

Response ID ANON-PW8Z-PGGQ-8

Submitted to **Streamlined Consumer Assessment for Aged Care**
Submitted on **2019-02-07 15:59:53**

Tell Us about Yourself

A What is your name?

Name:

Andrew Giles

B What is your email address?

Email:

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C What is your organisation?

Organisation:

Multiple Sclerosis Australia

D What stakeholder category/categories do you most identify with?

Peak body - consumer

E Where does your organisation operate (if applicable)? Otherwise, where do you live?

All States and Territories

F May we have permission to publish parts of your response that are not personally identifiable?

Yes, publish all of my response except my name and email address

Section 3 Design Principles

1 Are the proposed design principles appropriate for a streamlined assessment model? Are there any other principles that you believe should be included?

Please limit your answer to approximately 500 words or less.:

We agree with the principles in general.

We remain concerned to make sure that the application of these principles takes into account the disability needs of people aged over 65.

We would like one of principles to specifically ensure that admissions of young people into residential aged care is significantly reduced or stopped altogether through the implementation of an integrated care model and the provision of accessible accommodation options.

The assessment process should be able to identify the reasons why people end up in residential aged care and the "outcome focus" should include the prevention of premature residential aged care placement.

Section 5: Entry Processes

2 What issues need to be considered for assessment providers to manage intake and triage under a streamlined assessment model? (e.g. staff skills required of a triage function; consistency of operational processes; and resource implications)

Please limit your answer to approximately 500 words or less.:

Assessment providers need to understand condition-specific implications (such as needs of someone living with multiple sclerosis) of the assessment process, including the need to ensure a person's disability needs are assessed (both cognitive and physical) and what may happen as a result of the assessment e.g. a person assessed for residential aged care, even for a short time, will deteriorate.

3 How can a streamlined assessment model enhance referrals and collaboration between health professionals, My Aged Care and a national assessment workforce?

Please limit your answer to approximately 500 words or less.:

Improved use of technology may assist with streamlining. It is disappointing to read that the current system relies on "fax referral forms".

4 How do you think the triage process should operate to expedite access to a single time-limited CHSP service? What are the risks and how could these be managed?

Please limit your answer to approximately 500 words or less.:

The approach outlined in the discussion paper seems reasonable.

Trial outcomes will hopefully provide a clear way forward.

The process, if fully adopted, will need careful monitoring to mitigate the risks identified in the discussion paper.

5 How can support plan reviews be better managed under a streamlined assessment model?

Please limit your answer to approximately 500 words or less.:

The MS organisations have been through a similar process with the NDIA in trying to minimise the need for NDIS plan reviews. The MS organisations have found that individuals who undertake a significant amount of pre-planning preparation (with support and expertise from the MS organisations) get the best final plans with minimal or no need for review. Unfortunately this pre-planning preparation work by MS organisations is not funded.

Long delays in implementing plans and activating services can lead to rapid deterioration in health and disability progression, therefore leading to the need for plan reviews.

Section 6: The Assessment Workforce

6 What qualification and competency requirements do you believe are needed for a national assessment workforce? What particular areas of assessment practice require clinical expertise and/or multidisciplinary team-based approaches?

Please limit your answer to approximately 500 words or less.:

The workforce will need expertise in understanding condition-specific (e.g. multiple sclerosis) needs, complex needs (e.g. disability needs, assistive technology needs) and implications of co-morbidities. They will also need competency in understanding family circumstances and the needs of carers.

7 What design features will enable assessment providers to operate an integrated workforce which is capable of delivering assessment for people across the full continuum of aged care needs?

Please limit your answer to approximately 500 words or less.:

Access by the workforce to tailored, condition-specific resources will be essential, as will access to data on "best practice", i.e. what works best and what process gaps can be identified.

8 What training and other initiatives should be considered to build the capability of the national assessment workforce?

Please limit your answer to approximately 500 words or less.:

MS Australia has been working with the NDIA to develop an "MS snapshot" for the exclusive use of NDIA staff to improve understanding of MS more broadly and for Agency staff to improve understanding the specific needs of people living with MS. A on-line training module and video is under development. It is envisaged that the roll out of these tools within the NDIA will reduce the number of complaints and the number of requests for plan reviews.

Similar tools could be developed as resources for the assessment workforce.

9 What assurance mechanisms should be put in place to ensure the achievement of quality assessment outcomes for senior Australians?

Please limit your answer to approximately 500 words or less.:

Careful monitoring combined with regular high quality reports on outcomes.

Feedback from participants and reporting of this feedback on what works best and where gaps or problems have been identified will be important.

The NDIS, for example, reports on percentage overall customer satisfaction, which is consistently high but the sector remains unconvinced by this high level of reported satisfaction.

10 What should be considered in the design of a streamlined assessment model and a new national assessment workforce to achieve efficiency and deliver the best value for money?

Please limit your answer to approximately 500 words or less.:

Achieving value for money could consider other models from other sectors, if there are models where there is general agreement by stakeholders of success.

Section 7: Assessment in a Hospital Setting

11 How should aged care assessment work for people in a hospital setting under a streamlined assessment model? What issues need to be considered?

Please limit your answer to approximately 500 words or less.:

The implications of the assessment need to be considered at the time of the assessment; we don't want all roads to lead to residential care; the percentage approval for residential care quoted in the discussion paper of 31% seem too high.

We agree that we do not want older people to stay in hospital unnecessarily, and this will require more than connection to appropriate aged services, it will need to include connection to disability and health services.

A "red alert" should appear for anyone in a hospital setting aged under 65 being assessed by ACAT. We want to prevent, or at least substantially reduce, admissions of young people into residential aged care.

Assessment must take into account carer and family circumstances e.g. respite options for a patient or their carer while waiting for home modifications should not cause a person's health to deteriorate further nor their disability to progress.

Section 8: Assessment in Remote Australia

12 How can a streamlined assessment model support timely, high quality assessments in remote Australia? What flexible assessment approaches would you support and why?

Please limit your answer to approximately 500 words or less.:

The flexible approaches listed in the discussion paper seem reasonable, but will need careful monitoring, feedback and reporting.

Telehealth, webcam and phone may provide flexibility, though it is worth remembering that the NDIA was forced to abandon planning by phone as a result of overwhelming negative consumer feedback.

Section 9: Wellness and Reablement

13 How should wellness and reablement be further embedded in assessment practice under a streamlined assessment model? What strategies do you support and how should they be implemented?

Please limit your answer to approximately 500 words or less.:

Assessment of a person's disability needs and their Assistive Technology needs should be mandatory.

All assessments of a person aged under 65 should be approached with the principle of avoiding approval for residential aged care except in extreme circumstances, and that any such approval should be seen as a temporary measure, with regular review and more age appropriate arrangements made as a matter of top priority.

Section 10: Linking Support

14 How can more effective and consistent linking services to vulnerable older people be delivered under a streamlined assessment model?

Please limit your answer to approximately 500 words or less.:

The "linking support" must include linkages to support services outside of aged care including disability and health services, and to condition-specific agencies (such as the state-based MS organisations who have many, many years of experience and expertise in assisting people with MS).

It is important to provide consumers with a single point of reliable and effective contact, a "system wrangler" for ongoing support and information.

Section 11: Additional Comments

15 What do you believe are the key benefits, risks and mitigation strategies of a streamlined assessment model for aged care?

Please limit your answer to approximately 500 words or less.:

A key benefit will be the reduction in waiting times for assessments and plan implementation. This is a key point of complaint at the moment.

A key risk will be that whilst the assessment process is streamlined, the waiting times for packages, for services, for assistive technology, for home modifications, etc will remain unchanged.

16 What implementation and transition issues will require consideration in the design of a streamlined consumer assessment model?

Please limit your answer to approximately 500 words or less.:

A system for careful monitoring and accurate and effective reporting of outcomes, including consumer feedback mechanisms will be essential.