

Care Management fees have also been reduced to a flat 10% maximum which will be inadequate to cover the actual costs of Care Management for Clients with complex clinical care needs and barely enough for Clients with ordinary needs. The result? I predict that some Clients with complex needs will find it impossible to obtain a Home Care Provider willing to take them on.

At the same time as all this, Home Care Providers will also be implementing a whole new set of Aged Care Quality Standards and responding to very important but also very costly increased accountability measures imposed by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission.

None of that is funded either.

The regional Home Care Provider my wife and I established 10 years ago has always had lower fees than most Not For Profit Home Care Providers and we have always had excellent Client satisfaction with zero audit non-compliances, but under Support At Home as currently presented we think our service may not be financially viable.

If a service like ours cannot make the funding work then most of the For Profit and many of the very large Not For Profit Home Care Providers will also pull out entirely, or stop taking on Clients with complex/clinical care needs, leading to profound failure of the Home Care system and a further overburdening of Residential Care.

The new Support At Home program does implement some of the very important reforms recommended by the Royal Commission, but it is rushed, and extremely poorly thought through. The main intent seems to be to reduce Government spending per Home Care Client, by making Clients pay more themselves, and push all the complex Admin costs onto Home Care Providers.

Unless they pause and rethink, the result will be a net DECLINE in Home Care quality, at real cost to the people who most need high quality care, and a significant increase in people forced tented far more expensive residential care - defeating the whole purpose of Support At Home.