

Document Type	Policy
Department	Service Support

Client Contribution Policy

Policy

The Australian Government subsidises a range of aged care services in Australia. If the client's personal circumstances allow, it is expected that they will contribute towards the cost of services. Country Home Services (CHS) works within Government contribution requirements.

Procedure

1. CHS employees will use My Aged Care as a reference point in regards to client contribution <https://www.myagedcare.gov.au/understanding-costs>
2. At the point of client intake a CHS employee will explain to the client and/ or their representative the contribution requirements of service provision.
 - a. The maximum level of contribution that is expected to be paid for delivery of service:
 - Home Care Package (HCP);
 - Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP);
 - Veterans Home Care (VHC);
 - b. It is the role of the employee to form an understanding, on the basis of information provided, of the clients' ability to contribute. The contribution reduction or waiver application process should be commenced if the contribution is likely to cause them financial hardship.
 - c. That no-one is refused a service due to their inability to contribute.
3. The client will receive verbal and written confirmation of their contribution in a format that is clear and easy to understand. As follows:
 - *HCP* - On entry, the client will sign the CHS HCP Agreement. This Agreement outlines the amount that the client agrees to contribute. Any increase to the contribution rate is managed by the Department of Human Services (DHS). DHS will notify CHS and the client of any changes to the contribution rate throughout the year. The following documents outline the Schedule of Fees and Charges for HCP:
 - <https://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/home-care-packages-program/charging-for-home-care-package-services/fees-for-people-entering-home-care-packages-from-1-july-2014> (for clients who entered HCP from 1 July 2014)
 - <https://www.myagedcare.gov.au/costs/aged-care-costs-before-1-july-2014/home-care-package-costs-if-you-entered-care-1-july> (For clients who entered HCP prior to 1 July 2014)
 - *CHSP* - On entry, the client will be advised verbally of the current contribution rate. The CHSP contribution rate increases annually on 1st July each year, or as required. All CHSP clients will receive written correspondence notifying them of these changes, one month before the change in rate is applied.

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- *VHC* - As part of scheduled *VHC* processes, all clients receive a standard 'Service Plan Letter'. This letter outlines their contribution rate as determined by *VHC* and is sent to clients as their Service Plans are renewed.
4. A copy of this policy and procedure will be made available to clients and or their representative on their request. This policy is displayed on the CHS website.

Contribution Reduction

From time to time, clients will be impacted by a variety of life events that may make it difficult to contribute to their service. If this occurs, both DHS and CHS processes are in place to support those clients to continue to contribute at a rate that is manageable. Clients of the CHSP and those clients who entered HCP prior to 1 July 2014 may be eligible for a reduction in their contribution using CHS Client Contribution Reduction processes, including:

- CHS Client Contribution Adjustment Application; and
- CHS Client Contribution Schedule.

The CHS Client Contribution Reduction process is managed by Manager Operations. If a client has applied for a CHS Client Contribution Reduction and is not happy with the outcome, they are able to appeal the decision. This occurs by lodging a letter of appeal with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of CHS. The CEO has the discretion to overturn, or not, the recommendation of the Manager.

Clients who entered the HCP program after 1 July 2014 can apply for a reduction in their contribution via DHS @ <https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/forms/sa462>

The contribution rate for clients receiving services through the *VHC* program is managed by *VHC*. Therefore, CHS is not responsible for applying or managing any reduction in contribution.

Method of paying contributions

It is expected that monthly accounts are paid in full by the end of every month. There are several options available for paying an account, including:

- Direct Debit;
- Cheque;
- Online Banking; and
- Credit Card.

These options can be found at the bottom of the monthly account under 'Paying Your Bill'.

Document Owner	Manager Operations	
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