied health services. The overnight presence of the homesharer for a package recipient who lives alone, is invaluable, as it fills the gap in any package of being alone at night. In our experience people with quite high levels of care need can manage well at home with a low level package combined with homeshare. There were several instances of people with EACH packages who without the additional value of the homesharer's presence at night, could not have remained at home.

4.4.1 Changing the current mix of individualised and block funding

Question

Which types of services might be best suited to different funding models, and why?

Refer to pages 14 – 15 of the discussion paper

Homeshare in Victoria has been funded with block funding. This allowed the program to start-up and develop, to test and educate the market and to slowly grow. This is absolutely critical for establishing a Homeshare program as it faces a number of hidden barriers which make its market take up initially very slow – particularly the idea of taking a stranger into the home of a vulnerable person.

Homeshare can also be included in the services that are 'highly dependent on volunteers' as mentioned on page 15. Recruiting and screening homesharers and carefully matching them with older householders is similar, although more complex, to coordinating volunteers for social support. Homeshare is not a service that fits comfortably into a billable hours model.

Question

What would be the impact on consumers and providers of moving to more individualised funding?

Refer to pages 14 – 15 of the discussion paper

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Question

Are there other ways of funding particular services or assisting consumers with lower care or support needs, e.g. a combination of individualised funding and block funding, vouchers etc.?

Refer to pages 14 – 15 of the discussion paper

A combination of funding models would assist consumers and their case managers and family to be more creative in tailoring supports and improvements in lifestyle and well being. This is particularly important for introducing supports and assistance to 'reluctant' consumers! Many people avoid or refuse supports because of pride, lack of insight, mental health issues and other reasons making it necessary at times to present ideas in more creative ways.

4.5.1 Refocussing assessment and referral for services

Questions

Should consumers receive short-term intensive restorative/reablement interventions before the need for ongoing support is assessed?

If so, what considerations need to be taken into account with this approach?

Refer to page 16 of the discussion paper

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Question

How could a wellness and independence focus be better embedded throughout the various stages of the consumer journey (i.e. from initial contact with My Aged Care through to service delivery)?

Refer to page 16 of the discussion paper

[Click here to enter text.](#)

4.6.1 Ensuring that services are responsive to consumer needs and maximise independence

Questions

How do we ensure that funding is being used effectively to maximise a person's ability to live in the community and to delay entry to residential care for as long as possible?

For example, should funding be targeted to services or activities where there is a stronger connection with care and/or independent living? Are there examples of current services or activities that you believe should not be funded by government?

Refer to pages 16 - 17 of the discussion paper

Funding should be targeted to Homeshare because its major object is to maximise a person's ability to live in their own home, in the community and delay or avoid entry into residential care. This has been demonstrated on numerous occasions in both our experience in Australia and in Homeshare programs in the USA and UK.

Question

How do we maximise the flexibility of care and support so that the diverse needs of older people, including those with disability, are met?

Refer to pages 16 - 17 of the discussion paper

Because each Homeshare match is tailored to the person's needs and interests and the householder has control over choosing the person they want to share with, flexibility of the care and support is maximised.

4.6.2 Accessing services under different programs

Question

Under the current program arrangements, does allowing some consumers to access both programs promote inequity, particularly if other consumers have to wait for a home care package?

Refer to page 17 of the discussion paper

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Questions

Until an integrated care at home program is introduced, is there a need to more clearly define or limit the circumstances in which a person receiving services through a home care package can access additional support through the CHSP? If so, how might this be achieved?

Refer to page 17 of the discussion paper

[Click here to enter text.](#)

4.8.1 Supporting specific population groups

Question

How can we make the care at home system work better for specific population groups, particularly those whose needs are not best met through current CDC models and administrative arrangements?

Refer to page 19 of the discussion paper

[Click here to enter text.](#)

4.8.2 Supporting informed choice for consumers who may require additional support

Question

What additional supports could be considered to ensure that people with diverse needs can access services and make informed choices and exercise control over their care?

Refer to page 19 of the discussion paper

[Click here to enter text.](#)

4.10 Other suggestions for reform

Question

Do you have other suggestions for care at home reform, or views on how changes might be progressively introduced or sequenced?

Refer to page 20 of the discussion paper

Homeshare programs have been operating in Australia since 2000, improving people's independence and reducing residential care costs.

Victoria is the only state to have developed Homeshare programs in HACC with block funding.

Homeshare is NOT included in lists of services in MyAgedCare.

Homeshare needs to be accepted as a service type and included in the 'Care at Home' reform.

We would suggest a new dot point in the list for Community and Home support:

- * Live-in support – Homeshare

See page 9 of this submission, under 'Further comments', for a description of Homeshare

Section 5. Major structural reform

5.2 What would be needed to give effect to these structural reforms?

Question

Are there other structural reforms that could be pursued in the longer-term?

Refer to page 21 of the discussion paper

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Section 6. Broader aged care reform

6.1.1 Informal carers

Question

How might we better recognise and support informal carers of older people through future care at home reforms?

Refer to page 22 of the discussion paper

Homeshare plays a significant role in supporting informal carers of older people. Most importantly it supports family members and friends who are not living with the older person but play a huge, often very demanding support role. These family members can be living interstate, overseas or even in the next suburb. The reassurance of having someone trustworthy living with the parent is immeasurable.

6.1.2 Technology and innovation

Question

How can we best encourage innovation and technology in supporting older Australians to remain living at home?

Refer to page 22 of the discussion paper

Young tech-savvy homesharers have frequently encouraged and enabled their older housemates to use technology, particularly communications technology to keep in touch with friends and family. They have also helped them enjoy and benefit from using modern media technology. Homesharers have often been referred to as the live-in 'Help desk'!

Question

What are the existing barriers, and how could they be overcome?

Refer to page 22 of the discussion paper

Click here to enter text.

6.1.3 Rural and Remote areas

Question

How can we address the unique challenges associated with service delivery in rural and remote areas?

Refer to page 22 of the discussion paper

Click here to enter text.

Question

What other service delivery and funding models could we consider for providing care at home services to consumers living in rural and remote areas, including examples of innovative local community models?

Refer to page 22 of the discussion paper

Click here to enter text.

6.1.4 Regulation

Question

How can we further reduce regulation to allow for innovation while ensuring that essential safeguards remain in place?

Refer to page 23 of the discussion paper

Click here to enter text.

6.1.5 Aged care and health systems

Question

What are some examples of current gaps or duplication across the aged care and health systems, and how could these be addressed?

Refer to page 23 of the discussion paper

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Any further comments?

Other comments

Do you have any general comments or feedback?

This submission has been made with the major object of ensuring the Homeshare program is included in the reform of care at home.

For nearly 20 years we have been testing, developing, evaluating and growing Homeshare. We have been promoting Homeshare and seeking its recognition and acceptance into the service system.

We have met recently with Minister Wyatt and his advisors, and feel confident that the forthcoming round table discussions will chart a way forward.

Below is a brief description of the Homeshare program and its value:

Homeshare is relatively new and certainly new to the aged and disability care sector. Homeshare practice is still evolving and the evidence base for Homeshare is constantly growing, not just here in Australia but around the world.

Homeshare's object is to support older people or people with a disability to live safely in their own homes with the assistance of **affordable live-in support**. Safety and security at night have long been a recognised gap in home support services.

The actual service sought by the householder is a recruitment service whereby the agency assists the householder to **recruit** a suitable person to live in at low or no cost, in return for agreed practical help and support. The role of the Homeshare service is to connect householders with homesharers, develop a formal agreement and to safeguard, support and monitor these arrangements

Homeshare establishes a reciprocal relationship, an exchange, where the householder provides low cost accommodation in return for practical help, support, and the safety of a reliable presence in the home particularly at night which provides significant stress relief for carers, especially those living some distance from their loved one.

The key outputs for the Homeshare program are the number of matches made and supported, and the period of time the live-in arrangements are in place, ie the weeks or months of Homesharing.

Both householders and homesharers are equal participants in the Homeshare program – one is not a 'client' and the other is not a 'volunteer' or 'service provider' with the difference in status that those terms imply. Homeshare participants see themselves as equal partners, as both are contributing to and helping each other.

It is certainly hoped and expected that a successful Homeshare match will have a significant social component and every effort is made by the Homeshare Coordinators to ensure the parties are compatible, share interests and will enjoy each other's company.

The hours of support that the homesharer gives in return for housing are mostly related to **living support** – cooking, caring for pets, garden help, shopping, daily cleaning jobs, transport etc. The key support, of course, is the actual 'living-in', the security of someone in the home overnight. Nights off, weekends away, holidays must be negotiated and written into the formal agreement. In fact the companionship or social support is not usually counted in the 10 hours of support in the agreement.

Homeshare services have operated in Australia since 2000, and internationally since the early 1970s. There are now 3 Victorian service providers funded under the CHSP program covering the 4 metropolitan planning regions of Melbourne.

An evaluation of the Victorian program demonstrated that Homeshare enabled Householders to remain at home rather than being prematurely admitted to residential care. Over a third of householders surveyed by HomeShare Vermont in the USA said "they would not be able to live safely and comfortably at home without a homesharer". But the key findings of evaluations of programs throughout the world are the qualitative outcomes in wellness and quality of life. It is often said: "Homeshare has changed my life". Customer surveys from HomeShare Vermont report 60-80% of householders feel safer, happier, healthier, less lonely and sleep better.

Homeshare in Victoria was the first program to gain recurrent HACC funding. Interest in other states to establish Homeshare is increasing significantly. Enquiries from people in other states seeking homeshare programs are received via the Homeshare Australia website constantly.

Homeshare needs to be recognised as an effective and functioning service that should be available across Australia to add to the "better choices ... which will enable them [older Australians] to continue to live active and healthy lives in their communities".³ Homeshare is currently only available as a HACC funded program in Victoria and needs to expand and be included in the way forward in aged care reform.

Homeshare has demonstrated success, safety and efficiency in Australia, as it has in many other countries. However, this success will be jeopardised, and the opportunity for growth lost, if Homeshare is not acknowledged by the Commonwealth and supported within MyAgedCare.

³ Future reform – an integrated care at home program to support older Australians. Discussion paper July 2017 page 3