

1 Introduction

Community care has been a growing element of aged care for two decades, as a response to the preference of most people who need support to live at home in the community rather than moving to some form of institutional care. Although residential aged care continues to play a vital role in meeting the needs of older Australians, community care is becoming increasingly central to aged care provision.

Most home and community-based services for older people are provided under the auspices of the Home and Community Care (HACC) program. This program is jointly funded by the Australian and state and territory governments. The Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing reports annually on the provision of services through HACC, which is available on the department's website at <www.health.gov.au>.

Three smaller community care programs are funded by the Australian government for older people who have been evaluated by an Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT) and found to be eligible for residential aged care or its community care equivalents. These programs are:

- the Community Aged Care Packages (CACPs) program which provides support services for older people with complex needs living at home who would otherwise be eligible for admission to low-level residential care
- the Extended Aged Care at Home (EACH) program which aims to deliver care at home that is equivalent to high-level residential care
- the Extended Aged Care at Home Dementia (EACH Dementia) program which provides the equivalent of high-level residential care in the home to frail older people who experience behaviours of concern and psychological symptoms associated with dementia. EACH Dementia is a new program implemented from March 2006.

The distinction between low-level and high-level residential aged care is discussed in a companion volume released annually, entitled *Residential aged care in Australia 2005–06* (AIHW 2007).

This report is the eighth annual compilation of national administrative by-product data on CACPs prepared by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW).

It is the second of these reports to include similar reporting for the Australian government-funded EACH program and the first to include reporting for the EACH Dementia program.

The change in the title of the series from *Community Aged Care Packages in Australia* to *Aged care packages in the community* reflects the expansion of this publication to include information on EACH and EACH Dementia packages.

The report contains a set of tables compiled from the Aged and Community Care Management Information System (ACCMIS), managed and regularly updated by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing. The aim of this report is to highlight the characteristics of care recipients and patterns of service provision in both programs. The data reported provide a summary of:

- growth trends over time to 30 June 2006
- provision of packages at 30 June 2006
- the number of outlets providing these services throughout Australia
- sociodemographic characteristics of recipients

- service provision for 'special needs' groups
- carer support arrangements for EACH and EACH Dementia recipients
- the number of admissions and separations between 1 July 2005 and 30 June 2006 for each program and
- state and territory variations.

Restrictions on reporting

In the past, service-providing outlets have not been required to routinely report information such as the type of assistance received by care recipients, their levels of dependency and carer support. With the exception of information on carer support for EACH and EACH Dementia recipients, which is reported for the first time in this report, this information is still not available on a national basis. While the Australian Government has recently commenced collecting data on the total hours of service provided to CACP recipients, these data are not yet considered sufficiently reliable for publication.

Other relevant reports

In late 2002, a national census of CACP providers was conducted. The service outlets were given the option of running the census on any 7 consecutive days in a 4-week period during September–October 2002. The census collected data about the service outlets and about the care recipients, including demographic information, living and care arrangements, care needs and service provision. This material was published in the report *Community Aged Care Packages census 2002* (AIHW 2004a).

A census of EACH packages and recipients was conducted by the AIHW on behalf of the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing in May 2002. Data were collected over a 1-week period and the results were published in the report entitled *Extended Aged Care at Home census 2002* (AIHW 2004b).

For further background information on the CACP program as well as earlier data on the use and provision of CACPs, readers should refer to the report entitled *Community Aged Care Packages: how do they compare?* (Mathur et al. 1997) or previous editions of this publication (for example, AIHW 2006).

National publications such as the biennial *Australia's welfare 2005* (AIHW 2005) also report on selected aspects of the above programs.

Structure of the report

Section 2 of the report focuses on provision of packages in all three programs, and describes the characteristics of service providers. Section 3 outlines the characteristics of CACP recipients, and patterns of use in the CACP program. A profile of EACH recipients is provided in Section 4, which also outlines patterns of use in this program. EACH Dementia recipients are covered separately in Section 5 of the report. Appendix 1 compares statistics for the 3 programs, and includes time series for numbers of CACP recipients and service provision ratios of residential and community aged care programs.