

Practical Support Program Guidelines

What is the Practical Support Program?

Practical support is intended as short-term practical relief, where the treatment for cancer is having a serious direct effect on the functional capacity of the family or the person's capacity to remain independent at home.

The assistance is for the delivery of basic practical support services (listed below) up to a **maximum value of \$350 per person**. Cancer Council WA pays this directly to the service provider on invoice. This is not an entitlement and eligibility is determined by assessment of practical needs within the context of the family's social and financial resources. The fact that a cancer patient is undergoing treatment is not grounds for automatic approval of applications.

Cancer Council WA's Practical Support Program is funded through public donations and fundraising events and receives no government support. As such, referrers are required to be discerning when applying for practical support so that our limited funding is able to assist those who require it most. Cancer Council WA should be approached only as an agency of last resort.

The Practical Support Program is not an emergency service, and services can take up to 10 working days to commence. Cancer Council WA is unable to assist the patient and his/her family with ongoing/long-term practical support.

What is the process for referral into the Practical Support Program?

Cancer Council WA relies on the referrer to make a complete assessment of the applicant's eligibility for existing community social support resources and to approach these services prior to referring to the Program. The referrer is also asked to assess the applicant's familial and social support networks as well as the capacity for the applicant to afford similar services privately.

Cancer Council WA does not have access to full information about patients and/or their situation. It is the responsibility of external agencies to provide a detailed referral into our program. Any calls received by Cancer Council 13 11 20, from patients interested in accessing the program, will be referred back to external agencies or regional Cancer Council WA staff to complete the assessment and determine whether or not an application is eligible.

Who can make a referral?

Applications are made by a health professional responsible for the care of the applicant who has sufficient understanding of the social and financial situation of the client.

Patients are not to be given the form to complete and submit.

Please note that ALL sections of the referral form **MUST** be completed. Incomplete referral forms cannot be processed and will be returned to the referrer.

Who is eligible?

A person with a current, confirmed cancer diagnosis and is undergoing active treatment or has completed active cancer treatment within the last 6 months and is experiencing hardship as a result of a significant lack of social resources. To be eligible an applicant must be a resident of Western Australia.

A referral should only be made for people who request help and are in need of it at the time of referral. Referrals are not to be made for people to access at a later date.

Cancer Council WA must be notified if the client's circumstances change during the provision of these services.

Who is not eligible?

- Those who do not have a cancer diagnosis or those who finished active treatment more than 6 months ago.
- Those who are in receipt of any other funded Practical Support service or other care package.
- Those who have family or friends who are able to provide support.
- Those who have already accessed the full amount of funding available through the Program.
- People who have the capacity and means to fund the required service privately.

What services are covered?

Cancer patients can receive the following practical support services. These services can only be provided if preferred providers are available in the location requested. Patients may access ONE or a combination of the following services up to a total maximum value of \$350.

- Domestic Assistance (home help)
Light housekeeping/home cleaning services for basic home maintenance, up to a maximum of \$350. This includes duties such as mopping, vacuuming and cleaning of wet areas.

Not covered: window/blinds cleaning, rent inspection cleans, vacate/exit cleans, carpet cleaning, one-off/spring cleans.
- Gardening
Basic gardening services, up to a maximum of \$350. Services are limited to pruning, weeding, lawn mowing (where available) and general garden tidy.

Not covered: heavy duty garden services, tree lopping, mulching, reticulation.
- Family Assistance
Short-term in-home child care for the purposes of assisting with attendance at cancer treatment or medical appointments, up to a maximum of \$350. This will be serviced through the child care providers listed on the Practical Support Program panel only.

Access to this service should be discussed with Practical Support Program Officer prior to application.

The service provider may charge for missed appointments and late cancellations so please ensure that the patient contacts them directly if they need to reschedule.

Are there exceptional circumstances?

The program can only provide funding for services that fall within the program guidelines. Exceptional circumstances for assistance or support outside the parameters above will not be considered. This includes a further request for a client who has already accessed the full amount of funding available through the Program or for support after death.

How to make an application?

Applications must be made using the Cancer Council WA Practical Support Application Form. Referrers should ensure that they have the current application form before applying. This is available through the Cancer Council WA website **cancerwa.asn.au/professionals**

The application form MUST be correctly completed for an application to progress. Incomplete forms or illegible forms will be returned to the referrer for amendment prior to any processing occurring.

Please ensure your patient is aware that the total application process may take up to 10 working days from receipt of referral, by Practical Support Program Officer, to implementation by service provider. It is the referrer's responsibility to ensure that the patient is aware of the program guidelines and has consented to take part in the program. The patient is to direct any issues, regarding the service, to the service provider in the first instance.

A flow chart is provided overleaf. Referrers should call Cancer Council WA on (08) 6389 7810 for any enquiries relating to the application process.

Once completed, the application should be emailed to the Program Officer at practicalsupport@cancerwa.asn.au or faxed to (08) 6389 7821.

PRACTICAL SUPPORT APPLICATION PROCESS

