

Applying for lifetime participation

What is lifetime participation?

You were accepted into the Lifetime Care and Support Scheme (the Scheme) as an interim participant for two years. If you're nearing the end of your two-year interim period, your icare contact will support you to submit an application for 'lifetime participation' so that we can assess if you're eligible to remain in the Scheme for the rest of your life.

When and how do I apply?

The application process generally begins several months before the end of your two-year interim period. Your icare contact will tell you when it needs to begin, will help arrange any assessments needed.

To apply for lifetime participation:

- you (or someone on your behalf) need to complete a *Lifetime Application* form
- if you have a brain injury, burns or a spinal cord injury you'll have an assessment which your icare contact will arrange (see assessments below)
- a medical specialist (usually your treating specialist) needs to complete a medical certificate.

Your icare contact will send you a copy of the *Lifetime Application* form and can provide advice on how to complete it.

Your treating specialist will usually complete the medical certificate at one of your review appointments. This way you can avoid an extra visit. Your icare contact will send a copy of the form to the specialist, who will be asked to certify that:

- you meet the injury eligibility criteria in the *Lifetime Care and Support Guidelines* (the *Guidelines*) for lifetime participation
- the injuries were caused by the motor vehicle accident
- you need on-going support for the rest of your life because of your injuries.

Assessments for brain injuries, burns and spinal cord injuries

Brain injury and burns

If you have a brain injury or burns, the application also involves an assessment called the Functional Independence Measure, known as FIM[™] (or WeeFIM[®] for children). Your icare contact will arrange for a health professional experienced in using this tool to come and see you at home to complete this assessment.

The FIM[™] (or WeeFIM[®]) measures the type and amount of assistance you need with day-to-day tasks like eating, dressing, grooming, walking, and communicating. You may be asked to do some activities and your family, friends or service providers may be asked to provide information to assist with the assessment.

This assessment will be organised for no more than two months before the medical certificate for the *Lifetime Application* form is completed by a medical specialist.

If you are a participant in the Scheme, the FIM™ (or WeeFIM®) assessment will be sent to your treating specialist who will be asked to sign the medical certificate in the *Lifetime Application* form to say that they agree with this assessment.

Spinal cord injury

If you have a spinal cord injury, the application also involves a medical specialist (usually your treating specialist) certifying that you have permanent neurological impairment. This is done by completing a neurological examination and completing an American Spinal Injury Association (ASIA) Scale.

This assessment will be organised for no more than two months before the medical certificate for the *Lifetime Application* form is completed by a medical specialist. The assessment and medical certificate are usually completed at the same appointment with your treating specialist.

Who decides if I'm eligible for lifetime participation?

We'll review your *Lifetime Application* form, medical certificate and assessments to make sure that we have all the information we need.

Next, we'll assess if you're eligible to be a lifetime participant, based on the criteria in the *Lifetime Care and Support Guidelines*. These can be found on our website www.icare.nsw.gov.au.

We'll then inform you in writing of our decision about your eligibility for lifetime participation.

What happens if I'm eligible?

If you're accepted into the Scheme as a lifetime participant, we'll pay for your reasonable and necessary treatment, rehabilitation and care needs that are related to your motor accident injury for the rest of your life. The process for requesting and receiving services will remain the same as when you were an interim participant.

What happens if I'm *not* eligible?

If you don't meet the eligibility criteria to become a lifetime participant, or you don't complete a *Lifetime Application* form, we can't pay for treatment, rehabilitation and care after the date that your interim participation ends.

We'll support you to transition to any other services or supports you might need.

If you have an insurance claim (such as a Compulsory Third Party or workers compensation insurance) you may be eligible to have any ongoing treatment, rehabilitation and care costs paid for by the insurer.

If you have a private health insurance policy with a suitable level of cover, your treatment, rehabilitation and care may be paid for by the private health fund.

Alternatively, government-funded health services may be available.

What If I disagree with Lifetime Care's decision?

If you disagree with our decision about your eligibility for lifetime participation, you can dispute the decision. For more information contact our Assessment Review team on 1300 738 586 or email: feedback.lifetimecare@icare.nsw.gov.au. You can also see our information sheet: *Resolving disputes about eligibility*.

If you need help to lodge your dispute, we also have several support and advocacy providers who can assist you to navigate the dispute process. For details, see our information sheet: *Support and Advocacy Service*.

These information sheets can be found on our website www.icare.nsw.gov.au.