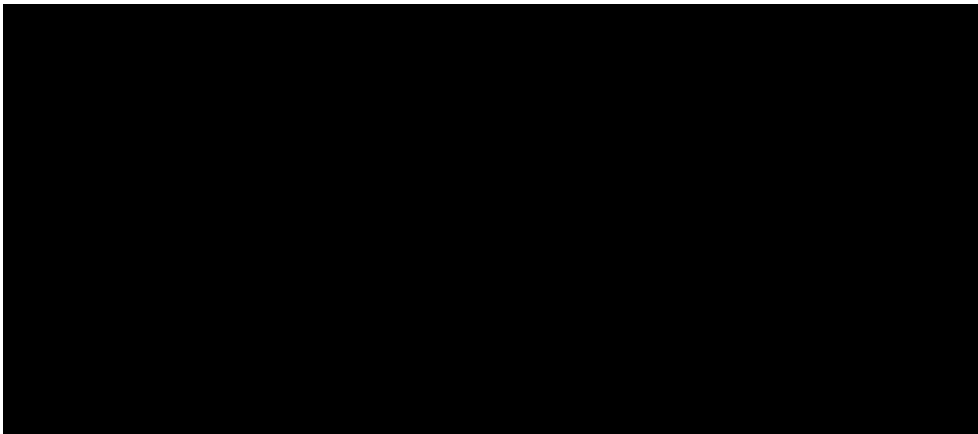


5 December 2024

To:
Submission form for new Aged Care Bill 2024 Consultation Stage 2a



To The Department of Health and Aged Care,

I am writing to you today on behalf of the [Australian Orthotic Prosthetic Association \(AOPA\)](#) wish to provide feedback on the Aged Care Bill 2024 Consultation Stage 2a, and seek clarification on the funding for orthotic and prosthetic services under the New Support At Home Program.

Who we are and who we represent

AOPA is the peak professional body for orthotist/prosthetists in Australia and is responsible for regulating the orthotic/prosthetic profession. AOPA is a full member of the [National Alliance of Self-Regulating Health Professions](#) (NASRHP) and is recognised by the Commonwealth Government as the assessing authority responsible for conducting migration skill assessments for orthotist/prosthetists. Orthotist/prosthetists assess the physical and functional limitations of people resulting from disease, illness, trauma, age-related functional decline and disability, including limb amputation, neuromuscular conditions such as stroke, and orthopaedic conditions such as arthritis and degenerative scoliosis. Orthotic and prosthetic services may involve the provision of orthoses and prostheses to restore function, prevent deterioration, and improve quality of life.

Feedback on the draft Bill

Unfortunately, the draft Bill did not clearly outline the mechanisms of funding orthoses, prostheses and their wrap around services. If we have overlooked the inclusion of such clarification, we suggest clearer signposting, headings and detail within the Bill.

The clarification we require

AOPA require clarification on two areas relating to the Support At Home Bill; will orthotic/prosthetic wrap-around services be included in the funded supports, and will orthoses, prostheses and wrap-around services be funded in full?

Will orthotic/prosthetic wrap-around services be included in the funded supports

From the information provided at the AHPA members day by Michael Lye, Department Secretary, it is our understanding that all services provided by orthotist/prosthetists will be - funded via the "three tiers" of AT funding. This includes funding for the orthoses and prostheses themselves, **and all** wrap around services such as assessment, fitting, review, education and report writing. It is essential we confirm these arrangements as **orthotist/prosthetists are not recognised on the allied health support list, nor can our services be funded via Medicare.**

Will orthoses, prostheses and wrap-around services be funded in full

We fear the Support At Home program will rely on state and territory equipment and limb schemes. As we have previously communicated, there are large gaps in this funding at best e.g. there is no Tasmanian or Northern Territory scheme for orthoses, Victorian equipment scheme only subsidises a small fraction of the device cost (e.g. a patient may be forced to pay up to 75% of the cost of their device in addition to wrap around services). It is imperative the funding is clarified so we can work with the Department to ensuring older Australians under the Support At Home program receive the assistive technology they require.

We eagerly await your reply.

Kind regards

