

A single system for aged care assessments is coming

Factsheet for NSW Health staff and stakeholders

This is the first in a series of fact sheets that will be released over time as new information becomes available. The intention of these factsheets is to keep NSW Health staff up to date with changes to the way assessments are delivered as a result of Australian Government aged care reforms.

What is the new model for providing aged care assessments?

The Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care (the Department) is establishing a **new single aged care assessment system** from **1 July 2024**.

The new single assessment system will combine the services currently provided by existing Aged Care Assessment Teams (ACAT), Regional Assessment Services (RAS) and Australian National Aged Care Classification (AN-ACC) functions.

The new single assessment system will also include assessments for:

- the Commonwealth Home Support Programme
- the Home Care Packages Program, Short-Term Restorative Care Programme, Transitional Aged Care Programme, residential respite and entry to permanent residential aged care
- the level of Australian Government residential aged care subsidy payable for individual residents

The Department is also introducing a new aged care assessment tool to collect better information to ensure service recommendations and referrals are tailored to each person's needs.

Why is it being introduced?

The single assessment system is being introduced to simplify and improve how older people access aged care and will avoid the need for older people to seek assessments through multiple assessment services as their needs change.

When will the change come into effect?

The single aged care assessment system will take effect **from 1 July 2024**.

How will this new model impact the NSW Health aged care assessment workforce?

NSW Health is committed to retaining the functions of aged care assessments, recognising that these services are important to support older people moving between NSW Health services and the aged care system.

NSW Health also recognises the dedication, skills and experience of NSW Health aged care assessment services staff and the value this brings to the assessment process.

The Department has confirmed that NSW Health will be provided with a market share of aged care assessments, equivalent to the current ACAT market share being delivered by NSW Health. This will include providing all in-hospital assessments (currently ACAT assessments) and a portion of clinical and non-clinical assessments (currently both RAS and ACAT) in the community. These new arrangements will be negotiated through discussions with the Department.

Following this, the Department will conduct a closed tender to determine provision of the remaining portion of community assessments and AN-ACC services. NSW Health is eligible to tender for these services and we are consulting with districts as part of this process to determine their interest.

The Department has indicated its intention to enable a longer-term contract, than has historically been provided, enabling NSW Health to provide greater job security to the valuable staff that make up the assessment workforce.

The Department will re-engage with NSW Health after the tender is finalised to negotiate any identified market gaps.

How can we find out more?

The Ministry will continue to work closely with districts throughout this process, particularly through the Aged Care Advisory Group and the Aged Care Reform Senior Executive Committee.

Regular fact sheets will be provided to keep NSW Health staff informed on the progress of the transition to the new single aged care assessment arrangements.

Available information can be found on the Department's website

<https://www.health.gov.au/topics/aged-care/aged-care-reforms-and-reviews/single-assessment-system-for-aged-care>

Who can I contact for more information?

Staff should contact their local Aged Care Contact / Aged Care Assessment Program Manager who will feed back any enquiries they are unable to answer to the Ministry of Health to enable compilation of responses to frequently answered questions to go out with future factsheets.