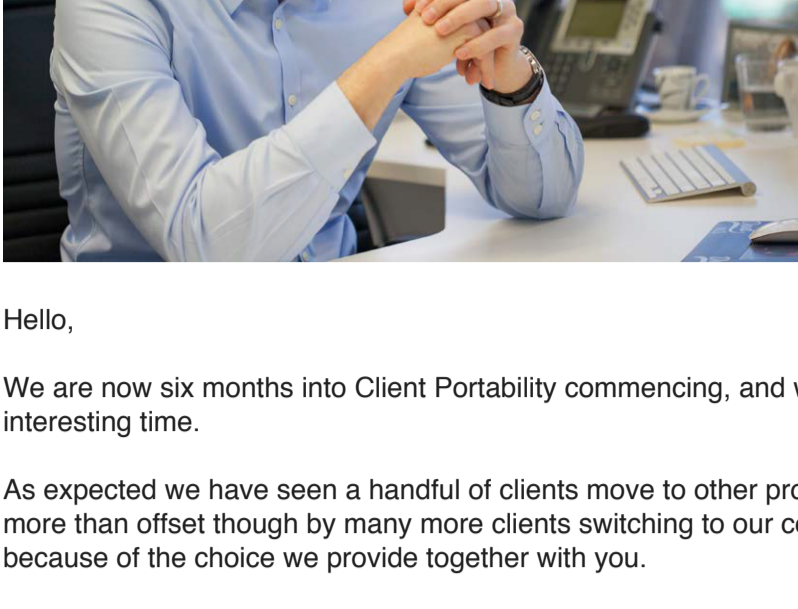




**Welcome to the fifth edition of Your Service Provider Voice.**



Hello,

We are now six months into Client Portability commencing, and we can say it has been an interesting time.

As expected we have seen a handful of clients move to other providers. This has been more than offset though by many more clients switching to our collective services, largely because of the choice we provide together with you.

More importantly, after some delays due to MyAgedCare portal changes, we have started to see a large number of new customers entering the market. This means our organisation is growing faster than ever before providing more services to our loyal provider network.

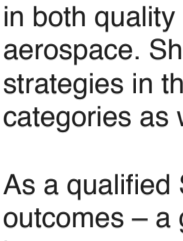
A big thank you to our providers who continue to refer clients to us. It is this type of support that helps our organisation grow and in turn yours too with the ultimate goal of providing great services to the people we support together.

We have some great information to share with you in this issue. Firstly, let me introduce you to our newly appointed Procurement Manager, Eileen Keane.

Sincerely,

Paul Ostrowski  
CEO

**New Procurement Manager**



Eileen Keane joins Care Connect as our Procurement Manager replacing Peter Cubit. Eileen has over 25 years' experience in procurement, supply chain and quality systems across a number of industries.

Eileen has spent the last five years at Health Purchasing Victoria where she was responsible for managing improvement programs across procurement and supply chain for Victorian public health services. This included working collaboratively with 80+ public health services to put into place procurement policies for the health sector, as well as developing a framework for ongoing supply chain improvements. Prior to working in public health, Eileen held senior positions in both quality and procurement in various industries including automotive, logistics and aerospace. She has led the development of successful procurement and supply chain strategies in the Asia Pacific and Africa regions encompassing a broad range of categories as well as forming strong relationships with suppliers to achieve goals.

As a qualified Six Sigma Black Belt she has a passion for improving processes and outcomes – a great asset to have as we continue to build our collaborative relationship between your organisation and ours.

Eileen is looking forward to working with all of our providers and continuing to build mutually beneficial partnerships. Eileen will be touching base with our provider network over the next few weeks. Please feel free to contact her if you wish to chat beforehand.

**Home Care Packages Facts & Insights**

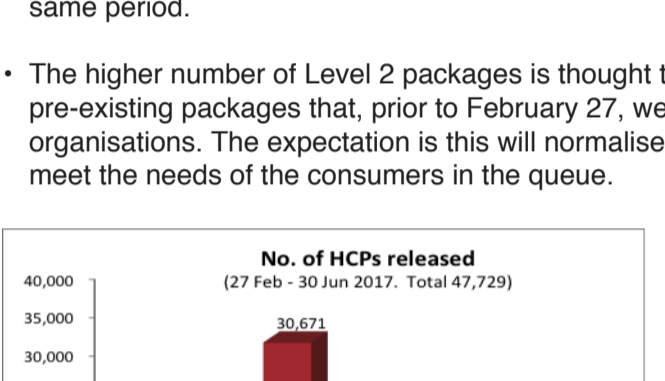
The Government's Home Care Packages Program, Data Report 27 February – 30 June 2017<sup>1</sup>, has given us some interesting insights into the current environment. This is the first data report that focuses on the transition to the new home care system and the national prioritisation process in its first four months. Read on for some interesting observations and our thoughts on the changes to date.

**Number of Consumers in Home Care**

- From February 2017, there was an immediate reduction in the number of consumers with activated Home Care Packages, however this is only a transition issue and the expectation is that this will grow in coming months.

- This supports Care Connect's experience to date, where clients have 56 days to activate a new package; the client is taking the full amount of time to understand and complete the necessary paperwork to activate the package. This has caused some initial concerns particularly where clients are not aware of the requirements to activate packages.

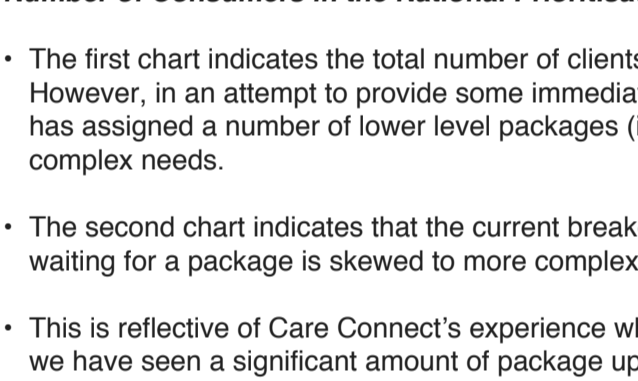
**No. of consumers in home care**  
(30 June 2016 to 31 March 2017)



**Number of Home Care Packages Released**

- There were 38,018 approvals for home care under the new arrangements. Of these, 25.8% were for high priority and 74.2% were for medium priority. There were 47,729 packages released or made available to a person over this same period.

- The higher number of Level 2 packages is thought to be related the number of pre-existing packages that, prior to February 27, were held vacant by registered organisations. The expectation is this will normalise over the coming months to meet the needs of the consumers in the queue.

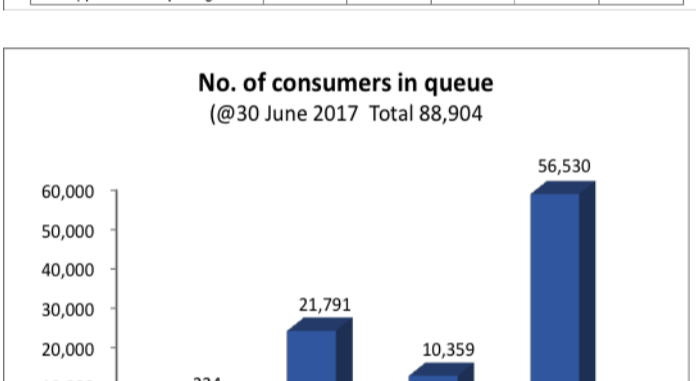


**Number of Consumers in the National Prioritisation Queue**

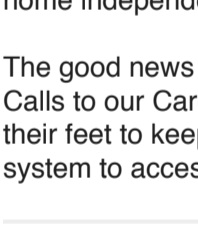
- The first chart indicates the total number of clients awaiting a package is increasing. However, in an attempt to provide some immediate relief, the Department of Health has assigned a number of lower level packages (interim) to people with more complex needs.
- The second chart indicates that the current breakdown of the 88,904 consumers waiting for a package is skewed to more complex needs.

- This is reflective of Care Connect's experience where together with client growth, we have seen a significant amount of package upgrades with consumers moving from Level 2 to Level 4.

**No. of consumers on the National Prioritisation Queue, by month**



**3AW radio campaign**



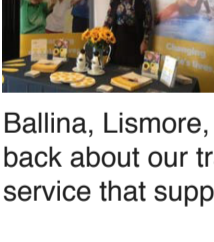
On Monday 7 August we launched a radio campaign on Melbourne's top talk radio station 3AW.

The radio campaign, which will run until 20 October, features Dr Sally Cockburn as our brand spokesperson and is known around Australia as 'Dr Feelgood'. As a high profile media presenter she champions sensitive issues and is passionate about the community.

When we approached her to be part of the campaign she was quick to come on board loving our independent advisory approach, combined with how we collaborate with you to give real choice in services to enable older Australians to stay living at home independently.

The good news is the response to the radio campaign has been overwhelming. Calls to our Care Centre increased substantially with our Client Advisers being worked off their feet to keep up with the number of people wanting help to navigate the government system to access a Home Care Package.

**Local radio campaign**

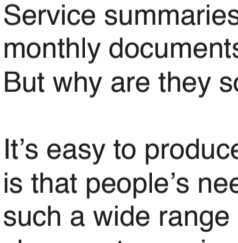


Again on radio we were thrilled when Rita from 97.7FM asked us to come on her show on Monday 17 July.

Ronnie, our terrific Home Care Adviser, joined Rita for an hour long chat about how people can stay living independently at home for longer.

Ronnie explained what a Home Care Package is and how to apply for one with the government. She also covered the services you could access on a Home Care Package and how to pick a good provider.

**Seniors expos**



We are pleased to say we have been busy taking part in a number of expos designed for seniors.

The Ballina Aged Care Symposium on 20-21 July at Ballina RSL Club was a terrific opportunity to speak with clinical staff, hospital Discharge Planners and Aged Care Assessment Teams across Ballina, Lismore, Casino, Grafton and Tweed Heads. We received a lot of positive feedback about our transitional care services and were able to let guests know we offer a free service that supports seniors apply for a Home Care Package.

We also attended the Twin Towns Seniors' Expo on 27 July at the Twin Towns Hotel. With over 1,000 seniors attending it was great to share our knowledge on how to access a Home Care Package, how to stay living at home and how to choose a good service provider.

**Our new Summary of Services statement**

Service documents were introduced with Consumer Directed Care. It's clear these monthly documents are one of the biggest challenges for both consumers and providers. But why are they so difficult?

It's easy to produce a simple statement if all your services are in one spot. The problem is that people's needs change with time. That's why Care Connect believes in offering such a wide range of service choices. The trade-off is we don't always get notified of changes to services. This means that passing on information to our clients regarding their service summaries can be a challenge.

We conducted research with both our Clients and Client Advisers, and we have also received feedback from many of you. Using the findings from the research, we have redesigned our statement so it is easy for clients to understand and contains the information they need. We have reinforced with our clients the need to always notify us when there is a change of their services so we can update their calendar. We have also provided an explanation sheet to our clients that explains what each line item means.

**Provider Portal update**

We have had a great response to our new supplier portal with over 80% of our providers signing up to it and processing their invoices through it.

This has significantly sped up the payment cycle. In the past, these providers would normally have had to wait 6-8 weeks to get paid. The waiting time has now been cut down to 2-3 weeks. In fact the longest delay now is the time taken between the service being completed and the provider confirming the service.

The client also wins from this process as we now have more timely information about the profile of services allowing us to better understand the client needs and meet their expectations.

**Late provider invoices**

We are still noticing that some providers (either through the portal or by post/email) are sending invoices for services greater than 90 days past the date the service was delivered.

In the past we have been able to pay these invoices, even if a client had discharged, because block funding meant we had the funds available. Under Consumer Directed Care, however, a consumer can discharge at any time and their excess funds need to be returned to government.

Over recent months we have worked hard to improve our Accounts Payable processes including the deployment of the provider portal to ensure you can be paid quickly. Given the change in funding under CDC, it is extremely important that all services are confirmed via the portal, or invoices submitted, within 30 days of the service being completed. Going forward we will approach providers who are consistently late to see what can be done to improve things or alternative arrangements be made.

**Provider profiles**

Last month we asked you to update your provider profile to ensure we have your correct details including your list of services, languages and geographies. If you haven't had a chance to do this yet then please update your profile as soon as possible.

We have recently invested heavily in a Vendor Relationship System where this information is stored. This new system helps us match our clients with the right providers. Our Client Advisers and Service Support team can quickly search our 600+ provider network to find a provider who matches a client's need be it a service, language or region. If your information is in the system, we will be able to contact you for the service that matches your skill set so we encourage you to update your details.

**Upcoming Service Provider forums**

We had a great response to the forums we conducted earlier this year. We plan on conducting another round of forums early in the new year. We will advise the dates before the end of the year so you can lock it away. We will be having some guest speakers at the next forums so will keep you posted on the details.

**Phone contact**

And as always if you need to get hold of us for whatever reason, here are the key contact details to remember:

To talk with our team about:

- missing services or transactional issues please contact our Care Centre on 1300 966 170 or via email at [service@careconnect.org.au](mailto:service@careconnect.org.au)
- pricing and service agreement discrepancies please contact Procurement on (03) 9270 9993 or via email at [procurement@careconnect.org.au](mailto:procurement@careconnect.org.au)

<sup>1</sup> [https://gen-agedcaredata.gov.au/Resources/Reports-and-publications/2017/September/Home\\_Care\\_Packages\\_Program\\_Data\\_Report\\_2017](https://gen-agedcaredata.gov.au/Resources/Reports-and-publications/2017/September/Home_Care_Packages_Program_Data_Report_2017)