



2: The ACFI and Aged Care Consumers

The ACFI is the new Aged Care Funding Instrument to be used for determining the level of government care payments for residents in aged care homes. Along with the new funding instrument, new categories of funding are also being introduced.

The new method is simpler with fewer basic funding categories, and two new supplements that will ensure funding is better matched to the needs of people with dementia and those with complex health care needs.

The time spent by aged care homes assessing residents for the purposes of funding will significantly reduce.

Who will benefit?

Residents in aged care homes will benefit from care payments that are more closely aligned with their care needs. Higher levels of care subsidy will be paid by the government for residents with the highest care needs.

Residents and staff will benefit from less staff time being spent assessing residents for funding, and more staff time available for providing care.

When will this be implemented?

From 20 March 2008, new residents will be assessed using the ACFI, and care payments will be made according to this.

Existing residents will be assessed using the ACFI when their classification under the current arrangements expires.

Existing residents will remain on their current RCS subsidy until their care needs increase (this is a 'grand-parenting' of the care subsidies of existing residents). The maximum government payment for those with the highest care needs will be progressively increased over four years.

What are the funding categories?

There are three categories, or 'domains', of funding:

1. Activities of Daily Living
2. Behaviour Supplement
3. Complex Health Care Supplement

Each of these domains has *three funded levels* - Low, Medium and High. The subsidy levels are determined by the twelve questions in the ACFI along with two categories of diagnosis.

How does the funding instrument work?

The twelve questions are divided into groups to determine the level of subsidy in the three domains above.

Some of the questions may involve completing an assessment involving an interview or some simple tasks. These will usually be conducted by staff of the aged care home.

You will be asked if you are willing to participate in these assessments. Indicate to the staff member if you are not comfortable completing the assessment.

What are the diagnoses used for?

Two categories of diagnosis are recorded as part of the ACFI process. These are Mental and Behavioural Disorders and Medical Conditions.

Your doctor may be asked to provide this information or it may be obtained from a hospital discharge report or a comprehensive medical assessment, or simply from notes your doctor has provided.

This information is used to support the findings in some of the ACFI questions.

Commonwealth Nursing Officers

Nurses employed by the Department of Health and Ageing regularly visit aged care homes. Under the ACFI funding arrangements, as well as meeting with staff of the home, they may also meet with people who live there.

They may wish to talk with you, or check your care needs using a simple task assessment or one of the assessments from the ACFI.

You will be asked if you are willing to participate in these activities. Indicate to the staff member if you are not comfortable participating.

Further information

Further information on the ACFI is available from the aged care home and from the Department of Health and Ageing's web site: www.health.gov.au/acfi.

Questions can be directed to acfi@health.gov.au or to the Aged Care Information Line on 1800 500 853.