

Right to Information Decision – Public Disclosure

Right to Information No.: RTI202122-011

Date of Decision: 30 September 2020

Information Requested

The information requested:

1. Number of patients admitted in Tasmanian hospitals who are awaiting NDIS approvals for 2020-2021 by hospital.
2. Number of patients admitted in Tasmanian hospitals who are awaiting Aged Care package approvals for 2020-2021 by hospital.

Decision

1. Number of patients admitted in Tasmanian hospitals who are awaiting NDIS approvals for 2020-2021 by hospital.

Table 1: NDIS approvals

	NWRH	MCH	LGH	RHH
1. Awaiting NDIS Access Request Form	1	1	3	6
2. Awaiting NDIS Eligibility Determination			1	2
3. Awaiting NDIS Plan Approval	1		1	5
4. Awaiting NDIS Support Implementation	1	2	2	6
5. Awaiting NDIS Plan Review	1		5	2
TOTAL	4	3	12	21

Notes

- Line 1 and 2 include those not medically ready for discharge.
- Line 3, 4 and 5 exclude those not medically ready for discharge.

2. Number of patients admitted in Tasmanian hospitals who are awaiting Aged Care package approvals for 2020-2021 by hospital.

All reasonable steps have been taken to find the information referred to in your request including consultation with relevant policy and program areas, thorough searches of departmental file management systems, electronic documents on shared and personal drives and departmental data bases.

I am satisfied the consultation undertaken and the searches conducted were thorough and all reasonable steps have been taken to locate the information relevant to your request.

My decision is that the information requested is not in the possession of the public authority.

In making this decision I will provide context.

The information systems for the Tasmanian Health Service and the Commonwealth aged care systems are not linked and there is no available mechanism for data integration. The information that is in the possession of the

public authority may indicate that an older person has an extended leave of stay but does not provide the granularity that would support direct attribution of any delays to entering the aged care system.

To be of assistance, under the following three sub-headings is a brief overview of the process.

2.1 *Approval*

To state the obvious, the aged care system provides a range of services that are approved by assessors based on assessed need.

Approval is given by the assessor and the timelines for this can be reported through the Commonwealth key performance indicators.

2.2 *Aged care package*

It is extremely rare for a home care package assessment to be undertaken when the person is in hospital. The number in hospital awaiting approval for a home care package will be close to, if not actually, nil.

A residential placement is where the lack of interaction of information systems makes it difficult to extract the information requested. Any number of variables may create delays that could be unrelated to the responsiveness of the aged care system

It is to be noted that an older person is referred for assessment, determined eligible for an aged care service and then at some future date access the aged care service should they choose to. An older person can be hospitalised at any time in this process and if so, the hospitalisation may or may not be associated with waiting for an aged care service.

2.3 *Background*

2.3.1 *Assessment for care under the Aged Care Act 1997 (Cth)*

These services comprise residential, and respite aged care delivered under home care packages and transitional care. Access to these services is through a comprehensive assessment undertaken by Aged Care Assessors (ACATs). The role of ACATs is to assess for eligibility and, where appropriate, provide approval for the necessary level of care based on the needs of the individual. The time taken from assessment referral and the approval (delegation) are contractually driven through Key Performance Indicators, which vary, depending on the urgency of the referrals and the person's location. The Commonwealth provides data on the timeliness of ACAT performance. The level of care the ACAT has approved determines the next steps.

If the person requires residential care, once they are approved, they must choose a facility, undergo means assessment, along with other requirements, and come to terms with the fact that they cannot go home. This process may create delays that could be unrelated to the responsiveness of the aged care system.

Transitional care is a post hospital service, and the person will move directly from hospital into transitional care via the discharge process

If the person needs a health care package, then this would almost invariably be assessed in the home. These assessments take place in the environment in which the support will be needed. Once the ACAT has an approval for a health care package, the person's details will be added by the Commonwealth to the National Priority System and allocated a package through the prioritisation process. The Commonwealth notes:

In addition to receiving an approval for a health care package as an outcome of their assessment, most people are also provided with approval to access Commonwealth Home Support Programme to assist with specific care needs identified during the assessment.

Assessors provide these approvals to ensure people have options to address care needs whilst awaiting their approved health care package.¹

2.3.2 Entry level services

Commonwealth Home Support Programme is where low level care is known to be needed and the assessment is undertaken by Regional Assessment Teams (RAS). The time taken from referral to completion and allocating services is again contractually driven through Key Performance Indicators, and for which the Commonwealth can provide data to the RAS

In short, ACATs assess a person's needs and, when making an approval for care, can approve a person for a health care package, residential care, respite care, transitional care, and CHSP, depending on the person's circumstances. Therefore, based on care needs and choice, not everyone with a health care package approval will enter home care. Most people assessed by ACATs are approved for permanent residential care, reflecting their complex care needs.

¹ *Home Care Packages Program Data Report 1st Quarter 2020-21* https://www.gen-agedcaredata.gov.au/www_ahwgen/media/Home_care_report/HCPP-Data-Report-2020-2021-1st-qtr.pdf