



Australian Government

Department of Veterans' Affairs

COMMUNITY NURSING NEWSLETTER No. 50

December 2024



The **Community Nursing Newsletter** is issued to provide updates to Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) Community Nursing providers about DVA's Community Nursing Program.

Annual Fee Indexation

Annual fee indexation will be applied to the DVA Community Nursing Schedule of Fees with effect from 1 January 2025, for claim periods commencing on or after that date. The 2025 Schedule of Fees is attached for reference and will also be available on the DVA website from mid-December 2024.

Community Nursing providers who deliver services to clients under an Exceptional Case approval will receive an updated approval letter for each client to reflect the indexed fees, in the week commencing 20 January 2025.



Fair Work Commission - Award Wage Increase

DVA is continuing to support the Fair Work Commission (FWC) decisions on the Aged Care Work Value Case. The Government has provided \$19.5 million to support DVA Veterans' Home Care and Community Nursing providers under Stage 3 award wage increases, to cover services delivered by:

- personal care workers
- home care workers
- assistants in nursing.

An additional 1.464% increase will be applied to the personal care fee items in the Community Nursing Schedule of Fees with effect from 1 January 2025, for claim periods commencing on or after that date.

In September 2024, the Stage 3 FWC decision determined further award wage increases for many aged care workers ranging between 2.3% and 13.5%. These award wage increases apply to workers on the Aged Care Award and SCHADS Award. Award wages for registered and enrolled nurses will be considered under the Nurses and Midwives' Fair Work Commission Work Value Case, which is yet to be determined.

Historical Leave Liabilities

Additional funding will also be made available to Veterans' Home Care and Community Nursing providers to fund historical leave liabilities as a result of the FWC decision. DVA is working closely with the Department of Health and Aged Care, as the lead agency on this, and further information will be made available as soon as possible.

Training on Suicide Prevention for Seniors

Australian men and women aged 85 and over have the highest age-specific suicide rates, yet they are less likely to access mental health services.

If you or your staff would like to learn how to support someone experiencing thoughts of suicide, the [Suicide Prevention for Seniors Program](#) can provide you with the skills you need. No prior mental health knowledge is required.

The online training is delivered via Zoom over a 3-hour period and is free of charge. Self-directed CPD points apply, and the training is Quality Innovation Performance accredited against the Suicide Prevention Australia Standards.

To register for this program, please visit www.anglicare.org.au/suicideprevention.

Security and Storage of Client Information

There has been a marked increase in organisation's ICT systems being targeted by online hackers, including community care provider systems. DVA would like to remind Community Nursing providers of their contractual obligation to ensure the storage and security of any documentation pertaining to a DVA client is in accordance with relevant State or Territory and Commonwealth privacy laws, including the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) and the Australian Privacy Principles.

Where records include clients' personal information (such as name, date of birth, address and services received) their confidentiality must be protected, including having digital security programs in place to prevent access by online hackers. Community Nursing providers must ensure client records are only accessible by personnel that have undergone appropriate security checks, with information accessed only for the purpose of performing relevant duties.

Christmas shutdown period

Thank you to all DVA Community Nursing providers for the care you continued to provide to veterans throughout the year.

The DVA office will be closed from 25 December 2024 to 1 January 2025 inclusive.

Community Nursing providers should continue to assess and deliver clinically required nursing services for eligible DVA clients throughout the Christmas period, under standard arrangements using the Schedule of Fees.

Where clinically required care exceeds the Schedule of Fees, providers should deliver the care and email DVA at exceptional.cases@dva.gov.au.

A DVA staff member will respond to requests from 2 January 2025.

Wishing you a safe and happy holiday period, from the DVA Community Nursing team.

