

Dementia Support Australia

Funded by the Australian Government
A service led by HammondCare

Assessing for Eligibility into the Specialist Dementia Care Program

A guide for health professionals



What is the Specialist Dementia Care Program?

The Specialist Dementia Care Program is a Commonwealth Government initiative that provides individualised care for people who are experiencing very severe behaviours and psychological symptoms of dementia and are unable to be adequately cared for in a mainstream aged care home or at home.

The Specialist Dementia Care Program (SDCP) offers temporary, transitional care to stabilise and reduce a person's behavioural symptoms with the aim of enabling them to transition to a less intensive care setting.

Who can refer?

Dementia Support Australia (DSA) can take client referrals from anyone, including families, residential care home staff, hospitals or older persons mental health units.



DSA aims to improve the quality of life and care for the person with dementia and their carers when behaviours are impacting their care

Benefits for a client

There are a number of benefits for a person with very severe behaviours related to their dementia living in an SDCP unit:

- Tailored and personalised approach to care.
- The care environment is specifically designed for a person with dementia.
- Specialist expertise in supporting a person living with dementia who has very severe behaviours.
- Personalised care to stabilise client behaviours to enable supported transition out of an SDCP and into mainstream aged care settings.

Who is eligible for the Specialist Dementia Care Program?

There are three key principles for eligibility which are the behaviours and psychological symptoms of the person:

- 1. Behaviours primarily as a result of dementia.**
- 2. Are very severe.**
- 3. Have not responded to trials of other specialist services.**

The person is also required to have been assessed to be eligible for placement in a residential aged care home.



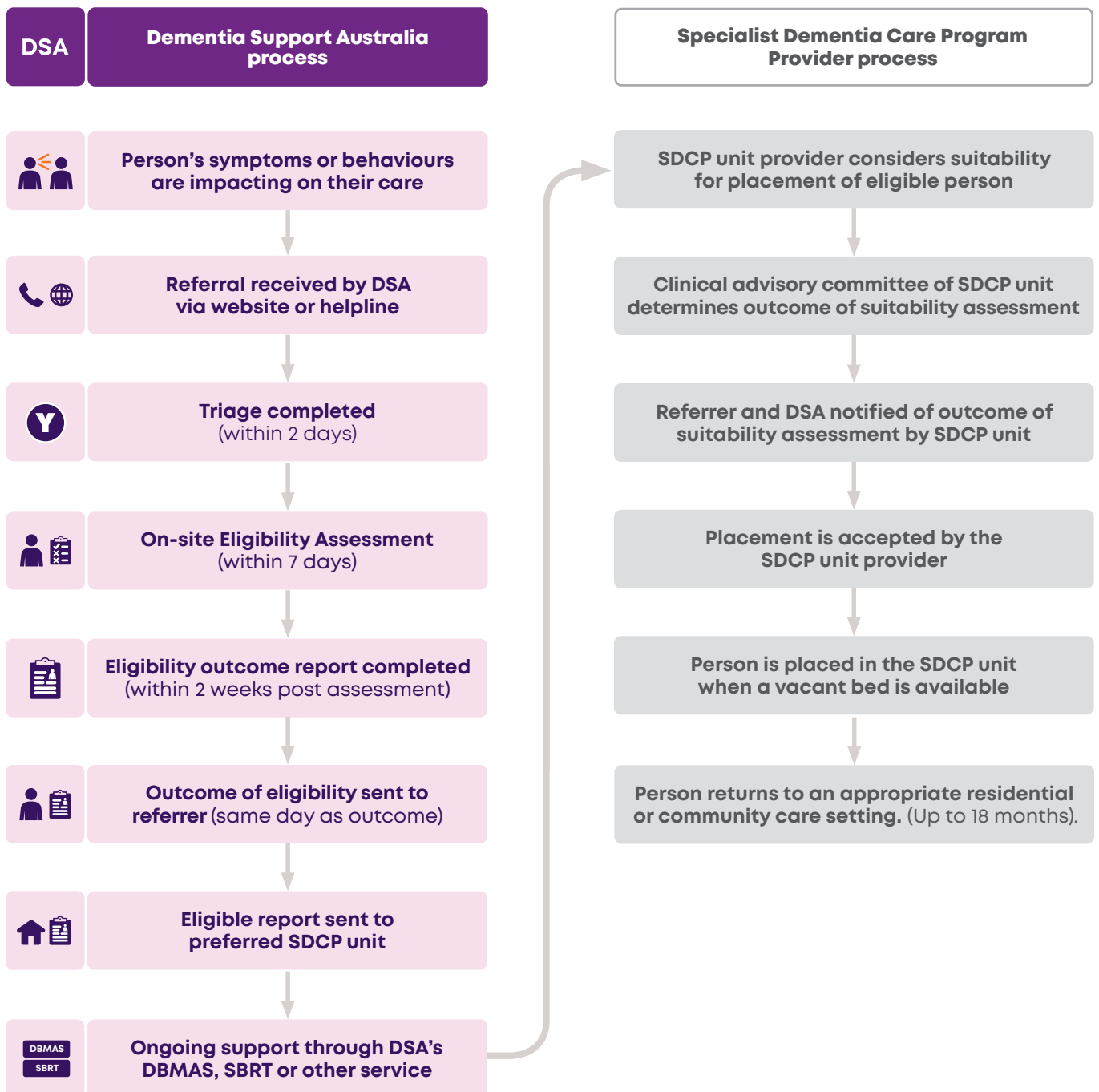
Where are the Specialist Dementia Care Units?

The Australian Government is establishing 35 SDCP units nationally across Primary Health Network regions. The program will complement existing state and territory government services and supports.

You can find more information about the SDCP on the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing website www.health.gov.au/specialist-dementia-care-program.

How DSA assess for eligibility

Funded by the Australian Government, **DSA assesses eligibility for the Specialist Dementia Care Program**. If a person is eligible, the Specialist Dementia Care unit provider will assess whether they are suitable for placement in their unit.



The role of family and the service provider in the assessment process

Consent

Dementia Support Australia aims to keep the person living with dementia informed and involved in decisions that affect their care. When this is not possible, it's important to gain consent from the legally appointed person responsible for their care.

An assessment for eligibility can only progress once the referrer has obtained informed consent.

Consent may be given verbally or in writing and will be confirmed by the DSA assessor during the assessment. Consent may be withdrawn at any time.

Timeframe to admission

The process from an eligibility assessment to admission in an SDCP unit can take time.

It is important to continue exploring alternative accommodation.

Alongside the referring service provider, DSA's advisory service can provide behaviour support and advice while the person is waiting for assessment.

Security of tenure

The length of stay within a Specialist Dementia Care Program unit varies according to individual needs but is likely to be for an extended period (generally around 12 months).

A person does not leave a Specialist Dementia Care unit until suitable accommodation is found.

DSA can also assist with transition out of the SDCP unit, on discharge.

Where can I find more information about the SDCP?

You can find more information about the SDCP on the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing website at www.health.gov.au/specialist-dementia-care-program or make contact with SDCP providers to discuss admission.



What is Dementia Support Australia?

Dementia Support Australia is a free nationwide service for people living with dementia and their carers.

Our dementia consultants provide advice and recommendations to people who care for someone living with dementia where behaviours are a risk to themselves or others.

DSA offers support 24 hours a day, 365 days a year throughout Australia.



DSA provides several levels of support based on the needs of the person with dementia.

1 Staying at Home

A carer education and respite program that helps people who live with dementia to stay at home longer.

2 Dementia Behaviour Management Advisory Service (DBMAS)

Supports staff and carers with client focused information, assessment and advice.

3 Severe Behaviour Response Team (SBRT)

A responsive agile service, available to support and provide timely expertise and advice to residential aged care staff.

4 Eligibility Assessments for the Specialist Dementia Care Program

An assessment for eligibility for people experiencing very severe behaviours that require more specialised care.

Each support service can be accessed independently. DSA identifies the optimal service level for each client via a team with extensive experience of supporting people living with dementia.

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Start a referral

To refer a client, call us anytime on **1800 699 799**, or fill in an online form at dementia.com.au/sdcp

More information

Department of Health,
Disability and Ageing
health.gov.au

Dementia Support Australia
dementia.com.au



**Contact us 24 hours a
day, 365 days a year or
chat with us now on our
website**



1800 699 799



dementia.com.au/sdcp