

## End of Financial Year Invoice Requirements

The Authority would like to advise suppliers and service providers to submit all tax invoices by [Friday 13th June](#) to enable payment before the end of the financial year. If you know of any participants with outstanding Participant Expense Claims, it would be appreciated if you can advise them to also submit these by the same date.

## Trial of Direct Funding of Attendant Care Services

In line with national and international developments, the Authority is currently working on different ways to offer increased participation, choice and control to participants within the scope of the Scheme.

One of the tools by which person centred service delivery and increased choice and control can be achieved is the direct funding of services. The Authority has an Australian Tax Office (ATO) Ruling which allows that direct funding of attendant care is not considered as income for taxation purposes. We have applied for an extension of this ATO ruling to cover all services that we fund.

The Authority is running a direct funding trial from April 2014 to April 2015. It will offer direct payments of attendant care services to 15 participants with stable care needs who meet the eligibility/risk assessment criteria for direct funding and who wish to directly fund their attendant care.

In practice this means that participants on the trial will receive the money for their approved attendant care services outlined on their certificate. They will have a separate direct funding bank account and will send the Authority regular expenditure information and copies of their bank statements. They will be able to either:

- Use an attendant care provider on the approved providers list; or
- Use an attendant care provider not on the approved provider list; or
- Directly employ an attendant care worker.

Participants will be offered start up training in direct funding which will include information about the responsibilities of being an employer, and insurance and other requirements if directly employing attendant care workers.

In the second half of the trial we will be hoping to offer a self managed model to participants who would like to have more choice and control over their attendant care services but that do not want to manage (or would have difficulty to manage) the money directly. In this model a specialist service provider will hold the funding on the participant's behalf and pay salaries, insurances etc and report on expenditure to the Authority. The participant will be assisted to recruit attendant care workers and will manage the rostering of staff themselves.

The trial will be evaluated by the Social Policy Research Centre, University of New South Wales. They will evaluate whether direct funding results in improved outcomes for participants, as well as considering the costs of the project and examining the direct funding process.

If you have any questions or would like further information, please email the direct funding project manager, [Cath Millen](#) or call on 02 9394 1390.

## Upcoming Tender for Approved Attendant Care Providers

The Authority has a panel of approved attendant care providers who are contracted to provide quality attendant care services to Scheme participants. Panel providers are selected through an open tender process and the current contract is in place until February 2015. The Authority is expecting to publish a request for tender (RFT) on 1 July 2014, on the NSW Government's eTendering [website](#) inviting existing and new attendant care providers to apply to become an approved attendant care provider for 3 years from February 2015.

For queries about the upcoming tender or about attendant care in the Lifetime Care and Support Scheme, please email the [Attendant Care Unit](#).

## 2013 Participant Survey – Service Provider feedback

The Authority conducts an annual survey of participants to get their feedback on a range of areas, including their satisfaction with service providers and services received. The results from the 2013 survey are extremely positive in regards to service provision with at least 85% of survey respondents satisfied to some extent with each of the main service types they received.

The total or net satisfaction is even greater for many individual services (this is the total of participants reporting they are either: extremely satisfied, very satisfied or satisfied with their services). This includes:

- 97% satisfaction with physiotherapy;
- 95% with psychology and occupational therapy;
- 94% with case management; and
- 89% with attendant care.

The survey results help to inform our continuous service improvement and the Authority would like to thank and congratulate providers for their excellent service provision to Scheme participants.

## ACI Chronic Pain and Spinal Cord Injury Project Update

The Agency for Clinical Innovation (ACI) has launched a new website that provides support to people living with chronic pain. Chronic pain is pain that lasts longer than 3 months with one or more of the following:

- escalating use of pain medications
- decreasing function and activity
- increasing psychological distress

The best evidence for effective management and prevention of chronic pain is to use an interdisciplinary biopsychosocial approach to people in pain. The website includes a valuable range of evidence-based tools and resources to guide management alongside complementary resources to provide consumers with an understanding of pain, the role of medication and some strategies to try regarding diet, sleep, physical activity and thoughts.

See [www.aci.health.nsw.gov.au/chronic-pain](http://www.aci.health.nsw.gov.au/chronic-pain) for more information.

The SCI Chronic Pain resources to be hosted on the website are currently being developed and ACI would like to thank everyone who recently attended the Chronic Pain and Spinal Cord Injury Focus Groups. The feedback provided has been very valuable to help refine the development of the tools and resources for screening, assessing and classifying SCI pain types and the pain management plan. These resources will be available on the Chronic Pain website by September 2014.

Part of the project has also included development of the service model for a specialist SCI Pain Clinic at Greenwich Hospital being run by internationally renowned SCI Pain Specialist, Professor Phillip Siddall and his team. This clinic incorporates on-site and telehealth options, to improve access for rural clients. If you are a case manager of a participant with chronic pain and SCI who you feel would benefit from an assessment at the clinic, you can make a referral via sending an email to both [Rebecca McCabe](#), pain clinic physiotherapist and [Lyndall Katte](#), ACI Project Officer, Chronic Pain and Spinal Cord Injury.

## Participant Reference Group

The Authority has established a Participant Reference Group which will meet with the General Manager 3-4 times per year to discuss policy, system changes and ideas to help improve services to participants. The group members were selected following an expression of interest that was sent out at the end of 2013 in our participant newsletter, Shine. The group members were selected to include representation from our participant population, including some family members. There are also stakeholders from Spinal Cord Injury Australia, the Brain Injury Association of NSW and the Trustee and Guardian. The first meeting was in April and the feedback from participants was very positive. We will keep you informed of any interesting feedback from the group and this will also help to inform our business planning.

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