

Eligibility Criteria

General Principle

Homemaker services means the minimum set of household tasks required to maintain a safe and supportive environment for the client. Services may include: cleaning, laundry and meal preparation and by exception, transportation, banking or shopping. Services do not include major home repairs.

The objective of the homemaker services program is to support and enhance the dignity and independence of physically disabled, mentally disabled or elderly adults, and to assist them to remain in their own communities with family and friends, thereby avoiding institutionalization.

Homemaker services are intended to:

- assist clients to live in their own homes as long as it is practical and in the best interests of the clients and their families;
- supplement, but not replace, the care provided by families, other unpaid caregivers and communities;
- promote the independence and well-being of clients, their families and other unpaid caregivers; and,
- provide respite care to the family member or other caregiver ordinarily caring for the person in the person's home.

The program recognizes the right and responsibility of the individual to remain at home for as long as it is reasonable, safe and practical to receive support services in the home setting. Individuals are encouraged to participate, to the fullest degree possible, in the development and implementation of a plan of service delivery structured to meet their assessed care needs.

It is the responsibility of the administering authority to determine the nature, amount, cost and duration of the service to be provided. The provision of service is based on available funding.

Philosophy

The underlying philosophy of the program is the belief that individuals are responsible, and wish to care for themselves and their families for as long as they are able to do so. The program is therefore supportive in nature, and provides services only to the extent that personal and family resources are unable to meet care needs.

The philosophy of the program is based on:

- the promotion of personal independence;
- the promotion of personal and family responsibility in planning and providing care;
- the encouragement of family and community involvement in providing care;
- the encouragement of a lifestyle consistent with community norms; and,
- working in partnership with other complementary programs and services offered by other federal government departments. For example, Veterans Affairs Canada and/or Health Canada's First Nations and Inuit Home and Community Care Program.

Eligibility

A person can only receive homemaker services if the person:

- is an eligible client;
- has been assessed as requiring homemaker services (see Chapter 1.2 vol. 2, Application Process); and,
- pays the daily client User Charge, if applicable (see Chapter 1.4 vol. 2, Client User Charges).

DIAND has established eligibility criteria related to the age, residency and health of the client. For example:

Age

In order to apply for homemaker services, an individual must be 19 years of age or older.

Residency

An applicant for homemaker services must be resident on-reserve at the time of application.

Health of the Applicant

Homemaker services are designed for those individuals who cannot live independently because of on-going, health related problems which do not require care in an acute or rehabilitation program. These problems are normally:

- of at least three months duration; and,
- due to a progressive and /or chronic condition.

The goal is to provide clients with services appropriate to their long term functional needs.

Access to Services

Administering authorities may provide homemaker services for eligible clients which are consistent with the following:

- Access to services is to be based on:
 - the client's health and functional status; and,
 - the availability of family and other community supports.
- Priority for service provision is to be given to clients who have been assessed as having the highest care needs or those who are living with the highest levels of risk.

Notwithstanding items #1 and #2, homemaker services may be denied, as a final resort, if providing service to the client puts the homemaker at risk.

Family Members Excluded from Providing Homemaker Services

Within the limits of their means and capacity, individuals and their relatives have primary responsibility for home management and supports. Payments may not be issued, therefore, when there is another person in the home, or a family member in the community who may reasonably be expected to provide the assistance required by the disabled or elderly person.

Services shall be withdrawn when a family member becomes available to provide assistance.

Respite Benefit for Families

While the homemaker program does not provide financial subsidies to families who care for their relatives. The program may provide funds for respite to families and relatives. The client must be eligible for homemaker services for their families to access financial support for respite services.

Veterans' Benefits

Veterans Affairs Canada provides services to veterans on and off-reserve.

Where it is considered that a veteran would benefit from additional services, a referral can be made to the nearest Veterans Services District Office of Veterans Affairs Canada.

Health Canada's First Nations and Inuit Home and Community Care Program

Health Canada's First Nations and Inuit Home and Community Care Program coordinates and links with existing programs and services at the community and/or provincial/territorial level.

The program is comprised of essential service elements and may be expanded to include supportive service elements provided the essential service elements are met. When communities already have all essential services through alternate sources, the program will not duplicate these services, but will allow communities to augment, through the supportive service components, the current services.

Essential service elements include:

- a structured client assessment process that includes on-going reassessment and determines client needs, family supports and service allocation. It is recommended that clients be assessed by an appropriately trained registered nurse;
- a managed care process that incorporates case management, referrals and service linkages to existing services provided both on and off reserve;
- home care nursing services that includes direct service delivery as well as supervision and teaching of personnel providing personal care services;
- the delivery of home support services that are determined by the community needs assessment plan and that do not duplicate, but enhance existing DIAND homemaker services. Home support covers a range of services such as personal care services (e.g. assistance with Activities of Daily Living such as bathing, grooming, dressing, care of bed bound clients including turning, back rubs and routine skin care, etc.) and home management (e.g. light housekeeping, laundry, meal preparation);

- provision of in-home respite care;
- established linkages with other professional and social services that may include coordinated assessment processes, referral protocols and service links with such providers as hospitals, physicians, respite and therapeutic services;
- provision of and access to specialized medical equipment, supplies and specialized pharmaceuticals to provide home and community care; and,
- a system of record keeping and data collection to carry out program monitoring, ongoing planning, reporting and evaluation activities.

For further information, please contact Health Canada's First Nations and Inuit Home and Community Care Program.

Eligibility Exclusions - Third Party Liability

Where the disability necessitating homemaker services is due to an illness or injury for which a third party is liable, the administering authority does not assume financial responsibility.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to inform the administering authority of the existence of, or a possibility of, a third party liability claim.

When there appears to be third party liability, the applicant is referred to the appropriate individual, agency or organization. The most common referrals involve the Workers Compensation Board and the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia.

If the applicant is turned down by the third party and wishes to pursue the question of eligibility for homemaker services, the applicant is requested to have the agency concerned write directly to the health authority outlining details of the claim and the reasons why the requested service cannot be provided.

If the need for service becomes urgent or critical and the applicant is otherwise eligible for homemaker services, payment for the necessary service may be provided by the administering authority on an interim basis. Such authorization will occur by exception only.

