

Six steps to switching your Home Care Package

A simple guide to comparing
and changing your Home
Care Package provider



ABSOLUTE

— CARE & HEALTH —

Are you getting the most from your Home Care Package?

Did you know that you can now choose which home care provider you would like to provide your Home Care Package? So it's worth looking around and seeing how your current care provider compares.

Researching and comparing providers may seem like a daunting task and we know the thought of it puts many people off – even when they're not happy with the care they're currently receiving.

But it's easier than you might think and there are many benefits that could be realised. So we've produced this guide to help simplify and demystify the process for you.

We're happy to answer any questions you may have, so please call us anytime.

Best wishes,

Maria

Maria Deveson Crabbe,
CEO
Absolute Care & Health

Six steps to switching

Here's a simple checklist to help you change your Home Care Provider.

- 1** Choose your new provider – see our quick guide to comparing providers on page 4.
Remember to review your Home Care Agreement with your existing provider to see what your notice period is and whether your provider will take any Exit Fees from your package funds.
- 2** Write to your current provider and tell them that you are moving your Home Care Package and giving them notice as specified in your existing Home Care Agreement. See the sample letter on page 8.
- 3** Ask your current provider to confirm in writing the last date that they will provide your care – this is known as your cessation date.
- 4** Call My Aged Care on 1800 200 422 and tell them that you are moving your Home Care Package to a new provider. Ask them for your new Unique Referral Code.
- 5** Give your new provider your Unique Referral Code so they can access your My Aged Care records and register as your care provider.
- 6** Agree your Care Plan and Care Agreement with your new provider.

Remember – you will not lose any funds you have saved up when you change providers. Your funds will move with you. See our myths and misconceptions on page 6.

Comparing your current home care provider

What's that old saying – “better the devil you know”?

Whilst having a choice is great, it isn't always easy to compare different providers, to know what you should expect from them and, importantly, to know who to trust.

Below are some things you might want to ask yourself about your current provider and find out about other providers you are considering.

Quality of services and care

Consider the care and services you currently receive - what is good and what is bad about it?

Reliability

- Do they turn up on time? Do they do the things they say they will?

Service quality

- Do they carry out all their tasks efficiently and to a high standard?
- Is there anything you wish they would do that they don't do? (or vice-versa?).
- Do you feel that you've been involved in deciding what care and support you get?

Communication

- Do they communicate well if your caregiver is running late or if there is another problem?
- Do they respond quickly if you contact them and do they resolve your query?
- Do you receive a monthly statement showing how your package money has been spent and is it easy to understand?
- How often does your Case Manager check in with you to see how things are going?
- How often have they reviewed your care plan?
- Do they take the time to explain things to you clearly?

Caregivers

- Do you like the caregiver(s) they send you? Do you feel that they do care about you?
- Do they usually send the same caregiver or do they change frequently?
- Would you like your current caregiver to stay with you if you move your Home Care Package to another provider? (At Absolute Care & Health, we're happy to facilitate this).

Value for money

Are you getting the most quality care possible from your Home Care Package?
See our fees comparison below.

- How much of your package funds are taken in fees by your provider?
- Do you feel that there is then enough money left in your package to provide all the care and support you feel you need?
- Have they clearly explained to you what their fees are for and do you think they are reasonable?
- Will they charge you an exit fee if you decide to move to another provider?

Fee structures explained

Because we keep our fees extremely low, you can receive **up to twice as many hours of care** with Absolute Care & Health compared to other leading home care providers. Our highly efficient and professional support structure means your Home Care Package is not reduced by unnecessary overheads. Care providers may charge the following fees which are taken out of your Home Care Package funds.

	ABSOLUTE	OTHERS
ADMINISTRATION FEE	LEVEL 1&2 20% LEVEL 3&4 15%	20%+
CASE MANAGEMENT FEE	0%	20%-40%
EXIT FEE	\$0	\$500-\$700
DAILY FEE	\$0	UP TO \$10
DIRECT CARE SERVICES	\$53 ^{50*} PER HOUR	\$55+ PER HOUR

Rates correct as of 12 July, 2018 and subject to change.

Myths and misunderstandings

If I change to another provider, my current provider will keep all the Home Care Package money I have saved up so far

They are not allowed to do this. The Government has ruled that any unspent Home Care package funds will move with you. The only money your current provider can keep is the cost of any services or products they have already provided to you and any Exit Fee that is specified in your Home Care Agreement with them.

I could lose my Home Care Package altogether if I change to another provider

Your home care package cannot be taken away from you because you switch providers. It will remain with you no matter how many times you change providers. However, you must start with your new provider within 56 days of finishing your care with your old provider. If you need longer to decide on a new provider, you can ask for an extra 28 days.

I will have to give my current provider six months' notice if I want to change providers

Your Home Care Agreement with your current provider will specify how much notice you must give them. You are not obliged to give any more notice than is specified here. If you have a long notice period, they may agree to agree to shorten it if you ask.

If I give my current provider notice, they will stop providing my care during the notice period

They are not allowed to stop care. Your care provider has a responsibility to provide your care up until the end of your notice period.

A new provider might promise less fees and more hours of care, but once I move my package to them, they will charge more in the end

Your new provider must clearly outline all their fees in your Home Care Agreement and must develop with you a written Care Plan which outlines the care they will provide against your Home Care package budget. They cannot charge anything other than what is outlined in these documents without your prior permission. If there is anything you are not happy with in these documents, ask them to change it.

If you experience **any** of these issues when moving your care to us, we can contact your current provider on your behalf and resolve any issues.

Don't just take our word for it



MR HANS SCHELLHORN

"Communication is everything" says Mr Schellhorn, commenting on why he moved his level 2 Home Care Package to Absolute Care & Health after three years with his previous provider.

"With my previous provider, it felt like there was a tower of bureaucracy. Whenever I had a question, the answer always seemed to be "no" and I could never find out why. I didn't really know where to turn.

"When I found out that Absolute Care & Health could provide my Home Care Package, it was an entirely different experience. Jenny, my Client Care Manager has a human, very warm approach. I can ask her anything and she is always helpful.

"Once I had made the decision to switch my Package, it was actually very easy. I just wrote a letter to my old provider and made a phone call to My Aged Care. It all worked perfectly. And if I had a question, I just called Jenny at Absolute and she could quickly find the answer. I trust Absolute - they seem to really understand that they are dealing with people".

With his previous provider charging around 37% in fees, Mr Schellhorn now also has more money from his total Package to spend on his care needs since Absolute Care & Health charges a fee of only 15%.

Like to hear more stories like this? **Absolutely.** Please call us on **03 9827 8899**.



Dear Sir / Madam

Home Care Package Ref: XXX - XXX - XXX

I am writing to advise you that, after careful consideration, I have decided to transfer my Home Care Package to another provider and therefore wish to discontinue my Home Care Package with you.

I have reviewed my Care Agreement with you and understand that there is a 30 day notice period. This means the last day you will provide care under my Home Care Package is 31st May. Please would you confirm this in writing to me.

I also understand that there will be an exit fee of \$500 which will be charged to my Package Budget. Please send me an up to date statement of funds in my package budget.

I request that you do not ask me to reconsider my decision but I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for providing my Home Care Package to date and in particular the caregivers who have provided my care on your behalf.



Use and adapt this example letter as your guide to informing your current provider that you wish to switch to another provider.



MR ROBERT STUART

“Switching providers was actually really easy in the end” says Kathy, wife of Mr Robert Stuart who receives a Home Care Package to help him remain in the home that they have spent so many years in together.

“There were two things that didn’t make sense to us with our previous provider” says Mr Stuart. “Firstly, we found that they weren’t actually employing and supplying the carers themselves. They were ‘outsourcing’ to another care company which made no sense to us – we couldn’t see the point in a middle-man as it were.

“We were then very distressed when they couldn’t get a carer to help us when Robert came home from a stay in hospital” adds Kathy. “I needed a lot of help with him and they just couldn’t get me anyone right when we needed it most. I couldn’t get hold of our Case Manager or anyone else there who could help.

“We’ve been delighted with the care from Absolute Care & Health. The communication and support we get from their Client Care Manager (Jenny) is outstanding. She made sure the changeover process went smoothly and supported us the whole way. She treats us as individual people, with a genuine interest in our wellbeing - not as just a name on their books”.

Names have been changed for privacy reasons.

Like
to talk
about it?
Absolutely.

Please call us on

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