Information Circular

Enquiries to: Jenny Stevens, Director, Aged Care
Phone number: 6415 4139
Supersedes: OP 1742/04

IC number: IC: 0174/14
Date: 10/12/2013
File No: 02-02617

Subject: REQUIREMENTS FOR AGED CARE ASSESSMENT IN MULTI-PURPOSE SERVICES

Purpose

All frail older people, including those living within a Multi-Purpose Service (MPS) site, must be assessed by an Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT) prior to admission into residential aged care services. The ACAT assessment aims to determine the most appropriate care option to meet the needs of the person and to prevent premature and inappropriate admission to residential care. Using the ACAT assessment facilitates a standardised approach to assessing frail older people for residential care across Western Australia.

Background

Currently throughout Australia, before a person can enter Commonwealth residential care, either permanent or respite, they must be assessed by an ACAT and approved as requiring residential care.

ACATs are independent assessors employed through Public Health Services that operate under Commonwealth policy, procedure and guidelines. They undertake a comprehensive, multi-dimensional and holistic evaluation of an older person's needs in determining the most appropriate care options. They are funded by the Commonwealth with a primary aim of preventing premature and inappropriate admission to residential care. The outcomes of their assessments indicate that approximately 60% of all their assessments result in the older person returning home with or without support. (ACAP MDS 2002)

ACAT approval for entry into residential care, including residential respite care, has historically not been required for people within MPS'. As a result some frail older people have been admitted to permanent accommodation, including becoming Nursing Home Type Patients prematurely and inappropriately. These people remain in residential care for extended periods of time, limiting resources for those who more appropriately require the care services. Often other care options or preventative interventions including rehabilitation may assist the person in improving their quality of life and returning to independent community living.

This instruction has been developed to facilitate a standardised approach to assessing frail older people for permanent and respite residential care within MPS' in Western Australia.
Assessment Process

Referrals to ACAT can be received from any source and are prioritised based on a level of risk to the person's safety, eg high risk of falls or abuse. Clients are notified of the outcome of an assessment, usually in writing.

The ACAT assessment provides information about the most suitable and available options to assist the person. At times the ACAT assessment will initiate a referral to other care services.

If assessed as eligible for residential care, the individual has the right to select a residential care option including an MPS.

An emergency admission to an MPS for respite care (eg. when a crisis arises with a patient’s main carer and no other options are available) may take place without prior ACAT approval. In these circumstances, an application for ACAT approval must be made within five business days after the date on which emergency respite started.

Local procedures need to be established between ACAT and MPS’ to address site specific process and communication needs.

Shane Matthews
A/CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
WA COUNTRY HEALTH SERVICE

This information is available in alternative formats on request from a person with disability.