

**SYDNEY WEST AREA HEALTH SERVICE  
AGED CARE ASSESSMENT TEAMS  
ASSESSMENT OF YOUNGER PEOPLE  
FOR COMMONWEALTH FUNDED AGED CARE SERVICES**

The assessment of younger people for residential aged care and community based aged care services continues to be an area of concern for all ACATs. Whilst the Aged Care Act 1997 states that younger people are entitled to receive aged care, it is quite clear that this entitlement should be exercised only as a last resort after all other options have been exhausted. (See attached reference document).

Planning ratios used to determine the number of aged care places in a region are based on the number of people aged 70 years and over, and do not take into account the population of younger people.

In order to follow the directives of the Department of Health and Ageing, Aged Care Assessment Teams in Sydney West Area Health Service will not accept referrals for ACAT assessments requesting Commonwealth funded aged care services for people under the age of 65 years (or 45 years for people from Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander background) without the appropriate documentation.

At the point of intake, the referrer will be provided with the contact numbers for the appropriate government department and services (listed below) who are responsible for assisting with the needs of younger people. They will be requested to provide written evidence that all other options have been exhausted before the referral will be accepted. Please note that acceptance of the referral does not guarantee the person will meet the criteria to be approved for aged care services.

This written evidence should include the patient/client's medical history, social supports, and any other information relevant to the assessment. The letter will also document all services and options already identified, and the results of referral to these services. The letter must state that the departments and services listed below have been contacted, and the results of each of those contacts. Overall, the written evidence will need to demonstrate that as a result of all other options not being suitable, assessment for residential care in an Aged Care Facility or provision of a community aged care service (eg CACP) has been identified a last resort.

The following services and departments should be contacted to provide services and options for younger people:

Metro North Information and Referral Line (DADHC)	8855 4200
People with Disability Australia Incorporated	9370 3100
Commonwealth Carelink	1800 052 222
NSW Younger People in Residential Aged Care Program	1800 467 622

If you require any clarification of this information, please contact the NSW office of the Department of Health & Ageing on 9263 3779

**Revised: 3rd January 2008**

**Reference:**

\* Assessment and Entry to Nursing Homes and Hostels of Young People with Disabilities. Aged and Community Care Division, Commonwealth Department of Health and Family Services (now Department of Health and Ageing). Published July 1997.



**POLICY FOR THE  
ASSESSMENT OF YOUNGER PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES  
BY AGED CARE ASSESSMENT TEAMS  
(A SUMMARY OF COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATION)**

Revised: 3rd January 2008

**Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to clarify the ACAT referral and assessment process for younger people with disabilities and to provide appropriate information to referrers.

**Scope**

ACAT clinicians and delegates of the Department of Health & Ageing, intake staff; other members of the community and acute health care teams; referrers such as GPs, other service providers, families and carers.

**Expected outcomes**

All staff will adhere to the Commonwealth guidelines and thus facilitate consistency in practice. Only appropriate referrals will be accepted and registered by ACAT. Information regarding the Commonwealth guidelines will be given to referrers to facilitate understanding and compliance with Government expectations.

**Definitions****ACAT (s) –**

Aged Care Assessment Team(s): multidisciplinary team of health care professionals responsible for approving eligibility for entry to residential aged care facilities and receiving Community Aged Care (CACF) , Extended Aged Care at Home (EACH), and Extended Aged Care at Home Dementia (EACHD) packages.

**Younger Person –**

A person under the age of 65 years or under the age of 45 years if Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

**ACCR –**

Aged Care Client Record, alternately known as a 3020. The official document used to approve eligibility by ACAT delegates.

**Procedure**

Younger people with disabilities or psychiatric disorders are entitled to enter aged care facilities under certain circumstances. However, in accordance with Commonwealth directives, this can only occur as a last resort after all other options have been exhausted .1

At the point of intake it will be explained to the referrer that, due to Commonwealth guidelines, the client may not be accepted for referral. The referrer will be provided with contact numbers for appropriate services and will be requested to provide written evidence that all other options have been explored and exhausted.

Documentation from the referrer should include details of the client's medical history, social supports, services and options identified and the outcomes of these actions. A statement should be included identifying residential aged care or community aged care services as a last resort for the client.

Once the requested documentation has been received, the referral will be accepted and registered. Note that acceptance of the referral does not guarantee the person will meet the criteria to be approved for aged care services. If an ACCR, is approved, a copy will be sent to the Department of Health and Ageing, accompanied by the referrer's letter. The client will also receive a copy of the ACCR. If an ACCR is not approved, an official letter will be sent to

the client advising the outcome and avenues of appeal. Copies of all relevant documentation should be filed in the client's medical record.

**THE FOLLOWING SERVICES CAN BE CONTACTED TO PROVIDE INFORMATION:**

Metro North Information and Referral Line (DADHC)	8855 4200
People with Disability Australia Incorporated	9370 3100
Commonwealth Carelink	1800 052 222
NSW Younger People in Residential Aged Care Program	1800 467 622

**Appeals Process**

Individuals and organisations have the right to appeal a decision if they are not satisfied with the assessment outcome. Under the Aged Care Act 1997, these are known as "reviewable decisions".

Letters of appeal must be sent within 28 days of receipt of the outcome of the assessment to:

The Secretary  
 Department of Health and Ageing  
 C/- State Manager Aged Care Division  
 GPO Box 9848  
 SYDNEY 2001

**Education Notes**

'.....younger people with disabilities are eligible to enter aged care homes if they require the intensity, type and model of care provided in such homes and no other more appropriate service is available. (.....) Entry to this type of care should have been approved only after all other care alternatives have demonstrably been exhausted.' <sup>1</sup>

'It should be an extremely rare occasion where an ACAT would approve a younger person for a CACP or EACH package. These packages are intended to be provided to frail older Australians' <sup>2</sup>

'ACATs should assess only a younger person with a disability for CACP services if they have already been assessed through disability services and there are clearly no other care alternatives in the area' <sup>3</sup>

'Usually a person with a serious mental health illness should not be eligible for entry to residential aged care, nor should a person whose care is already provided by a mental health or psychiatric service. People under some form of involuntary psychiatric care should not be approved' <sup>4</sup>

'The provision of appropriate accommodation and support services for younger people with disabilities has been agreed, under the Commonwealth/State Disability Agreement (CSDA), to be the primary responsibility of the relevant state/territory agency responsible for disability services. The CSDA currently provides that states/territories have responsibility for the approval, administration and evaluation of disability service accommodation, independent living training, respite care, recreation, information and print disability services, with the

Commonwealth Disability Program responsible for employment related services for this target group.' <sup>5</sup>

'Persons affected by a reviewable decision have 28 days from the day after they were notified of the decision, or a longer period as allowed by the Secretary, to apply in writing for the decision to be reviewed..... A decision will be reviewed if the Secretary is satisfied that there is sufficient reason to do so. The documentation supporting the original decision will be examined, and a re-assessment of the person may be sought.' <sup>6</sup>

### **References and Related Policies**

Aged Care Act 1997

Protocols and Procedures Manual for ACATs in NSW 2007 Section 1.7.4

<sup>1</sup> Aged Care Assessment Program Operational Guidelines 2002: Sec. 4, Page 21

<sup>2</sup> Aged Care Assessment and Approval Guidelines 2006 Part 1.9.1 Page 8

<sup>3</sup> Aged Care Assessment Program Operational Guidelines 2002: Sec. 4, page 22

<sup>4</sup> Aged Care Assessment Program Operational Guidelines 2002: Sec. 4, page 22

<sup>5</sup> Aged Care Assessment Program Operational Guidelines 2002: Sec. 4, page 23

<sup>6</sup> Aged Care Assessment Program Operational Guidelines 2002: Sec. 5, page 30