

August 2021

# Access and Support Service Practice Guide



# Contents

- Access and Support Service Practice Guide** ..... **1**
- What is Access and Support?** ..... **2**
- Eligibility for Access and Support service** ..... **3**
- A&S role in a client journey** ..... **4**
- HACC PYP and NDIS** ..... **5**
- Aged Care** ..... **7**

We are proud to recognise Indigenous Peoples as the first Australians and as Cultural Leaders and Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we live, meet and work.

We acknowledge that sovereignty was never ceded. We pay our respects to their Elders, past & present.



The Access and Support Practice Guide was developed by the Access and Support Working Group and supported by the Australian Government Department of Health.

Although funding for this Practice Guide has been provided by the Australian Government, the material contained herein does not necessarily represent the views or policies of the Australian Government.



# Access and Support Service Practice Guide

The Access and Support (A&S) program is funded through the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) and Home and Community Care Programme for Younger People (HACC PYP). It assists individuals whose diversity characteristics are a barrier to accessing culturally appropriate aged care, disability and other services across the broader health and community sectors.

This guide provides information on the Access and Support program and its role within a client's journey when navigating and accessing aged care, disability and other health and community care systems in Victoria. A&S workers also support cross-sector capacity building to adequately meet vulnerable people's needs.

## Policy background

The Aged Care and Disability sectors acknowledge the importance of ensuring the needs of diverse communities and people with varied life experiences are met via a range of responsive approaches. Intersectionality in people's identities, dignity, equitable access and quality of care is being delivered through a range of frameworks and strategies, such as Korin Korin Balit-Djak, Aged Care Standards, Aged Care Diversity Framework and related action plans, Wellness and Reablement planning and NDIS CALD Strategy.



## What is Access and Support?

A&S is a free service, which assists vulnerable clients to access a range of aged care, disability and broader health care services. A&S workers apply their place-based knowledge to refer across different points of the service systems for the best client outcomes.

A&S service is critical in assisting people with diverse needs, who experience barriers in accessing services, to better understand support pathways and assist them at various stages throughout their client's journey. The A&S service achieves improved access by providing episodic support for a part or throughout the client pathway as the person navigates the service system.

The A&S worker is the bridge between the client and their carer, where applicable, and the service provider. They apply culturally appropriate, holistic, and a consumer-directed care approach when assessing the client's needs within broader community and service system settings. Based on a Wellness and Reablement approach, A&S workers assist clients and their carers, where applicable, to develop critical knowledge of service systems and build their confidence and self-advocacy skills, which enables them through a prevention rather than a treatment approach.

The A&S worker develops effective links and establishes trust with specific communities and individuals, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) and other communities. In situations where people are not comfortable or able to access services directly, the A&S worker may be the primary contact for assisting the client to access the services they require, including support during initial needs identification, assessment and care planning. The role supports and builds the confidence of the client to access holistic assessment through different assessment services in both aged care and disability.

A&S workers are located in a range of funded organisations, including Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs), multicultural and ethno-specific agencies, homelessness services, community health services, and local councils. Organisations may have varying eligibility criteria based on their target group focus. The cultural safety of the A&S service is created and maintained by workforce members who are from diverse backgrounds, including First Nations and culturally and linguistically diverse.



## Eligibility for Access and Support service

People accessing A&S service must:

- For aged care services:
  - Be aged 65, or 50 years old and over for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities
  - Note: prematurely aged people\* aged 50, or 45 years and over for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities can be assisted by the A&S to access CHSP services via the Assistance with Care and Housing (ACH) Sub-Program if they:
    - are on a low income; and,
    - are homeless or at risk of homelessness as a result of experiencing housing stress or not having secure accommodation.
- For HACC PYP and National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS):
  - Be under 65, or under 50 years old for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities.
- For aged care services, A&S program has a key focus on special needs groups, under the Aged Care Act 1997:
  - People from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities
  - People from Culturally and Linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds
- People who live in rural and remote areas
- People who are financially or socially disadvantaged
- Veterans
- People who are homeless, or at risk of becoming homeless
- People who are lesbian, gay, transgender and intersex (LGBTI)
- People who are care leavers
- Parents separated from children by forced adoption or removal.

Access and Support workers assist and empower clients who face barriers to accessing or remaining in services, e. g., people who:

- Are unsure about how to communicate their need for assistance
- Have little or no knowledge of and experience with accessing services
- Are not aware of their eligibility for support services
- May not trust or have confidence to find out if or how different services could potentially support them
- Think that services may not understand their needs or respect their preferences.

\* People might have prematurely aged due to life experiences, such as active military service, homelessness or substance abuse.



A&S workers also take into account other diversity considerations, which may impact a person's ability to access services, such as faith and spirituality, low literacy, sight or hearing impairment, people with traumatic past experiences, at risk of abuse or neglect, individuals with mental health issues and those living with dementia.

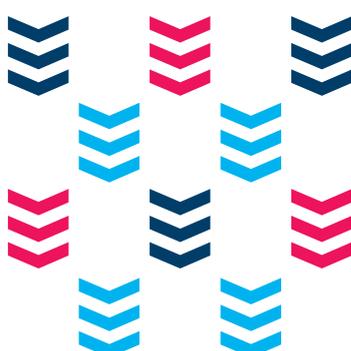
To be eligible for the A&S service the person must be experiencing barriers to accessing services consistent with the listed types of considerations or target groups, regardless of the level of care required. Any person or provider can make a referral for the Access and Support service.

## A&S role in a client journey

The main components of the A&S worker's role in the clients' journey are to:

- Identify individuals in need through an assertive outreach model
- Define the service systems the client is eligible for, explain the services available and how to navigate them
- Support clients with the assessment process as required
- Assist clients with finding a suitable provider
- Work with service providers to advocate and promote better practice in the responsiveness of service delivery to meet the needs of diverse communities and individuals within them
- In doing the above, identify barriers to access and provide feedback to funding and peak bodies through the reporting process.

The A&S service ceases once the client is confidently engaged with a suitable aged care, HACC PYP, NDIS, other community service providers, or has been introduced to an NDIS 'Partner in the Community' for further assistance.



# HACC PYP and NDIS

## Assertive outreach



- A&S worker may identify potential clients via assertive outreach, such as visiting social clubs, community centres, caravan parks, network meetings.
- Referrals to the A&S service can be received from different sources: a client, their carer or family, MyAgedCare, service providers or community representatives.
- During initial meetings with the client and rapport building, the A&S worker will engage interpreters, if required.

## Referral process to HACC PYP and NDIS

### HACC PYP



- The A&S worker builds rapport with the client.
- The A&S worker prepares the client by explaining the services system and access process.
- The A&S worker supports the client to make the phone call to the intake worker, with the client's consent, and helps them understand and answer the questions.
- During the HACC PYP intake process the A&S worker can request the provider to organise an interpreter, if required.
- The intake worker, arranges a meeting with a service provider and registers the A&S as a support service.

### NDIS

- If the client (either existing HACC PYP client or new) agrees to test their eligibility for NDIS, the A&S worker can assist the client to contact NDIS and complete the application process. The A&S worker can refer the client to NDIS 'Partner in the Community' organisations for further assistance.

## Service provision



- A&S worker may identify potential clients via assertive outreach, such as visiting social clubs, community centres, caravan parks, network meetings.
- Referrals to the A&S service can be received from different sources: a client, their carer or family, service providers or community representatives.
- During initial meetings with the client and rapport building, the A&S worker will engage interpreters, if required.

## Client discharge from Access and Support



### HACC PYP

- When the client confidently accesses a HACC PYP service provider, the A&S worker discharges the client.

### NDIS

- When the client is successful with NDIS Access and a NDIS Plan is approved, the A&S worker discharges the client.
- The A&S service is not funded to support those with an approved NDIS plan.

### HACC PYP + NDIS

If the client at any stage disengages from the service system or service is not appropriate, the A&S worker can assist the client to re-establish appropriate services, if required.

**\* In addition to accessing HACC PYP and NDIS, A&S can also assist with other services, such as Services Australia, mental health, housing, financial and legal services etc.**

## Aged Care:

The table below shows the client pathway to accessing aged care services and the roles and responsibilities of an A&S worker's role at each step in the process.

### Assertive outreach



- The A&S worker may identify potential clients via assertive outreach, such as visiting seniors' clubs, other groups, caravan parks, network meetings.
- Referrals to the A&S service can be received from different sources: the client, their carer or family, assessment services, My Aged Care, service providers or community representatives.
- During initial meetings with the client and rapport building, the A&S worker can engage interpreters, if required.

### Referral process to My Aged Care

#### My Aged Care: registration and screening



- The A&S worker builds rapport with a client and engages interpreters, where required
- The A&S worker prepares the client for contact with the My Aged Care contact centre by explaining the screening and assessment processes. Alternatively, with consent, the A&S worker can register a client online.
- The A&S worker can request My Aged Care to organise an interpreter.
- The A&S worker supports the client to make the phone call to the contact centre, with the client's consent, and helps them understand and answer the questions.
- The contact centre registers the client and creates a client record.
- The contact centre commences a registration and screening process, which identifies suggested actions as part of initial discussion and reason for referral, including the request for referral to the A&S service post initial assessment.
- The contact centre sends an electronic referral for a RAS (home support) or ACAS (comprehensive) assessment, depending on a level of need.

## RAS or ACAS assessment



- If the A&S worker is nominated as the client contact person for the assessment appointment, the assessor contacts the A&S worker to discuss the client's circumstances and to identify suitable dates for a client home support or comprehensive assessment. The assessment date would take into consideration the assessor, client and the A&S worker's schedule, if needed.
- The A&S worker will contact the client and carer, where required, to confirm the details of the assessment and arrange the time with the assessor. The A&S worker assists an assessor to understand the client's and their carer's needs in a holistic way.
- The assessment service organises a face to face interpreter, if required.
- During face to face assessment, with the A&S worker in attendance, the assessor develops a support plan that includes the A&S service, if requested by the client.
- The assessor may also identify the need for an A&S worker where a person is not already engaged with an A&S service. In these circumstances an assessor, with the person's consent, will contact the A&S worker (and follow up with a direct referral or via My Aged Care/Specialised Support Service/Client Advocacy) for the client support at assessment and/or through to access to service provision.

## Service provision

### CHSP:



- The CHSP service provider accepts the electronic referral from an assessment service. The A&S service may be identified in the client's support plan as a service referral.
- Where the A&S worker is listed as the client contact person, the A&S worker will liaise with the client and their carer and relevant CHSP service providers to facilitate a service level assessment and engagement.
- The A&S worker contacts the client to explain the service level assessment process and to find out the client's preferred date for the service level assessment.

- The CHSP service provider conducts a service level assessment with the A&S worker in attendance, then enters the client service information on the client record on the My Aged Care provider portal. The CHSP service provider organises a face to face interpreter, if required.
- The A&S worker supports the client until they confidently start accessing CHSP services.



#### HCP:

- The A&S worker assists the client to access CHSP services while waiting for a Home Care Package.
- The A&S worker can disengage while the client is waiting for a Home Care Package to be assigned, if appropriate.
- The A&S worker can reengage when a HCP is assigned to assist the client and their carer, where required, to choose and engage with an appropriate HCP provider, if required.

## Client discharge from Access and Support

#### CHSP:

- The A&S worker supports the client until they confidently access CHSP services.
- When the client confidently accesses a HCP provider, the A&S worker discharges the client.



If the client at any stage disengages from the service system or service is not appropriate, the A&S worker can assist the client to re-establish appropriate services, if required.

**\* In addition to accessing CHSP and HCP services, A&S can also assist with other services, such as Services Australia, mental health, housing, financial and legal services etc.**