



Regulatory Bulletin

Support at Home pricing requirements

RB 2026-1

The Support at Home program introduces new protections to make sure prices are reasonable and transparent.

This bulletin explains what providers need to do to meet the new pricing requirements and what actions the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (the Commission) can take if they do not.

Key points

- The Support at Home (SAH) program commenced on 1 November 2025.
- Providers can currently set prices for services delivered under the SAH Program. This is consistent with the former Home Care Packages Program the SAH program replaced.
- The Aged Care Rules 2025 (Aged Care Rules) include new protections for older people accessing services through the SAH program. These protections include:
 - **Prices must be reasonable.** Section 273-15 of the Rules requires that prices for services are not unreasonable.
 - **Prices must be reported.** Section 166-1005 of the Rules requires that providers report pricing information to the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing (the department) every two months, for publication on the My Aged Care website.
 - The Australian Government will **introduce set price caps (maximum prices) from 1 July 2026.**
- Under the Aged Care Rules, providers must support older people to make informed decisions about their agreements and services. This includes explaining the reasons for any price variation from their published price.
- The Commission will continue to receive and assess complaints about aged care pricing.
- In addition to dealing with individual complaints, the Commission and department are working together to actively monitor providers' compliance with their pricing requirements.
- Where non-compliance is detected, the Commission may take regulatory action, including requiring providers to adjust their price.



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Bulletin number: RB 2026-1

Version number: 1.0

Publication date: 23 January 2026

Replaces: N/A – new release

Information in this bulletin applies to: Registered providers delivering funded aged care services through the Support at Home program.

Attachment: N/A

Notes: N/A

To be reviewed: 1 July 2026



Support at Home pricing requirements

Pricing requirements

Under the SAH program, providers must include all the costs of delivering direct services in one unit price. Additional fees or surcharges that may have previously been charged separately are no longer allowed under the SAH Program. The unit price must include package management, travel and other costs associated with delivery of a service.

Care management is funded separately from direct services, through a deduction of 10% from the participant's quarterly budget for [direct and indirect care management services](#). Care management costs must not be included in the unit price for other funded aged care services.

Providers under the SAH program are required to charge prices that are not unreasonable, and they must report their prices to the department for publication on the My Aged Care website.

From 1 July 2026, the Australian Government will set price caps for funded aged care services using the advice of the Independent Health and Aged Care Pricing Authority (IHACPA).

These requirements support SAH pricing to be reasonable and transparent. This helps older people to make informed decisions about their SAH provider and services.

What are unreasonable prices?

An unreasonable price is a price that a provider cannot justify based on the cost of delivering the service (plus a reasonable margin). The prices a provider charges should match the costs of delivering those services, including:

- labour (including sub-contracting costs)
- administration overheads (e.g. human resources)
- travel
- a margin to cover the costs of purchasing goods essential to service delivery
- transition costs, while the provider is transitioning their service model to meet the requirements of the new SAH Program

Providers should be able to explain to both older people and the department or Commission how they have set their prices and why they consider those prices to be reasonable. The Commission will be monitoring and assessing complaints about the reasonableness of SAH pricing.

Older people cannot be charged for any costs for which the provider is already funded by the Australian government. For example, if a provider receives a thin market grant to reduce the cost of delivering services in remote locations, they must make sure their pricing takes this funding into account.

The department has released [guidance for providers on setting SAH prices](#), which providers should consult alongside this bulletin.



What pricing information do providers need to report?

Providers must provide pricing information to the department every 2 months. The information they need to report is the most common price. That is, the price they charged most frequently during standard business hours over the previous 2 months for each of the 12 service types specified in subsection **166-1005(3)** of the [Aged Care Rules](#).

Uploading or linking to a pricing schedule on the provider's website does not meet this requirement, though providers must publish common prices on their websites in accordance with Rule **155-80**. Providers must report information to the department in the approved form.

The department will publish this pricing information on the My Aged Care website.

The department has [published guidance](#) on the process providers must follow to comply with their price reporting requirements.

Regulatory approach

The Commission will identify potential non-compliance with the pricing requirements through 3 key channels:

1. Complaints and feedback
2. Targeted monitoring of providers' prudential and governance arrangements, and
3. Referrals from the department's program assurance activities.

Complaints

The Commission's main regulatory response to individual instances of unreasonable pricing will be through its complaint function. The Complaints Commissioner is well-placed to respond to individual matters by focussing on what can be done between the older person and the provider to resolve the issue, before any other regulatory action is taken.

Anyone, including older people, their friends and family or representatives, independent aged care advocates, or other support workers or professionals involved in their care can contact the Complaints Commissioner if they have concerns about SAH pricing. This may include situations where someone feels they have been charged fees or prices they have not agreed to, have been subjected to unreasonable pricing, received poor communication about pricing or felt pressure to sign an agreement. During a complaint resolution process, a Complaints Officer will talk with the complainant to understand what has happened, and what outcome they are seeking from the process.

Possible outcomes of a complaint resolution process include:

- Working with the provider to review or vary a service agreement if an older person feels it was signed under duress
- Encouraging and supporting the provider to allow an appropriate amount of time under the transitional requirements to support an older person to make an informed decision about their service agreement
- Requiring the provider to take specified action to resolve the complaint

If non-compliance is found during the complaints process and it remains unresolved, the Commission may escalate its regulatory response (see [compliance and enforcement](#)).



Targeted monitoring

The Commission undertakes proactive monitoring of SAH providers to assess compliance with prudential and governance requirements. When determining which providers to target for monitoring activities, the Commission will prioritise providers who:

- have not reported required pricing information to the department
- have a history of non-compliance with prudential and governance requirements
- are charging fees that significantly deviate from their published prices
- are charging higher fees than other providers operating in comparable contexts and delivering comparable services
- do not adequately explain or consult on their prices with older people
- are referred to the Commission by the department as a result of program assurance activities

Assessing if a price is unreasonable

When targeted monitoring activities or complaints indicate that a provider may not be complying with pricing requirements, the Commission will engage with the provider in accordance with its provider [Supervision Model](#). When assessing whether a price charged for a service is reasonable, the Commission may refer to:

- pricing information, including:
 - the provider's published price
 - any deviation from the published price
 - justification from the provider for any variation to their published price
 - the provider's history of compliance with price reporting and publishing requirements

- the provider's explanation of how their costs have been calculated, and how the costs relate to the price charged
- invoices, monthly statements, service agreements and individual budgets provided to an older person

The Commission may also require certain information or documents to make an assessment on how a provider has ensured their pricing is reasonable, including:

- information from the provider's governing body, including management briefings and records of decisions related to pricing
- invoices and participant billing records
- timesheets, attendance records or rosters
- payroll or general ledger extracts showing labour cost for billed services
- travel claims/odometer or travel records where transport service is charged for, or where other services are charged for at a higher amount due to increased travel costs
- published price evidence, such as My Aged Care listings, price schedules or written participant communications
- service delivery records or care notes supporting billed items, and
- organisational budget allocations and service model details
- any other relevant documents or information.



Monitoring reporting requirements

Price reporting requirements play an important role in supporting older people to exercise informed choice and autonomy regarding their funded aged care services. The department is primarily responsible for monitoring compliance with price reporting requirements. Both the department and the Commission can take regulatory action against a provider that does not meet its reporting requirements.

Compliance and enforcement

The Commission undertakes compliance and enforcement activities in accordance with its [Regulatory Strategy 2025-26](#) and its [Compliance and Enforcement policy](#).

If the Commission becomes aware of pricing that may be unreasonable, it will engage directly with the provider. The Commission uses a case management approach to:

- ensure a shared understanding of the causes of non-compliance, and actions required to return to compliance
- enable ongoing assessment of the level of risk to older people receiving care
- inform and monitor the provider's response.

If a provider is unwilling to adjust their prices (and is unable to justify them), the Commission will increase its level of intervention consistent with the [provider Supervision Model](#). This includes using regulatory powers to compel providers to take certain actions or change their behaviour in relation to pricing, including through:

- **required action notices** to make a provider investigate their pricing practices (including by engaging an independent expert) and provide the Commission with a detailed report

- **requiring specified actions** through a complaints resolution process, in order to resolve disagreements or change a provider's behaviour
- **compliance notices** to require a provider to stop engaging in certain conduct (for example, charging unreasonable prices for services) and to take actions to fix the issue
- **applying conditions** on a provider's registration, to require a provider to change how they calculate and charge fees to older people
- **seeking injunctions** to compel a provider to stop engaging in certain conduct, or to take certain actions, to address non-compliance.

Where the Commission is concerned about a provider's pricing practices, but the provider has demonstrated they are committed to, and capable of, resolving the issue, it may accept an **enforceable undertaking** from that provider to take certain actions (such as refunding amounts to older people).

If a provider repeatedly fails to comply or refuses to comply, the Commission can also take enforcement action. This may include varying a provider's registration to stop them from delivering certain funded aged care services.




Further resources


Providers can find more information on the department's website, including:


- [guidance on the Support at Home program](#)
- information to help SAH providers understand and comply with their pricing requirements
- a [suite of resources](#) on SAH pricing.

The department also has several [programs and advisory services](#) to support providers facing viability, governance or business management challenges.

The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

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