

## Working with a participant's attendant care program

Lifetime Care pays for reasonable and necessary attendant care services for participants in the Lifetime Care and Support Scheme. The care is required as a result of their motor accident injuries. All attendant care must be pre-approved and delivered by attendant care providers who are on our approved provider panel.

This information sheet answers some frequently asked questions about attendant care. If you have further questions, please contact the participant's icare contact.

### Roles in an attendant care program

There are many people involved in an attendant care program, including the participant and their family, the attendant care coordinator, the support workers, the case manager, treating health professionals, and the Lifetime Care contact.

### What is the role of a support worker?

The support worker supports the participant with the goals and care needs that are outlined in an *Attendant Care Service Agreement (ACSA)*. The ACSA is developed by the attendant care provider with the participant. It is based on the information provided about the participant's goals and care needs in the *Care Needs Report*; and the care they have requested and that has been approved.

Support workers are recruited and appointed to meet the participant's specific needs.

### Can a support worker help a participant with their rehabilitation goals?

Attendant care includes providing care to help a participant achieve their rehabilitation goals. This can include physical assistance, prompting and/or supervision.

The support worker carries out the program under the direction of a health professional. The support worker can't direct or change a program but should report regularly to the health professional overseeing the program. The best way for this to happen is for the support worker to talk to their attendant care coordinator.

### What is the role of a registered nurse?

We use the Attendant Care Industry Association (ACIA) guidelines\* to determine what a support worker is able to do and when a registered nurse is required. We'll pay for a registered nurse to do the following tasks:

- administer any injections
- change a suprapubic catheter
- change an in-dwelling catheter
- change a tracheostomy tube (with a second person also present)
- manage complex wounds (as determined by a registered nurse)
- complete PEG changes

- fill a medication box.

\* The ACIA guideline we use is '002 – Provision of paid attendant care and nursing in the community'. Visit the ACIA website at [www.acia.net.au](http://www.acia.net.au) Go to Education > ACIA guidelines

## What is the role of the Lifetime Care contact?

The Lifetime Care contact has a responsibility to:

- make referrals to the approved attendant care provider chosen by the participant
- inform all parties when care has been approved, including details of the approval (the case manager, the participant and the attendant care provider)
- provide a copy of the *My Plan, Care Needs Report* and *Attendant Care Service Request* to the selected attendant care provider
- review the *ACSA* to make sure care meets the participant's injury-related needs, and goals as identified in the *My Plan* and *Care Needs Report*
- make sure the *ACSA* is complete and signed by all parties
- give a copy of the *ACSA* to the case manager
- monitor services and invoices to make sure care is delivered according to the *ACSA*
- make sure that *Care Needs Reports* and *Attendant Care Service Requests* are completed by the appropriate provider, within the required timeframe, so there is continuity of care
- be actively involved in any reviews of the attendant care program, if required.

## What is the role of the case manager?

The case manager has a responsibility to:

- act as the key point of liaison between the participant and their family, the attendant care coordinator, the treating team and the Lifetime Care contact
- monitor services to make sure care is delivered according to the *ACSA* and it is supporting the participant to achieve their goals
- address any issues with the delivery of the attendant care program with the attendant care coordinator
- monitor the care plan period and arrange for a care needs review to occur before the new period starts, allowing enough time for the assessment and approval of requested care
- consult with the attendant care coordinator and the treating team to identify any training needs for support workers specifically relating to the needs of the participant
- help organise the delivery of any identified training for support workers
- help the attendant care coordinator solve any issues with the attendant care program.

## What is the role of the attendant care coordinator?

The attendant care coordinator has a responsibility to:

- review the *Care Needs Report* and *Attendant Care Service Request*
- develop the *ACSA* with the participant and the family
- submit the *ACSA* to Lifetime Care

- make sure care is delivered as agreed in the ACSA
- locate and employ support workers with skills and attributes that match the participant's injury-related needs and where possible their preferences e.g. for age, gender, cultural background
- bring to the attention of the case manager any participant needs that are beyond the scope of the attendant care provider
- provide training to support workers in relation to required skills, such as manual handling, hygiene, infection control and work health and safety
- provide training to support workers in injury-specific skills, such as spinal cord and traumatic brain injury
- monitor service delivery and the changing needs of participants
- give feedback to care needs reviewers and the case manager
- manage the provision of services, including supervising staff and making sure there is continuity of service
- report back to the case manager or Lifetime Care contact when issues with attendant care provision arise.

## Support worker training

### Does Lifetime Care pay for support worker training that is generic?

We don't pay for generic training, as attendant care providers on the panel are expected to provide a basic level of training to make sure their support workers have the right skills. This includes training in manual handling, hygiene, infection control, and work health and safety. Attendant care providers are also expected to provide training to support workers in generic injury-specific skills (such as spinal cord and traumatic brain injury).

### Does Lifetime Care pay for support worker training that is specific to a participant?

We'll pay for 'participant-focused training'. This is training that is specific to an individual participant and is over and above the generic skills expected of a support worker. Examples of this may include:

- training on how to implement a behaviour management program
- dietary requirements when preparing meals for a participant
- specific instructions on how to hoist a participant
- how to use any equipment specific to the participant
- how to carry out any specific rehabilitation programs.
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Concerns about the level of training of an individual support worker should be raised with the attendant care coordinator.

## Overnight care

### What is an inactive sleepover shift?

An inactive sleepover shift is where a support worker is in the participant's house, on-call overnight. This is an 8 hour shift where the support worker can sleep but will respond to any needs arising overnight e.g. occasional toileting. To provide this care, the support worker requires a bed in a separate room. Lifetime Care can pay for a single bed to be provided if there is not one already available. The attendant care provider is responsible for

providing the bed linen.

## Active overnight shift

An active overnight shift is one where the support worker is required to do specific scheduled tasks, or where the care provided during an inactive sleepover exceeds 4 hours in total.

### **With inactive sleepovers, is prior approval required for *additional* care overnight?**

If the participant needs additional care during an inactive sleepover, prior approval is not required. The inactive sleepover allowance provides for 2 wakeup periods of less than 30 minutes duration each. If additional wakeup periods occur, making a total of up to 4 hours per night, these are paid in half-hour increments in addition to the inactive sleepover allowance.

### **Will the support worker be paid if an inactive sleepover becomes active?**

If 4 hours or more of active duty are provided during the night, the shift is then paid to the support worker as an active 8-hour shift. The attendant care provider reports any active duty on an *Attendant Care Activity Statement*, which is sent to Lifetime Care with each invoice. The provider keeps a record of the time the support worker spent in active duty. These records may be audited by us.

## Changing attendant care providers

### **Can a participant change providers? If so, how long does it take and who is involved?**

Participants can exercise choice about their attendant care provider and can change provider if they choose. The participant should discuss this with their case manager or Lifetime Care contact. Changing providers usually takes up to 4 weeks. Sometimes it may take longer, for example, if there are problems recruiting support workers or time is required for extensive training.

The participant should choose another attendant care provider from the panel of approved providers. Their case manager or Lifetime Care contact can support them to do this. There is an attendant care finder tool on our website at [www.icare.nsw.gov.au](http://www.icare.nsw.gov.au).

There is also information from each attendant care provider about their company, the geographical area they cover and the services they provide.

Once a provider has been selected, the Lifetime Care contact is advised and then makes a formal referral to the provider in writing. It's the role of the Lifetime Care contact, not the case manager, to make an official referral to an approved attendant care provider. The Lifetime Care contact also informs all parties when care has been approved, with details of the approval.

## Managing supply of consumables

### **Can the support worker be responsible for managing supply of consumables?**

If a participant or their family is unable to manage their supply of prescribed consumables, this can be

incorporated into the role of the support worker. It should be identified in the *Care Needs Report* and included in the ACSA as a regular task. Consumables are items such as catheters and continence pads.

## General questions

### **Does Lifetime Care pay for care while a participant is in hospital or another health facility?**

No. We don't pay for attendant care while a participant is in hospital because it is the hospital's responsibility to care for the person and this is included in the bed day rate.

### **Can the treating team receive feedback on how the attendant care program is progressing?**

The attendant care provider will have procedures for giving feedback to the case manager and treating team (for example, checklists and monthly summaries). If the team requires specific feedback this should be requested from the attendant care coordinator, not individual support workers. Support workers should provide feedback to the team through their supervising coordinator.

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