



Key Directions for the Commonwealth Home Support Programme Discussion Paper

Submission template

Completed submissions are to be sent by 30 June 2014 to:
CHSP@dss.gov.au (preferred method) OR

Home Support Policy Team, Level 6, Sirius Building
Department of Social Services PO BOX 7576
Canberra Business Centre, ACT 2610

Submissions received after Monday 30 June 2014 may not be considered.

Unless otherwise stated, the information and feedback you provide may be used for publishing purposes. Please state if you do not wish for your comments to be published

Instructions for completing the Submission Template

- Download and save a copy of the template to your computer.
- You **do not** need to respond to all of the questions.
- Please keep your answers concise and relevant to the topic being addressed.
- Refer to the **Discussion Paper: Key Directions for the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (Hyperlink)** for context on the questions.

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If submitting on behalf of a company or organisation

Name of organisation: HANZA Inc. (Homeshare Australia & New Zealand Alliance)

Stakeholder category (e.g. service provider, client, peak body, academic):peak body

State/Territory:Vic

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Question 1: Are there any other key directions that you consider should be pursued in the development of the Commonwealth Home Support Programme from July 2015?

Acceptance and expansion of the Homeshare programme as a new development and new service type for the Home Support Programme.

HACC funding has been provided for the development of the Homeshare Programme in different ways in several states since 2000. There are currently 3 HACC funded programmes in Victoria and one in South Australia. Other programs exist in WA, ACT, Tas, & Vic, funded in various ways.

The submission template does not provide a clear place to discuss the Homeshare initiative nor for HANZA to respond to the request we received from Minister Fifield's office "*to consider the Discussion Paper ... including how any learnings from the Homeshare model could be used to inform the development of the new programme. Your feedback will be important in ensuring that this issue is carefully considered in the development of the Commonwealth Home Support Programme.*"

The most appropriate location for a discussion of Homeshare would seem to be Question 13. Some comments will also be made in answer to Question 10 about capacity building resources.

Question 2: How should restorative care be implemented in the new programme?

Question 3: Are these proposed client eligibility criteria appropriate? Should the eligibility criteria specify the level of functional limitation?

Client eligibility criteria are appropriate. Specifying functional limitation should not be necessary and would add an onerous load to the assessment process.

Question 4: Are the circumstances for direct referral from screening to service provision appropriate?

Entering the 'aged care system' via My Aged Care may 'help to improve equity of access and create a clear and consistent pathway' but not everyone wants or needs to enter the 'system' or to be screened, when they may just want to enquire about and learn more about

a service like Homeshare and whether it is available in their area. It is to be hoped that My Aged Care staff will be a font of knowledge on all services that are available, including Homeshare, for the person who starts their research through the My Aged Care website or the 1800 number. Whether such enquiries need to be 'screened' or perhaps just simply registered needs more clarification. In some cases, of course, screening may necessary to help clarify the person's needs and situation. But a straightforward enquiry for information or a service's availability should be referred directly to the service provider.

It is not clear in the discussion paper whether requests for a service can be made directly to a service provider or whether all requests need to go via My Aged Care. The aim of marketing and promoting a new service like Homeshare, is to encourage direct enquiry to the Homeshare service provider. It would be cumbersome and off-putting if accessing Homeshare was only possible via My Aged Care.

Question 5: Are there particular service types that it would be appropriate to access without face to face assessment?

Again – a straightforward referral or request for Homeshare would not need a face to face assessment by My Aged Care assessment service. Homeshare programmes have rigorous assessment processes for establishing suitability for the Homeshare programme and they work with the Householder and his/her family to determine the sort of Homesharer they are seeking to meet their needs and with whom they would be compatible.

Question 6: Are there any other specific triggers that would mean an older person would require a face to face assessment?

Question 7: Are there better ways to group outcomes?

Question 8: Are there specific transition issues to consider?

Question 9: How are supports for carers (other than respite services) best offered? For example, should these be separate to or part of the Commonwealth Home Support Programme?

Homeshare is a unique, affordable, way to relieve Carer stress by having a person, overnight, in the home of the older householder or younger disabled householder. This is particularly valued by carers who live some distance from their loved one.

Question 10: What capacity building resources are needed to assist with the sector's transition to the Commonwealth Home Support Programme?

The Homeshare programme has been piloted, evaluated and studied in a number of ways.

A significant project that the CHSP should be aware of is the *2010-11 HWA Demonstration project for Workforce Innovation and Reform: Caring for Older People Program*. One of the demonstration projects was the Homeshare WA project by Perth Home Care Services (PHCS).

The PHCS project examined a number of issues relating to Homeshare practice and training requirements for its workforce. We commend the report to the Commonwealth Home Support Programme Advisory Group.

HANZA has done some work on training for homeshare staff as well as for the homeshare participants, but there is still significant work required which should happen at a national level to ensure high standards and best practice.

HANZA Inc is the peak body for Homeshare services. HANZA provides information, advice and resources about homeshare and connects homeshare services within Australia and New Zealand and to international programmes. HANZA operates as a clearing house of information for people looking to find a homeshare organisation in their community or to help get a programme started.

Homeshare staff of the member organisations are able to participate in bi-monthly Community of Practice teleconferences. Members are kept informed of research, outcomes and practice wisdom from the International Homeshare Movement through Quarterly Newsletters. HANZA members share their research, programme development information and ideas with each other.

A HANZA committee member is on the HACC Homeshare Reference Group working with the Victorian Department of Health and its Regional representatives, and with the new program managers, on developing Programme Specifications, Criteria for Success, Best Practice and other matters crucial to the long term success of homeshare programmes. HANZA will continue to resource the Homeshare expansion project in Victoria and is keen to offer its services to CHSP Advisory Group to support Homeshare in its transition to the CHSP and its expansion nationally as the CHSP develops.

HANZA believes in the viability of the International Homeshare Model of practice to deliver quality outcomes for participants and supports its establishment in non-profit organisations with close ties to their communities. HANZA is working to achieve a long term sustainable financial model for Homeshare programs in Australasia.

Question 11: How should the current Assistance with Care and Housing for the Aged Program be positioned into the future?

Question 12: Are there any other issues that need to be considered in transitioning functions from the current HACC Service Group Two to My Aged Care?

Question 13: Is there anything else you want to raise to help with the development of the Commonwealth Home Support Programme?

Acceptance and expansion of the Homeshare programme as a new development and new service type for the Commonwealth Home Support Programme.

Homeshare is not included in the HACC – CURRENT SERVICE GROUPS & SERVICE TYPES nor is it part of the NRCP – CURRENT SERVICE TYPES, consequently there is no obvious place for it in the mapping of services in Attachment C.

The first two groups – **Assistance at Home** and **Social participation – Social Support**, would seem to be the most appropriate groups. We would suggest a new line in the list – **Assistance at Home – Homeshare**.

Although homesharing has been around for a long time, agency assisted, 'full service' Homeshare is relatively new and certainly new to the aged and disability care sector. Homeshare practice is still evolving and the evidence base for Homeshare is constantly growing, not just here in Australia but around the world.

Homeshare is a new service type. Its object is to support older people or people with a disability to live safely in their own homes with the assistance of **affordable live-in support**. The service model for achieving this is Homeshare. Safety and security at night have long been a recognised gap in home support services.

The actual service sought by the householder, who is either an older person or a young person with a disability, and provided by an agency, is a recruitment service whereby the agency provides the householder with assistance to **recruit** a suitable person to live in affordable accommodation in return for agreed practical help and support. The role of the Homeshare service is to connect householders with homesharers, develop a formal agreement and to safeguard, support and monitor these arrangements.

Homeshare establishes a reciprocal relationship, an exchange, where the householder provides low cost accommodation in return for practical help, support, and the safety of a reliable presence in the home particularly at night which provides significant stress relief for carers, especially those living some distance from their loved one.

The key outputs for the Homeshare program are the number of matches made and supported, and the period of time the live-in arrangements are in place, ie the weeks or months of Homesharing.

Both householders and homesharers are equal participants in the Homeshare program – one is not a 'client' and the other is not a 'volunteer' or 'service provider' with the difference in status that those terms imply. Homeshare participants see themselves as equal partners, as both are contributing to and helping each other.

It is certainly hoped and expected that a successful Homeshare match will have a significant social component and every effort is made by the Homeshare Coordinators to ensure the parties are compatible, share interests and will enjoy each other's company.

The hours of support that the homesharer gives in return for housing are mostly related to **living support** – cooking, caring for pets, garden help, shopping, daily cleaning jobs, transport etc. The key support, of course, is the actual 'living-in', the security of someone in the home overnight. Nights off, weekends away, holidays must be negotiated and written into

the formal agreement. In fact the companionship or social support is not usually counted in the 10 hours of support in the agreement.

Homeshare services have operated in Australia for over 14 years, and internationally since the early 1970s. There are now 3 Victorian service providers funded under the HACC program covering the 4 metropolitan planning regions of this State. There is also a HACC funded Homeshare program in South Australia. Other programs exist, funded in various ways.

An evaluation of the Victorian program demonstrated that Homeshare enabled Householders to remain at home rather than being prematurely admitted to residential care. This outcome is consistent with the government's reasons for expanding home care. In addition, Homeshare does not rely on staff from a dwindling aged care workforce. Instead, homesharers receive their reward through service to an elderly or disabled person and affordable accommodation.

Homeshare in Victoria was the first program to gain recurrent HACC funding. South Australia was the second. Because other States are showing considerable interest in running Homeshare programs it would be more efficient and effective if Homeshare funding was made available under one set of guidelines and specifications.

Homeshare fits in with the wider notion of home support which now includes established HACC programs, packaged care, day therapy and carer programs.

Australia is one of the most significant providers of the Homeshare program in the world. This has led to Melbourne being chosen to host the 4th World Homeshare Congress in November 2015. Participants are expected from Asia, Europe, North and South America.

Other governments have acknowledged Homeshare as a useful program in the pantheon of programs for the aged. This leads HANZA to hope that the Australian government will see fit to make Homeshare part of the Commonwealth Home Support program.