

Background summary

Excerpts from the *Aged Care Roadmap 2016*

(full report at <https://agedcare.health.gov.au/aged-care-reform/aged-care-roadmap>)

Foreword

In April 2015, the Australian Government tasked the Aged Care Sector Committee with developing a roadmap that sets out future reform directions for aged care.

As Chair of the Aged Care Sector Committee, I am pleased to present the Aged Care Roadmap which represents our views on what is needed to achieve a sustainable, consumer driven and market based system. While the Roadmap is a product of the Committee, we urge that it be used by current and future governments, industry and consumers to shape reforms in coming years.

The aged care system has undergone significant change in recent years to become more consumer focussed. Our aged care system is in transition and we need to ensure it is viable and sustainable into the future. We also need to ensure that it can support older people to maintain their independence and receive support and care that is sensitive and appropriate, where and when they need it.

Increased consumer choice will be a major change into the future. A fiscally sustainable aged care system that requires consumers to contribute to their care costs where they can afford to do so means that there will be increased consumer expectations for greater choice and control. The ability for consumers to choose who provides care and support will create a more competitive and innovative market. This, accompanied by an aged care sector that has more flexibility to respond to the increasing diversity of consumers' care needs, preferences and financial circumstances will contribute to a sustainable system.

In developing the Roadmap, the Committee observed that health, housing, superannuation, retirement incomes, enterprise bargaining and labour supply (through immigration) influence consumer and market behaviour in aged care. While the Committee felt that they were not directly in scope for the Roadmap, it was important to acknowledge these interdependencies.

The aged care sector welcomes the opportunities this Roadmap presents and looks forward to working with government to maximise the capacity of the aged care system, to become a consumer driven, market based sustainable aged care system.

We look forward to working with leaders in government, the aged care sector, research organisations, communities, consumers and other key stakeholders to ensure these opportunities are realised for our future aged care population.

*David Tune AO PSM
Chair, Aged Care Sector Committee
March 2016*

Executive Summary

The Aged Care Roadmap sets out the path to a system where people are valued and respected, including their rights to choice, dignity, safety (physical, emotional and psychological) and quality of life. They (together with their families and carers) will have access to competent, affordable and timely care and support services through a **consumer driven, market based, sustainable aged care system**.

Key features of this system are:

Consumers, their families and carers are proactive in preparing for their future care needs and are empowered to do so

Older Australians will be proactive, and will be encouraged and supported to have early conversations about when they may require care and support. They will understand what options are available and how to use their own resources to meet their care needs. A range of appropriate information and support services (including independent advocacy) will be made available by government to enable informed decision making regarding care options.

A single government operated assessment process that is independent and free, and includes assessment of eligibility, care needs, means and maximum funding level

Any older person may seek an aged care assessment, including those with the means to self-fund their care and support, to help them to make informed choices about their care. The assessment will consider time limited and ongoing needs, taking into account physical and medical needs, emotional wellbeing, existing formal/informal support arrangements and individual circumstances. An assessment process, independent of providers, will be an essential pre-requisite for older people to receive government support and the assessment will determine the level of government funding based on a person's needs and their ability to fund their own care and support.

Regardless of cultural or linguistic background, sexuality, life circumstance or location, consumers can access the care and support that they need

Older people should be able to choose and access aged care, regardless of their individual circumstances, however they may require additional support to do so. Assessment of need will consider individual circumstances. Government-set core standards will require providers to treat all consumers with dignity and respect, not to discriminate, and to design services around the preferences and needs of individuals. There will be continued investment in improving providers' capacity to meet the diverse needs of consumers, and monitoring of access patterns to identify and address barriers so consumers are able to access the care they need.

The community is dementia aware and dementia care is integrated as core business throughout the aged care system

Older people with dementia have the same rights as all other people, however they may require additional support to exercise choice and access services. Government and providers will continue to work together to ensure dementia care is evidence based and research is translated into improved dementia care and services in a timely way. Providers will have good dementia awareness and be able to identify and appropriately refer consumers requiring dementia support.

A single aged care and support system that is market based and consumer driven, with access based on assessed need

Aged care and support will be delivered based on consumer need. Consumers will be able to choose the setting (be it in a person's home, in the community or in a residential setting) and the types of care and support they receive. Care and support will be available on an episodic, short term early intervention/restorative, and ongoing basis. Government will no longer regulate the number or distribution of services. The market will respond to consumer demand, however when it doesn't or can't respond, government will act as a safety net to ensure services are available and accessible to those in need.

A single provider registration scheme that recognises organisations registered or accredited in similar systems, and that has a staged approach to registration depending on the scope of practice of the providers

Providers will have greater flexibility and incentive to develop innovative and responsive services that respond to consumer needs and expectations. They will be registered to provide care and support, based on their scope of practice, and similar registration or participation in other accreditation systems

will be recognised for particular categories of registration. Providers who wish to receive government contributions and list on My Aged Care must be a registered or recognised provider.

Sustainable aged care sector financing arrangements where the market determines price, those that can contribute to their care do, and government acts as the 'safety net' and contributes when there is insufficient market response

Consumers will be primarily responsible for their accommodation and everyday living costs, as they have been throughout their lives. Providers will determine how much they expect consumers to pay for their accommodation/everyday living, and care/support costs. Government will set and publish reasonable prices it will pay on behalf of consumers who cannot afford to fully meet their own costs. Consumers' lump sum payments will be protected.

A well-led, well-trained workforce that is adept at adjusting care to meet the needs of older Australians

The aged care sector will be considered a desirable and rewarding place to work, with providers attracting and maintaining a well-led, flexible and responsive workforce. Unpaid carers and volunteers will continue to be supported and recognised as having an important role in caring for older people. Networks and partnerships between the aged care and other industries (education, research and employment) will boost supply, and the needs of care industries (aged care, health, disability and child care) will be considered in the development of government policies and programmes.

Greater consumer choice drives quality and innovation, responsive providers and increased competition, supported by an agile and proportionate regulatory framework

Consumer protections will include core standards, compliance and an independent complaints mechanism, with providers required to meet core standards based on their registration category and scope of practice. Government will have a more proportionate regulatory framework that gives providers freedom to be innovative, whilst ensuring a safety net for consumers. Platforms will exist for providers to market their services, including by demonstrating the quality of what they deliver beyond these consumer protections. Consumers will drive quality and innovation by exercising choice as to which provider/s they use.

Planning for the Future at a Glance*

A consumer driven, market based, sustainable aged care system

Domain	Short Term (within 2 years)	Medium Term (3-5 years)	Long Term (5-7 years)	Destination
How do consumers prepare for and engage with their aged care?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote positive societal attitudes about aged care and benefits of talking about and planning for aged care. Improve access to information and support services, including advocacy. Co-design strategies to support consumer empowerment. Start building the narrative around social expectations – who is responsible for what decisions and who has to pay by starting to communicate why long term change is needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to highlight the individual benefits of talking and planning early and increasing awareness of home care services. Continue to support informed consumer choice by enhancing information published on My Aged Care. Implement measures to support greater consumer empowerment based on the co-design process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to build long term messaging, based on ongoing evaluation. Continue to expand My Aged Care to become a core component of a virtual aged care market. 	Consumers, their families and carers are proactive in preparing for their future care needs and are empowered to do so.
How are eligibility and care needs assessed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rollout of a national screening and assessment framework. Implement a single assessment process for eligibility, care needs and funding level for home care. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish an integrated assessment workforce. Establish an assessment process for eligibility, needs and funding levels for the new integrated care at home programme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single assessment framework extended to cover residential and flexible care, and becomes service agnostic. 	A single government operated assessment process that is independent and free, and includes assessment of eligibility, care needs and maximum funding level.
How are consumers with different needs supported?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify barriers that constrain access and choice for consumers and implement strategies to address these. Identify information and support needs of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing evaluation, review and enhancement of information and support products. Government and providers will monitor and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government and providers will continue to monitor and adapt strategies that address barriers to access and choice for consumers. 	Regardless of cultural or linguistic background, sexuality, life circumstance or location, consumers can access the care and support they need.

	<p>providers serving consumers with different needs and develop information products to help them prepare for the long term.</p>	<p>adapt strategies that address barriers to access and choice for consumers.</p>		
<p>How do we make dementia care core business throughout the system?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consolidate existing dementia programmes. • Identify information and support needs of people with dementia and their informal carers and develop information products to assist these people to prepare for the long term. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An appropriately knowledgeable and skilled workforce delivers quality care to people with dementia. • Quality, consumer directed dementia care is core business. • Government to increase the number of specialist dementia care units for people with extreme and very severe behavioural and psychological symptoms associated with dementia. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government and providers continue to work together to ensure dementia care is evidence based, and research knowledge is translated into care in a timely manner resulting in improved quality of services. 	<p>The community is dementia aware and dementia care is integrated as core business throughout the aged care system.</p>
<p>What care is available?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government will reduce controls on distribution of places and pilot allocation of places with minimal regional restrictions. • Develop robust modelling for estimating future demand. • Home Care Package consumers choose any provider to deliver care and packages are portable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor unmet demand and supply patterns to inform removal of supply controls in aged care. • Cease the allocation process for residential care places. • Amalgamate existing home care programmes to form an integrated care at home programme with individualised funding that follows the consumer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seamless movement between home based and residential care with true consumer choice of care and provider across the spectrum. • Uncap supply. • Remove distinction between care at home and residential care, creating a single aged care system – agnostic as to where care is received. 	<p>A single aged care and support system that is market based and consumer driven, with access based on assessed need.</p>
<p>Who provides care?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streamline process for approved providers of one type of care to apply to provide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish categories of registration for providers. • Commonwealth Home Support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition remaining approved providers to registered providers. 	<p>A single aged provider registration scheme that recognises organisations registered or</p>

	<p>another type of care.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scope changes needed to move 'approved provider' to 'registered provider' status. 	<p>Programme and Home Care Programme providers transition to care at home registered providers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement capacity for 'mutual recognition' of similar registration/accreditation systems. 	<p>accredited in similar systems, and that has a staged approach to registration depending on the scope of practice of the providers.</p>
Who pays?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake work on current funding, financing and means testing arrangements in order to establish longer term financing arrangements. • Determine the market informed price government is prepared to pay. • Examine alternative arrangements to the Bond Guarantee Scheme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New financial products are available to support consumer choice. • Measures are in place to enable continued access for vulnerable consumers including additional government assistance if required. • Integrate fee arrangements for home care and Commonwealth home support to support the new care at home programme. • Reform or replace the Bond Guarantee Scheme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Means test all income and assets. • A consumer will receive the same government contribution, regardless of whether they are receiving care and support in their home or in a residential setting. 	<p>Sustainable aged care sector financing arrangements where the market determines price, those that can contribute to their care do, and government acts as the 'safety net' and contributes when there is insufficient market response.</p>
How will the formal and informal workforce be supported?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify the roles of government and providers on workforce matters. • Leverage government programmes that will boost workforce supply. • Develop an integrated plan for carer support services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop career structures and pathways within aged care and across care and community services sectors. • Implement actions from the integrated plan for carer support services to support unpaid carers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to implement actions from the integrated plan for carer support services to support unpaid carers. 	<p>A well-led, well-trained workforce that is adept at adjusting care to meet the needs of older Australians</p>
How will quality be achieved?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government co-designs and pilots a single set of core aged care standards. • Publish information on My Aged Care about providers' performance against 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the single set of core aged care standards. • Providers grow capacity to support co-regulation and earned autonomy. • Publish 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of aged care standards. • Fully implement co-regulation and earned autonomy. • Government does not regulate beyond consumer protections (core 	<p>Greater consumer choice drives quality and innovation, responsive providers and increased competition, supported by an agile and proportionate regulatory framework</p>

	standards. • Consumer choice supported by better information to drive competition and quality.	differentiated performance information on core standards and quality indicators on My Aged Care in order to continue to drive competition and quality.	standards).	
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*The short, medium and long-term actions highlighted in this table are a subset of all the actions outlined in the Roadmap