

Streamlined Consumer Assessment in Aged Care

Information for Victorian Providers
February 2020

Background

The Commonwealth has announced that it will implement a new national streamlined assessment model that will assess eligibility for all aged care services. This will replace the current system of aged care assessment delivered by Aged Care Assessment Services (ACAS) and Regional Assessment Services (RAS). The new assessment organisations will be procured through a public tender process. The new model will commence from 1 April 2021.

States and territories will continue to advocate for statewide streamlined assessment services that are contracted through state and territory health departments, however, if this advocacy is unsuccessful, the Victorian department will not be tendering to provide assessment services under the new model.

Streamlined assessment model

Details about the Commonwealth changes, the process and timelines can be found at <https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/aged-care/aged-care-reforms-and-reviews/new-aged-care-assessment-arrangements>

The Commonwealth has provided an overview of the new assessment model. Key components include:

- Simplified registration through either the My Aged Care contact centre or directly to the assessment organisation
- Triage by the assessment organisation
- Consolidated assessment workforce which will assess for all aged care services
- Increased focus on reablement and linkage support.

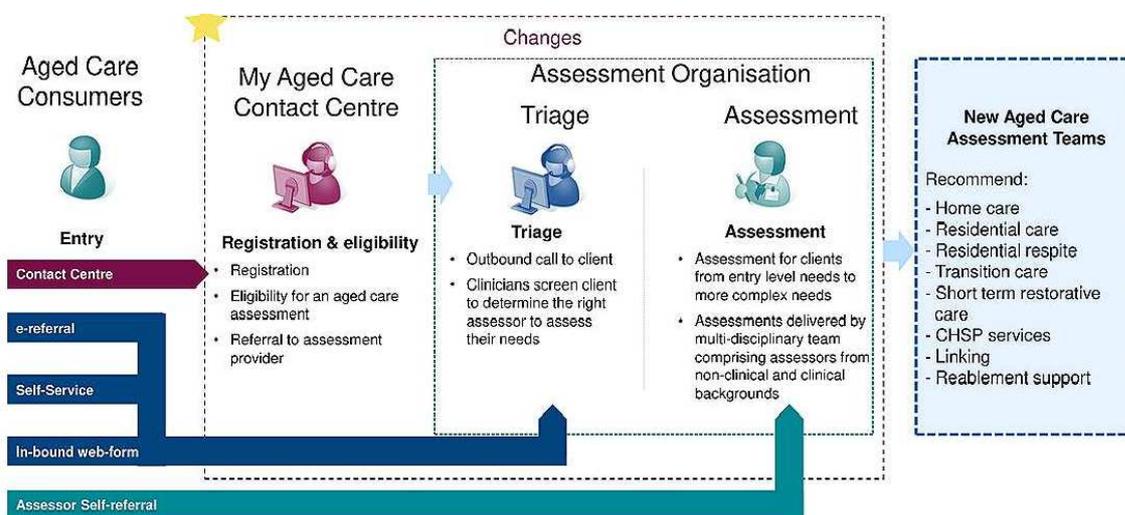


Figure 1 (Source Commonwealth webinar 11 December 2019)

Procurement and implementation

The new assessment organisations will be appointed following a competitive tender process.

There will be 15 service areas nationally with 2 service areas in Victoria.

There will be multiple providers in each service area to ensure competition and service availability. Each provider must be able to provide at least 50 percent of assessments in the service area. Organisations can tender for more than one service area and consortia bids are encouraged.

Assessment funding will be based on fee for service arrangements.

The Commonwealth indicative timelines for the tender process are:

- April 2020 - Exposure draft of tender released
- May 2020 – Tender opens
- June 2020 – Tender closes
- December 2020 – Contracts with new providers signed
- December 2020 – March 2021 - Transition

What this means for Victorian providers

Current arrangements

- Existing agreements for the delivery of ACAS and RAS in Victoria will be extended to 31 March 2021. Current contractual obligations will need to be met.
- Where existing services are exiting their current contract at 30 June 2020, the department will commence a process to procure alternative providers for the provision of assessment services through until 31 March 2021.
- Consistent with current requirements, organisations will need to provide formal notification to the department if they decide to exit the provision of assessment services prior to 31 March 2021.
- Contractual arrangements with existing assessment providers will cease following the introduction of the Commonwealth's new model on 1 April 2021.
- The Victorian and Commonwealth departments are working together to develop an implementation plan for the transition of existing assessment services to the new providers.

Streamlined assessment

- The department will not be tendering to provide assessment services under the new model. The department will focus on:
 - a smooth transition to the new aged care assessment services
 - making sure the department is best placed to monitor performance across the system and acting to ensure all Victorians have access to quality assessments in a timely manner under the new arrangements
 - supporting services and the new assessment organisations to work effectively together.
- Organisations need to consider their ongoing role in the delivery of aged care assessment services and their participation in a tender to deliver assessment services under the new model.
- Regardless of tender participation, organisations need to prepare for the introduction of the new model and consider the impact on their services. This includes how they might work with the new assessment providers.
- The department will be making information and support available to those public services who may be considering tendering or forming consortia or partnership arrangements to tender.
- The department is keen to work with the sector to support a smooth transition and will provide further information as it becomes available. DHHS is undertaking several activities to plan for transition and will be consulting further with providers. Organisations are encouraged to talk to their agency leads about any challenges with current contract obligations and transition issues.

Next steps

Seniors, Ageing and Aged Care will continue to provide regular updates as further detail becomes available.

For further information, please contact:

Carmel Benham

A/Manager, Aged Care Policy & Assessment

Seniors, Ageing and Aged Care

Ph 9096 3099 or 0409 385 748

Email: carmel.benham@dhhs.vic.gov.au