



Government of **Western Australia**  
Department of **Communities**



# Community Aids and Equipment Program (CAEP)

Referrer's Information Kit

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## Document control

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## Amendments

Version	Date	Author	Description
1	July 2018	Strategic Contract Management Officer	Rebranded to new Corporate design
2	March 2019	Strategic Contract Management Officer	Clarify eligibility criteria.
3	August 2020	Strategic Contract Management Officer	Clarify eligibility criteria.
4	July 2021	Area Manager	Update to Disability Sector Organisation Provider

# 1 Introduction

The Community Aids and Equipment Program (CAEP) is funded by the State Government and administered by the Department of Communities. The main purpose of CAEP is to provide basic and essential equipment for people with a long-term disability who meet the CAEP eligibility criteria. Access to CAEP funded equipment is guided by the CAEP Manual and Imprest List, which outlines the policies and procedures as well as the basic and essential equipment that can be funded.

The program objectives of CAEP are:

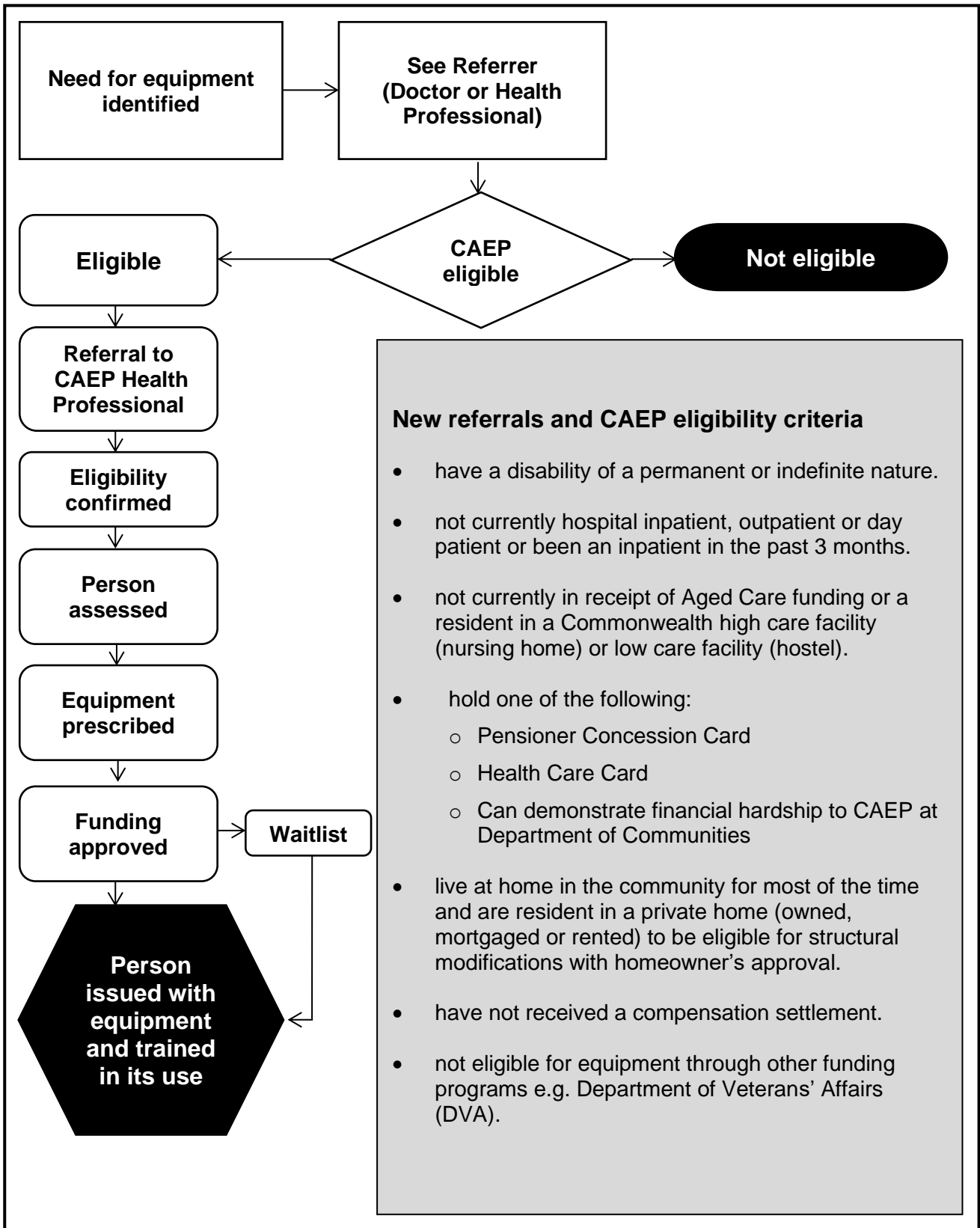
- to provide essential and basic equipment to CAEP eligible people to support them to manage at home.
- to provide a service that enables equitable access to aids and equipment within consistent guidelines (see Page 3 for eligibility criteria).
- to apply administrative and equipment resources within the program to ensure maximum benefit to the target group.

The purpose of this information kit is to aid referrers and community organisations to help eligible individuals' access CAEP appropriately and effectively.

## 2 Accessibility criteria

### 2.1 The process

CAEP will fund basic and essential equipment that enables people with long-term disability to live in their own homes.



## 3 Eligibility criteria

Existing CAEP individuals (already known to CAEP; check with CAEP Coordinators if unsure)

- Continue to access CAEP until their NDIS plan is approved.

New individuals (not already accessing CAEP)

- Under 65 years old, refer to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).
- Aged 65 years and older, refer to My Aged Care.
- If the person with disability is declined access by NDIS or My Aged Care, who would otherwise meet CAEP eligibility, the person may access CAEP. Department of Communities will determine eligibility on a case-by-case basis with receipt of the outcome letter by NDIS or My Aged Care.

### 3.1 Funded

CAEP will fund aids and equipment from the CAEP Imprest List for people who meet all the criteria below:

- have a disability of a permanent or indefinite nature
- are holders of one of the following Australian cards:
  - Pensioner Concession Card
  - Health Care Card

or

- the person can demonstrate financial hardship using Centrelink criteria and are made eligible having been reviewed by the Communities appointed Senior Officer.
- are in a residential situation that is structured to encourage independent living and live in the community for the majority of the time.
- are resident in a private home (owned, mortgaged or rented) to be eligible for home modifications.
- have not received compensation settlement (note: If a settlement is subsequently made the person will be expected to recompense the Service Provider).

**Note:** A person living in a State government or non-government hostel, group home or social or community housing accommodation is eligible for personalised and portable equipment only.

### 3.2 Not funded

CAEP will not fund aids and equipment from the CAEP Imprest List for people who meet the criteria below:

- are currently hospital patients, that is, inpatients, day hospital patients or outpatients of a hospital who should be discharged with ongoing availability of equipment or installations to ensure safe discharge and prevent re-admission.

- Inpatients, outpatients and day patients may be eligible for CAEP services if the reason for their intervention in the hospital is not related to the equipment need or they are only attending for review/maintenance purpose, that is not active or therapeutic intervention.
- a person living in a State government or non-government hostel, group home or social or community housing accommodation, who requires equipment for communal use or structural modifications.
- any structural modification or equipment that address Occupational Health and Safety issues of paid care workers.
- are funded by Aged Care funding or are a resident in a Commonwealth funded low or high care facility.
- are eligible for equipment under other government funded programs.

**Note:** Holders of a Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) Veteran Card (Gold, White or Orange) must demonstrate they are not entitled to the item through the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA). Written documentation from DVA stating the person is not entitled to DVA assistance and the reason for this decision is required.

## 4 Equipment criteria

CAEP was established to assist people with disability to remain in their own homes within their community. The eligibility criteria states:

Individuals must be "in a residential situation that is structured to encourage independent living and live in the community for most of the time". These residential situations do not include nursing homes or hospitals.

Accordingly, the main purpose of CAEP is to provide essential equipment to CAEP eligible people to support their independent functioning at home.

The CAEP essential criteria to be addressed are:

- the equipment is essential for independent functioning and functional care at home.
- the equipment must be the most basic model/type that meets the clinical need.
- the equipment must be for personal use only, that is not communal use.
- the equipment is required for use in the person's primary residence.
- the item costs more than \$50.
- the equipment is required for safety and behavioural purposes where applicable.

## 5 Home Environment criteria

CAEP defines the home environment as the person's primary residence and includes external access to the clothesline, letterbox, and garage (where relevant). The Communities appointed Senior Officer would consider individual cases for full access to the home's external environment when that environment is a farm or a few acres of land.

CAEP may fund equipment for purpose outside the home where access is essential for daily home functioning: for example, a scooter/power wheelchair to access:

- medical and dental services.
- shops/services where there is a need to purchase food, pay bills and obtain other requirements for home functioning.

Where a non-equipment option meets the same need, that option must be pursued first. Strategies such as the use of respite, shopping when the client is at school, or using the local taxi service must be explored. The applicant must demonstrate that these strategies are either not an option or are an impractical alternative to supplying the equipment for essential broad community access.

Factors to consider when assessing which is the most practical solution include:

- frequency of need (that is, several times a week)
- other supports and options; and
- intermittent home-based need where there is regular fluctuation in the person's abilities to manage without the equipment.

Each piece of equipment requested through CAEP must meet the Home Environment criteria and any specific criteria for that item as defined in the CAEP Manual and Imprest list.

## 6 Issuing and returning equipment

CAEP equipment is provided to people as a long-term loan until no longer needed. People receive the most appropriate basic and essential equipment to address their functional need. Equipment provided may be refurbished or purchased from a supplier.

When people no longer need the equipment, they should advise the prescribing therapist. The prescribing therapist can arrange for equipment collection if the equipment can be refurbished for use by someone else.

## 7 CAEP Structure

CAEP structure is set out below:

- the Referrer
- the Service Provider/Budget Holder
- the Specifier

### 7.1 The Referrer

An applicant who requires an item of equipment will need to be referred to CAEP to access funding from either:

- a medical practitioner or specialist physician/surgeon to a Specifier (including Specialist Provider).



- a disability sector organisation with the expertise to refer from within their organisation.
- in rural and remote areas, a community nurse, remote area nurse, clinical therapist or local coordinator may refer applicants.

A referral is required from a recognised Referrer for initial specification of aids and equipment. A new referral is not required for replacement of items or new equipment for the same disability, unless there is significant changed need or clinical indicators that suggest a new referral is warranted.

**The role of the Referrer is to undertake the following:**

- identify person's clinical need for equipment.
- initial check on person's eligibility for CAEP.
- determine the appropriate Service Provider.
- inform the Service Provider by phone, email and/or mail about the referral, providing the Service Provider with all necessary information (see CAEP Referral form).
- inform the applicant to contact the Service Provider for their catchment area to find out the Service Provider's process (that is, where do they go, who do they see for what purpose).

## **7.2 The Service Provider/Budget Holder**

A Service Provider is an organisation that has entered into an agreement to provide aids and equipment for people with long term disability who meet the CAEP criteria.

Department of Communities administers CAEP funding to the Service Provider via a Service Agreement for non-government organisations and via a Service Level Agreement for the Department of Health providers.

CAEP has entered into Service Agreements with CAEP Service Providers to ensure that in most cases applicants can access services in their local area.

CAEP currently has three types of CAEP Service Providers:

### **Health Service Provider**

Department of Health hospitals and community health centres are grouped into the following designated regions and each of the services listed below have CAEP funding:

- East Metropolitan Health Service
- North Metropolitan Health Service
- South Metropolitan Health Service
- WA Country Health Service

### **Disability Sector Organisation Provider**

Organisations that provide CAEP services for people with disability are referred to as Disability Sector Organisation Providers. The Disability Sector Organisation Providers listed below have CAEP funding:

- Ability WA
- Therapy Focus

### **Specialist Service Provider**

Organisations providing specialised services are Specialist Service Providers. People can access their local Service Providers for routine equipment and may be able to access a Specialist Service Provider for specialist equipment at the same time. There are two Specialist Service Providers for CAEP:

- Statewide Equipment Service – East Metropolitan Health Service and South Metropolitan Health Service for complex equipment needs.
- WA Sleep Disorders Research Institute for respiratory equipment.

### **The role of the CAEP Service Provider is to undertake the following:**

- Confirming eligibility and that the referral contains all relevant information
- Managing their allocated budgets.
- Specifying and providing equipment.
- Repairs and maintenance of equipment.
- Ensure equipment specification is consistent with current clinical best practice.
- Be competent to assess, specify, prescribe, and issue equipment or to seek senior colleague advice and ratification of assessment etc., when required.
- Comply with the current Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) legislation.

## **7.3 The Specifier**

A Specifier is a CAEP recognised or registered health professional who undertakes equipment prescription.

### **Recognised Specifiers for CAEP:**

- Registered Nurse
- Occupational therapist
- Orthotist
- Physiotherapist
- Podiatrist
- Speech pathologist
- Statewide Equipment Service
- WA Sleep Disorders Research Institute

### **The role of the CAEP Specifier is to undertake the following:**

- confirms that the applicant meets CAEP eligibility criteria.
- advises the applicant on the CAEP process and informs them of their consumer rights and responsibilities.
- undertakes equipment specification consistent with current clinical best practice.

- assesses, specifies, prescribes, and issues equipment.
- ensures the request is consistent with the CAEP guidelines.
- liaises with Referrer where appropriate.
- submits equipment application to the relevant Budget Holder.
- gains approval from CAEP Service Provider to spend CAEP funds.
- checks that the equipment supplied meets the specifications, is fit for purpose and in good working order.
- supplies aids and equipment to the applicant, including any training and instructions about using and maintaining the equipment.
- reviews equipment to ensure ongoing suitability and the need for maintenance/repairs.

## 8 CAEP equipment process

The steps below outline the process that is to be followed when applying for and receiving CAEP funded equipment.

- person obtains a referral from a doctor (GP or specialist) or therapist.
- the Referrer advises the person on the CAEP process and refers them to the relevant CAEP Service Provider/Budget Holder.
- the Service Provider/Budget Holder organises an appropriate Specifier for the person.
- the Specifier assesses the person and recommends the appropriate item of equipment to meet their functional need.
- the Specifier contacts the Service Provider/Budget Holder and applies for funding.
- the Service Provider/Budget Holder approves funding and orders equipment prescribed for the person when funding is available.
- the Specifier trains the person and/or their family and carers in the use of the equipment.

Also see the flow chart 'Accessing CAEP – the processes' on page 2.

## 9 CAEP Referral Form

The referral form is available on the Department of Communities website:

<https://www.communities.wa.gov.au/services/disability-services/>

<http://www.disability.wa.gov.au/services-support-and-eligibility/services-supports-and-eligibility-new/services/services-provided-by-the-commission/equipment-and-technology/community-aids-and-equipment-program-caep/>

All completed CAEP Referral Forms should be sent to the correct CAEP Service Provider as identified by postcode, listed in the CAEP Referral Form.