



Department of Health and Human Services

50 Lonsdale Street
Melbourne Victoria 3000
Telephone: 1300 650 172
GPO Box 4057
Melbourne Victoria 3001
www.dhhs.vic.gov.au
DX 210081

HHSD/20/60249

Dear CEO

I am writing to update you on Commonwealth Government implementation of the new streamlined aged care assessment model and its impacts on current assessment providers.

The Commonwealth Department of Health has released further detail outlining the process and timelines for implementation of the new model.

In the new model, Victoria has been divided into two service areas and there will be more than one assessment provider in each area. More information about the model and implementation is attached. In this model, the Commonwealth will no longer have agreements solely with the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services for the delivery of state-wide aged care assessment services.

The Commonwealth has advised that the new assessment organisations will be commissioned through a public tender process commencing in May 2020. Draft tender specifications will be released in April ahead of the formal tender process.

States and territories, including Victoria, are continuing to negotiate with the Commonwealth to retain the role of jurisdictions in the delivery of a state-wide streamlined assessment service. However, should the tender proceed as outlined by the Commonwealth, the department will not be tendering to provide assessment services under the new model.

This follows consideration of the procurement process and the aim of the Commonwealth to have multiple providers in each service area. It was concluded that the focus for the department should be on system-wide stewardship and advocacy. The priorities of the department are:

- ensuring our obligations under our current agreements continue to be delivered
- negotiating the terms of the contract extension from 1 July 2020 to 31 March 2021. The department is anticipating that the extension terms will be similar to current arrangements and is expecting further information shortly
- ensuring a smooth transition to the new aged care assessment services
- making information and support available to public services who may be considering tendering or forming consortia or partnership arrangements to tender
- making sure the department is best placed to monitor performance across the system and advocate to ensure all Victorians have access to quality assessments in a timely manner under the new arrangements.

The department and the government continue to advocate to the Commonwealth about the proposed changes and the fundamental requirements that must be in place to deliver effective streamlined assessment reform. This includes the need to ensure that assessment services continue to be delivered by a highly qualified workforce, that assessment services continue to support service integration and that there are effective systems in place to ensure timely hospital assessments.

Current assessment services in Victoria have significant experience, are highly skilled and could contribute much should they wish to continue as providers in the new model. The department recognises the very significant role that assessment providers perform and will work to ensure that older people continue to receive high quality, timely assessments both in hospital and in the community through advocacy and support for our public health and community services.

The department will be holding an information session for interested stakeholders. Details will be provided shortly.

Should you wish to discuss this matter further, please contact Carmel Benham, A/Manager, Aged Care Policy and Assessment at the Department of Health and Human Services on 9096 3099 or carmel.benham@dhhs.vic.gov.au.

Kind regards



Jackie Kearney PSM
Director, Seniors, Ageing and Aged Care
Health and Wellbeing Division

12 / 02 / 2020