

Support at Home (SAH)

How It Works – Overview Report

1. Introduction

The Support at Home (SAH) program is the Australian Government's updated approach to delivering aged care services in the home. It is designed to replace the previous Home Care Package system and provide a simpler, more flexible, needs-based model of support for older Australians.

The core aim of SAH is to help people remain safe, supported and independent in their own homes for as long as possible, while receiving care that is tailored to their needs, preferences and personal goals.

2. Key Principles of Support at Home

Support at Home is designed to be:

- Person-centred: support is shaped around the individual and what matters to them.
- Flexible: services can be adjusted over time as needs change.
- Needs-based: funding and supports are matched to care requirements, not a “one size fits all” package.
- Clear and transparent: clearer pathways, guidance and communication are intended to reduce confusion for clients and families.
- Independence-focused: supports are aimed at maintaining confidence, wellbeing and daily function where possible.

3. How SAH Works – The Client Journey

Step 1: Initial Enquiry and Understanding Needs

A person (or their family/carer) typically begins by exploring aged care support options and identifying what help is needed at home. This may include support with personal care, household tasks, nursing, transport, social connection, restorative supports or respite.

Step 2: Aged Care Assessment

To access government-funded services, an aged care assessment is completed. This assessment considers the person's overall situation, such as:

- Daily living needs (personal care, meals, household tasks)
- Health conditions and clinical support needs
- Mobility, safety, and risk at home
- Cognitive or psychosocial considerations



- Informal supports available (family/carers)
- Goals and priorities (e.g., staying socially connected, rebuilding strength after illness)

The assessment outcome helps determine the level of support recommended and the type of services that may be appropriate.

Step 3: Funding Allocation (Support Tiers)

Under SAH, funding is intended to align to the level of support a person requires. There are different support tiers (or funding levels) to match care needs, from basic assistance through to higher-level supports for more complex or intensive care needs.

In practical terms, the higher the assessed need, the higher the level of funded support likely to be available. This structure aims to ensure funding reflects real-world care requirements.

Step 4: Choosing a Provider

Once funding is approved, the person can choose a provider to deliver their services. A provider such as A1 Community Care Providers works with the client (and family/carers where appropriate) to plan and coordinate supports.

Step 5: Care Planning and Service Commencement

The provider collaborates with the client to create a personalised care plan. This includes:

- What supports will be provided
- How often supports are delivered
- Preferred days/times
- Worker preferences and routines
- Safety considerations and goals

Services can then commence, with regular check-ins to ensure care remains appropriate and respectful.

Step 6: Ongoing Review and Adjustments

Support at Home is designed to be responsive. As needs change, services can increase, decrease or shift focus. Regular reviews help ensure supports remain aligned to the client's wellbeing and goals.

4. Types of Services Commonly Delivered Under SAH

Services that may be delivered through SAH-funded care can include:

- Personal care (e.g., showering, dressing, grooming)
- Domestic assistance (cleaning, laundry, meal preparation)
- Nursing and health supports (e.g., medication assistance, wound care, monitoring)
- Social support and companionship
- Transport to appointments and community activities (direct or indirect support)
- Respite care to support families and carers
- Restorative care to rebuild strength, mobility and confidence after illness/injury/hospital stay
- End of life and palliative support focused on comfort, dignity and emotional wellbeing

The exact mix of services depends on the person's assessment outcomes, goals, and day-to-day needs.

5. Flexibility and Personalisation Under SAH

A key intention of SAH is to make home care more flexible and easier to tailor to the individual. This can include:

- Adjusting supports as needs change
- Including restorative supports where appropriate
- Offering a clearer, more supportive pathway for clients and families

For clients, this means care is more likely to feel practical, personal and aligned to real life.

6. Costs and Client Contributions

Depending on a person's circumstances, there may be contributions toward the cost of care. These may include a basic contribution and/or income-tested contributions where applicable.

A provider should explain any fees clearly and transparently so clients and families understand what is covered, what is optional, and what out-of-pocket costs may apply.



7. The Role of A1 Community Care Providers

A1 Community Care Providers supports clients and families by making the process clear, calm and manageable. Our role may include:

- Helping clients understand SAH and what supports are available
- Supporting clients through assessment and onboarding steps
- Developing personalised care plans that reflect preferences and goals
- Coordinating care staff and services with a focus on consistency and trust
- Reviewing and adjusting services over time as needs change
- Communicating clearly with families, carers and relevant health professionals where appropriate

Our aim is to provide support that feels human, respectful and reliable—so clients can live well at home with confidence.

8. Benefits of Support at Home

Support at Home is intended to deliver benefits such as:

- Helping older Australians remain at home longer
- More personalised supports matched to actual needs
- Flexibility to adjust services over time
- A stronger focus on independence and wellbeing
- Clearer pathways and guidance for clients and families

9. Conclusion

The Support at Home (SAH) program represents a modern approach to home-based aged care, aiming to provide clearer pathways, more flexible supports and care that better matches individual needs.

With the guidance of a trusted provider such as A1 Community Care Providers, clients and families can navigate the process with confidence and receive compassionate care that supports comfort, dignity and independence at home.