INTRODUCTION TO RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE

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SUMMARY
This technical bulletin provides basic information on residential aged care facilities. It outlines how aged care residents are assessed, the types of fees they are likely to pay and our suite of tools for aged care planning.

Residential care facilities
Residential care facilities provide care for the elderly or frail clients who are unable to stay in their own home.

The facilities are provided by not-for-profit (religious, charitable and community groups), private sector operators and the Government. The Australian Health Directory states that the not-for-profit sector provides approximately 65% of the country’s residential aged care services, with the balance provided by the private sector and government.

All facilities are legislatively obligated to meet a standard level of accommodation and provide specific levels of care.

Services provided by residential care facilities
All Aged Care facilities provide standard services including:
- basic accommodation related services, such as furnishings and bedding
- general laundry, towels, washers, soap and toilet paper
- cleaning services
- maintenance of buildings and grounds
- staff continuously on call to provide emergency assistance
- meals, including special dietary requirements
- administration, including resident documentation

Entering a care facility
All clients requiring access to Government support services for Aged Care are required to be assessed to determine their eligibility to receive such services. This assessment is conducted by Aged Care Assessment Teams (ACATs) or Aged Care Assessment Services (ACAS) in Victoria.

The ACAT is available to assist older people and their carers to determine the level of care that will best meet a client’s needs when they are no longer able to manage at home without assistance.

The ACAT determines the level of care required by an individual and will be able to arrange special respite care if and when this is required. The team members can provide information on suitable care options and can help arrange access or referrals to appropriate residential or community care services in the area.

The team is made up of health professionals, such as doctors, nurses and social workers, and is located in public hospitals and community centres. Your clients can be referred for a free assessment by their local doctor or hospital.

To determine the level of care required, the ACAT member/s will:
- talk to your client and obtain their permission to discuss their medical history with their doctor.
- discuss the Aged Care options available to them
- ask questions about your clients day-to-day living activities and specifically what help is required
- ask about the client’s general state of health and any specific health conditions.
- ask the client how they feel about staying in their own home and whether they need the support of an aged care home
- provide information about all of the services that may be available in the local area.

Apart from approving aged care accommodation, the ACAT can also provide information about home and community care, respite care and other aged care initiatives. For further information about these services, please contact My Aged Care on 1800 200 422 or visit website www.myagedcare.gov.au
Potential fees

The fees likely to be paid by a resident depend on the resident’s means as well as the pricing structure of the facility. The maximum fees that a facility may charge are set, however lower amounts may be negotiated.

Residential care facility

A resident in aged care may pay the following:

- Standard resident contribution fee otherwise known as the basic daily care fee
- Means tested care fee
- Accommodation contribution or an accommodation payment
  - those subject to an accommodation contribution may pay either a daily accommodation contribution and/or a refundable accommodation contribution.
  - those subject to an accommodation payment may pay either a daily accommodation payment and/or a refundable accommodation payment.
- Additional charges/extra services fee

Extra service facilities

Certain facilities are classified as “extra service”. These facilities provide a higher level of accommodation (e.g. a deluxe room with private bathroom, higher standard of furnishings, amenities, etc.). Extra service homes may charge an ‘extra service amount’ which is set by the care facility but must be approved by the Department of Health. There is no specific rate for an extra service amount.

To verify if the care facility charges an extra services amount, the facility should be contacted directly.

OnePath materials

OnePath has many documents and tools that can be used to understand, and develop aged care strategies. These are available on the Adviser Advantage website and include:

- Technical Bulletin 77 – Aged care and the former home
- Technical Bulletin 78 – Aged care and fee reduction strategies
- Technical Calculator 02 – Aged care and pension calculator
- Technical Factsheet 03 – Aged care and special residence fact sheet