

Victorian Aids and Equipment Program (VA&EP) Guidelines

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Department
of Health

Victorian Aids and Equipment Program (VA&EP) Guidelines

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Authorised and published by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne.

© State of Victoria, Department of Health, June 2026.

ISBN 978-1-76131-494-0 (pdf/online/MS word)

Available on the [Department of Health website](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/supporting-independent-living/victorian-aids-and-equipment-program). <<https://www.health.vic.gov.au/supporting-independent-living/victorian-aids-and-equipment-program>>

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Purpose of these guidelines

These guidelines provide a framework for delivering the Victorian Aids and Equipment Program (VA&EP).

These guidelines are intended for:

- VA&EP service providers
- Assistive technology (AT) practitioners
- Department of Health program managers
- Clients and relevant stakeholders

These guidelines can be found on the [Department of Health website](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/supporting-independent-living/victorian-aids-and-equipment-program).

<<https://www.health.vic.gov.au/supporting-independent-living/victorian-aids-and-equipment-program>>:

The guidelines reflect current Department of Health policy and supersede all previous versions.

Terms used in this document

Term	Definition
Assistive Technology (AT)	Devices and modifications whose primary purpose is to maintain or improve a person's functioning and independence. In this context, the assistive technology available under the VA&EP includes aids and equipment, home and vehicle modifications and some specific health-related items.
Current client	A person who is actively receiving assistive technology support from the VA&EP.
Wait listed client	A person who applied to and has been accepted as eligible to receive assistive technology support from the VA&EP for a specific need, but is on a wait list to receive this support.
Future client	A person who is yet to apply and therefore yet to be determined as eligible to receive assistive technology support from the VA&EP for a specific need.
Asset	An assistive technology item that the VA&EP service provider maintains ownership of.
Assistive technology practitioners	The AT practitioners who undertake assessments, help applicants identify the most appropriate assistive technology and lodge applications on the applicant's behalf.
VA&EP service providers	Health services (Grampians Health) or community service organisations funded by the Department of Health to administer the VA&EP schemes.
Subsidy	The amount of funding provided by the VA&EP toward the purchase price of an assistive technology item.

Gap funding requirement	The difference between the subsidy available from the VA&EP and the actual cost of the assistive technology, which the client or a third party is required to pay.
Eligibility	A person allowed to participate in the VA&EP by meeting specific program requirements.
Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency	Ensures that Australia's registered health practitioners are suitably trained, qualified and safe to practise.

Role of the Department of Health

The Department of Health is responsible for:

- developing policy and guidelines for operating the VA&EP including setting eligibility criteria, determining subsidy levels and the list of AT items available.
- planning and developing new VA&EP programs with stakeholders, including analysing trends, emerging needs and demand projections.
- monitoring service provision to ensure funded VA&EP service providers meet service targets and quality performance measures.

VA&EP service providers

Six VA&EP service providers are funded by the Department of Health to deliver the VA&EP.

VA&EP service provider	Program responsibility
<u>Grampians Health State-Wide Equipment Program (SWEP)</u>	Administers the: • Aids and Equipment Program (A&EP) • Continence Aids Program (CA) • Domiciliary Oxygen Program (DOP) • Supported Accommodation Equipment Assistance Scheme (SAEAS) • Vehicle Modification Subsidy Scheme (VMSS) • Lymphoedema Compression Garment Program (LCGP) • Laryngectomy Consumables Program (LCP) • Preventative Maintenance Program (PMP)
<u>Expression Australia</u>	Administers the Smoke Alarm Scheme
<u>Freedom Solutions</u>	Administers customised assistive technology
<u>MND Victoria</u>	Administers an assistive technology library for people who have motor neurone disease
<u>Vision Australia Foundation</u>	Administers the low-cost Vision Aids Scheme
<u>Yooralla</u>	Administers the Electronic Communication Devices Scheme (ECDS)

About the Victorian Aids and Equipment Program

Program aim

The VA&EP provides eligible people with subsidised assistive technology to enhance independence in the home, facilitate community participation and support families and carers in their role.

Eligibility criteria

A person is eligible to receive assistive technology support from the VA&EP if they meet:

- **all** of the VA&EP eligibility criteria
- **none** of the VA&EP ineligibility criteria

The VA&EP eligibility form is available at: <https://swep.bhs.org.au/other-relevant-documents.php>

VA&EP eligibility criteria	
A person is eligible to receive assistive technology support from the VA&EP for a specific need if they meet all the following criteria.	
Criteria	Details
Residency status	Must be a permanent resident of Victoria OR a refugee or an asylum seeker (see Identifying refugees and asylum seekers in this document that provides guidance to assistive technology practitioners and VA&EP service providers on how to identify refugees and asylum seekers).
Support needs	Must require assistive technology on a permanent or long-term (period greater than 12 months) basis for a health or ageing-related need as determined by an appropriate assistive technology practitioner.
Additional category-specific criteria	Must meet additional eligibility criteria for each program category listed in the relevant Category-specific subsidy and eligibility information sections of this document.
Additional VA&EP service provider criteria	Must meet any additional eligibility criteria that each of the six VA&EP service providers may have. Additional eligibility criteria will be listed on the relevant VA&EP service providers' website. As these criteria may be subject to change, refer to the websites of individual VA&EP service providers for the most up-to-date information.

A person may have multiple needs that require assistive technology support. For example, someone with limited mobility and a respiratory condition might need both a mobility aid and domiciliary oxygen. Eligibility to receive support from the VA&EP is assessed separately for each need.

VA&EP ineligibility criteria

A person is not eligible to receive assistive technology support from the VA&EP for a specific need if they meet any of the following criteria.	
Criteria	Details
Eligible for support through the NDIS, WorkSafe Victoria or the TAC	A person is not eligible to receive assistive technology support from the VA&EP if they are eligible to receive the required assistive technology support for the specific need from: - the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) - WorkSafe Victoria - the Transport Accident Commission Exemptions: a person may still be eligible to receive assistive technology support from the VA&EP for a specific need if they are waiting on an access or planning decision for the NDIS, but not yet actively receiving assistive technology support for that specific need.
Eligible for Commonwealth-provided aged care services	A person receiving any level of a Commonwealth-provided Home Care Package or Commonwealth Support at Home funding is not eligible to receive domiciliary oxygen through the VA&EP as domiciliary oxygen should instead be funded through the Commonwealth Support at Home Oxygen supplement. A person receiving a Level 3 or Level 4 Commonwealth-provided Home Care Package or Level 4 to 8 Commonwealth Government Support at Home classification will not be eligible to receive assistive technology support from the VA&EP except for the following items: - a mobility scooter - a powered wheelchair - home modifications - electronic communication devices Exemptions: a person may still be eligible to receive assistive technology support from the VA&EP for a specific need if they are waiting for a Commonwealth-provided Home Care Packages or Commonwealth-provided Support at Home package but are not actively receiving assistive technology support for that specific need.
Commonwealth-funded aged care residents	A person is not eligible to receive assistive technology support from the VA&EP for a specific need if they live in a Commonwealth-funded residential aged care facility. Exemptions: residents of Commonwealth-funded aged care facilities are eligible to apply for an electronic communication device via the Electronic Communication Devices Scheme administered by Yooralla.
DVA Gold Card holders	A person who holds a Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) Gold Card but does not have a 'clinically assessed need' for DVA funding can only apply for the following items through the VA&EP: - a mobility scooter - a powered wheelchair - vehicle modifications
Current hospital inpatients	A person is not eligible to receive assistive technology support from the VA&EP if they are an inpatient in a public or private health facility.

	For the first 30 days after discharge, public hospitals and extended care centres are responsible for providing assistive technology related to a person's hospital admission. Public hospitals are also responsible for providing the first orthosis for patients. For current information about public hospital responsibilities in relation to assistive technology visit the Department of Health's fees and charges webpage <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/hospitals-and-health-services/patient-fees-charges/other-services>. Applications for the VA&EP from patients who will or are likely to have a permanent need for assistive technology may be submitted while in a public hospital. However, the application will not be processed until the 30-day post-discharge period has expired. The VA&EP will accept applications from private hospital patients immediately on discharge for the available range of subsidised items.
Private health insurance coverage	A person is not eligible to receive assistive technology support from the VA&EP if they can claim the full cost of the assistive technology through private health insurance. The VA&EP will fund any gap between the cost of an item and the private health insurance refund, so long as the gap does not exceed the maximum subsidy amount provided by VA&EP for that item. (For example, the cost of an item is \$1,000 and a person's private health insurance will refund \$300. The VA&EP provides a maximum subsidy amount of \$900 for this item. Therefore, the VA&EP will subsidise the full \$700 gap between the cost of the item and the private health insurance refund because the gap amount of \$700 is less than the maximum subsidy amount of \$900.)
Access to compensation, legal settlements or court awards	A person will not be eligible to receive assistive technology support from the VA&EP if they have any form of compensation, legal settlements or court awards for the required assistive technology. Exemptions: in some circumstances, a person may be eligible to receive assistive technology support from the VA&EP for a specific need once compensation or settlement funds for their assistive technology have been fully expended.
Preference for new AT item when there is a suitable re-issue item available	A person cannot elect to access VA&EP subsidy for a new AT item if there is a suitable re-issue item available.

Access for refugees and asylum seekers

Most refugees (humanitarian program entrants, family or skilled/business migration program entrants) have full access to Medicare and income support, whereas asylum seekers live in Victoria on temporary visas with inconsistent access to Medicare and income support.

Refugees and asylum seekers in Victoria should be prioritised for the VA&EP due to disadvantage, which may include health, housing and financial insecurity, social isolation and barriers to employment and education. This is in line with the following two policies:

- [Guide to asylum seeker access to health and community services in Victoria](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/publications/guide-to-asylum-seeker-access-to-health-and-community-services-in-victoria)
<<https://www.health.vic.gov.au/publications/guide-to-asylum-seeker-access-to-health-and-community-services-in-victoria>>
- [Refugee and asylum seeker health services guidelines for the community health program](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/publications/refugee-and-asylum-seeker-health-services-guidelines-for-the-community-health-program)
<<https://www.health.vic.gov.au/publications/refugee-and-asylum-seeker-health-services-guidelines-for-the-community-health-program>>

Identifying refugees and asylum seekers

Due to difficulties associated with identifying refugee or asylum seekers status, including changing visa category rules, referring assistive technology practitioners and VA&EP service providers should be open to identifying and assisting refugees and asylum seekers with available documentation.

Guidance for how to identify an asylum seeker is provided here: [Hospital access for people seeking asylum](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/publications/hospital-access-for-people-seeking-asylum) <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/publications/hospital-access-for-people-seeking-asylum>

Gap funding for refugees and asylum seekers

Where appropriate, gap fee reductions or waivers should be considered by VA&EP providers for asylum seekers and refugees.

Change of eligibility status of existing VA&EP clients

VA&EP clients must continue to meet eligibility requirements to receive ongoing assistive technology support.

VA&EP clients may become ineligible for assistive technology support if they have:

- a change in their **personal circumstances**
- a change in the **specific need** for which the VA&EP provides assistive technology support.

VA&EP service providers are responsible for reviewing the eligibility of current and wait listed clients to ensure that the required assistive technology support is administered for the specific client need.

VA&EP registered AT practitioners are responsible for ensuring clients continue to meet eligibility requirements for ongoing assistive technology support and should inform the VA&EP service provider where a clients change in circumstance or needs may affect eligibility.

VA&EP clients have a duty to report to their VA&EP service provider any of the following changes in personal circumstances that may impact their eligibility to receive VA&EP support.

These changes include but are not limited to:

- becoming an NDIS participant
- becoming a recipient of any other government schemes that fund assistive technology (WorkSafe Victoria, Transport Accident Commission)
- becoming a recipient of a Commonwealth Government Support at Home Program (including the AT-HM scheme)
- entering Commonwealth-funded residential aged care
- receiving compensation for assistive technology from any other source
- moving interstate or overseas.

The impact of changes in eligibility status on VA&EP service provision is outlined in the table below.

Reason for change in eligibility status	Impact on VA&EP services provided
Receiving compensation from other sources	VA&EP clients that receive another source of compensation for assistive technology funded by the VA&EP will be required to repay the cost of the assistive technology to their VA&EP service provider. This applies to subsidies or assistive technology provided by SWEP as per the 'Applicant Declaration' section of the Eligibility Form available at <https://swep.bhs.org.au/other-relevant-documents.php>
Moving interstate or overseas	VA&EP clients relocating interstate or overseas can continue to use the assistive technology supplied, with the exception of domiciliary oxygen. However, the VA&EP will no longer meet the cost of repairing and replacing this assistive technology. VA&EP clients relocating interstate should be referred to the relevant State or Territory assistive technology program for ongoing support. Ongoing support will be contingent on meeting any specific eligibility requirements of that State or Territory.
Becoming a recipient of the Commonwealth Government aged care programs	From 1 November 2025, a change to eligibility status includes becoming a recipient of the Commonwealth Support at Home program. Eligibility for VA&EP support will depend on the client's Support at Home classification and the eligibility rules outlined in the <u>Ineligibility Criteria Section</u>. From 1 July 2026, a change to eligibility status for home modifications includes becoming a recipient of the Commonwealth AT-HM scheme. Eligibility for VA&EP home modification support will depend on the client's AT-HM funding tier and the eligibility rules outlined in the <u>AT-HM Category-specific subsidy and eligibility information</u>.
Moving into residential aged care	VA&EP clients can keep using the assistive technology and the VA&EP service provider will continue to maintain the assistive technology until it is deemed no longer viable to do so. The VA&EP will not modify or meet the cost of replacing any items after a client has moved into residential aged care, as the aged care provider is then expected to meet the assistive technology needs of their residents. Once the assistive technology is no longer appropriate for a client's needs, it should be returned to the VA&EP service provider.

Priority of access framework

To ensure prioritisation of applicants most in need, applications are prioritised according to a priority of access framework where:

- The assistive technology is **critical** to the safety of the applicant or injury prevention in daily living activities.

- Not making the assistive technology available will lead to a deterioration in the applicant's health or functioning abilities that may result in premature admission to institutional care, hospitalisation or dependence on more costly services.
- Not making the assistive technology available will place excessive demand on carers in caring for the applicant and seriously jeopardise current care and living arrangements.

Applications are triaged according to the priority of access framework and available funding. If an applicant's circumstances change and the need for the assistive technology becomes more urgent after the application has been triaged, the applicant's assistive technology practitioner can escalate the urgency of need to the relevant VA&EP service provider.

The criteria for establishing each of the prioritisation categories are presented in the table below.

Prioritisation category	Criteria
No waiting	The assistive technology, subsidy or repair will be supplied as soon as possible after all relevant documentation and information is received. Items within the 'no waiting' category include: • domiciliary oxygen • ongoing supply of continence aids for existing clients • lymphoedema compression garments • laryngectomy supplies • assets triaged as requiring immediate repair • mobility assets triaged as requiring immediate modification • re-issue of assets and replacement of assistive technology deemed unviable to repair • refugees/asylum seekers
High urgency	The assistive technology, subsidy, or repair will be supplied as soon as funds are available to buy the item or modification where a re-issued item is not available. For the item to be supplied by the VA&EP service provider, the client must have submitted all documentation and evidence that they are able to meet any gap funding requirement for the assistive technology item. High urgency is established when: • The assistive technology is critical to the safety of and prevent injury to the client in daily living activities • Not making the assistive technology available will lead to a deterioration of the client's health or functioning that may result in premature admission to institutional care, hospitalisation or dependence on more costly services • Not making the assistive technology available will place excessive demand on carers in caring for the person and seriously jeopardise current care/living arrangements.
Low urgency	The assistive technology or subsidy will be supplied subject to the availability of funds, with applications managed in chronological order of receipt. The category applies where a re-issued item is not available and according to the referring practitioners' consideration of the implications of non provision: • clinical factors • the length of the waiting period experienced by the client.

Subsidies provided by the VA&EP

The VA&EP funds a subsidy toward the purchase price of a range of assistive technology items specified in the [Category-specific subsidy and eligibility information](#) section of this document.

The VA&EP has set subsidy levels for different assistive technology items. Some items have an annual subsidy limit (for example, continence products) or a threshold for replacement.

Detailed VA&EP service provider subsidy information is listed on VA&EP service provider websites:

- [Grampians Health State-wide Equipment Program](#) (SWEP) <<https://swep.bhs.org.au/available-items-and-subsidy.php>>
- [Yooralla](#) <<https://www.yooralla.com.au/services/communication-and-assistive-technology/electronic-communication-devices-scheme>>
- [MND Victoria](#) <<https://www.mnd.org.au/equipment-service>>
- [Freedom Solutions](#) <<https://freedom-solutions.org.au/>>
- [Expression Australia](#) <<https://www.expression.com.au/>>
- [Vision Australia](#) <<https://www.visionaustralia.org/services/funding/other-funding/technology#stateterritory>>

Subsidies not provided

The VA&EP does not provide subsidies in the following instances:
for the cost of an assessment for an assistive technology item or home/vehicle modification
for aids and equipment that are standard household or personal items (for example, washing machines, and clothing)
to modify assistive technology that has been privately funded
retrospectively – the VA&EP will not reimburse or fund any costs associated with an assistive technology item or modification that a person may have committed to before their application to the VA&EP has been submitted and approved, regardless of their eligibility for a subsidy under the VA&EP
for assistive technology specifically for use at work, in educational settings or specifically for recreational pursuits
for items associated with medical treatment or surgical interventions required for periods longer than 12 months with the exception of: • medical gas/oxygen • lymphoedema compression garments • laryngectomy items • subsequent orthoses to treat children who have a club foot but no other associated disabilities. These exemptions are set out for relevant program categories in the Category-specific subsidy and eligibility information section of this document
to provide assistive technology required for periods less than 12 months, for example post-surgery and inpatient rehabilitation
for new dwellings, dwellings under construction or construction of new 'builds' to an existing dwelling
for program-specific exclusion conditions listed in the Category-specific subsidy and eligibility information section of this document
to maintain items that are not considered an asset of VA&EP

Gap funding

'Gap funding' refers to the amount paid by VA&EP clients equivalent to the difference between the full actual cost of the assistive technology and the maximum subsidy available.

Once a client provides formal confirmation to the VA&EP service provider that they have sourced the required gap funding, their application will be assessed using the [priority of access framework](#).

Once the assistive technology item or service has been supplied, the gap funding paid by the client is non-refundable.

Client responsibilities

Clients of the VA&EP are responsible for:	
Paying assessment costs required for the application process	
Organising and attending clinical reviews where appropriate	
Accepting the terms and conditions of the supply of the recommended assistive technology, which include:	
1	Advising the VA&EP service provider of any change to their eligibility status. This includes: • becoming an NDIS participant • becoming a recipient of any other government schemes that fund assistive technology (WorkSafe Victoria, Transport Accident Commission) • becoming a recipient of a Commonwealth Government Home Care Package or Support at Home package (including the AT-HM scheme) • entering Commonwealth-funded residential aged care • receiving compensation for assistive technology from any other source • receiving a concession card • moving interstate or overseas.
2	Accepting a refurbished item that will meet their assessed needs
3	Funding the non-refundable gap fee equivalent to the difference between the cost of the assistive technology and the VA&EP subsidy provided for that item
4	Refraining from making modifications or repairs to assets owned by a VA&EP service provider
5	Caring for and cleaning the asset
6	Replacing wheelchair and scooter tyres and tubes
7	Agreeing to enable access to the assistive technology for preventative maintenance on assets owned by a VA&EP service provider
8	Contacting the VA&EP service provider as soon as possible to report faults or repairs required
9	Not putting any member of the public at risk through inappropriately or negligently using the VA&EP assistive technology
10	Advising their assistive technology practitioner of any change in their physical, cognitive or psychological condition, or change of place of residence that could affect the safe use of the VA&EP assistive technology

11	Agreeing to organise relevant reviews by an assistive technology practitioner of their capacity for safe use of the assistive technology provided under the VA&EP
12	Agreeing to a new assessment and recommendations made by an assistive technology practitioner, including returning assets owned by a VA&EP service provider when it has been determined that a change places the client and/or members of the public at risk through operating the item in a potentially unsafe way
13	Considering taking out insurance for the assistive technology where appropriate (for example, an insurance policy for third-party damage, fire and theft for a wheelchair or scooter.)
14	Understanding that if an item has been 'written-off' by the VA&EP service provider due to being unviable to maintain, and not due to safety, the client assumes ongoing full responsibility for the item should they wish to keep it.
15	Understanding their rights and responsibilities within the Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights

The VA&EP application process

The VA&EP relies on the support of assistive technology practitioners to deliver an efficient client-centred program. Assistive technology practitioners registered to practice with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency or other professional/regulatory bodies certify the applicant has a permanent need for the assistive technology.

Some VA&EP service providers require the assistive technology practitioner to be registered with the VA&EP service provider. The assistive technology practitioner undertakes the assessment of an client's clinical need and, in conjunction with the client, prescribes the most appropriate assistive technology available through the VA&EP. Assistive technology practitioner responsibilities are set out in the table below.

An assistive technology practitioner is responsible for
assisting the client to understand the VA&EP eligibility criteria and assessing the client against these eligibility criteria
discussing with the client any potential non-refundable gap funding requirements
providing information about the Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights
establishing that the client and/or their carer has the cognitive, physical and psychological ability to operate the assistive technology safely
not prescribing assistive technology that represents a restrictive restraint as outlined in the <i>Disability and Social Services Regulation Amendment Act 2023</i>
ensuring there is no suitable refurbished assistive technology item available that will meet the client's needs before recommending the supply of a new item
ensuring training is provided to the client/carers to safely use their assistive technology
ensuring the client is aware of any future reassessment requirements
ensuring the client is fully aware of their obligations in accepting support through the VA&EP
ensuring client continues to meet eligibility requirements for ongoing AT support and advise the service provider when circumstances or needs change
maintain current professional registration and VA&EP credentialling requirements

Concession card status

As part of the application process, VA&EP service providers must collect the client's concession or health care card status. Where a client advises they hold a concession or health care card, the client must provide the card type and card number as part of their application.

Application assessment and approval

VA&EP service providers will confirm the client's eligibility and application in writing within ten working days of receiving a completed application.

The VA&EP service provider will advise the client:

- of the status of their application
- arrangements for the supply of the assistive technology.

Assistive technology item ownership and maintenance

Ownership

The service provider retains ownership of an assistive technology asset when the subsidy provided by the VA&EP exceeds 50 per cent of the item cost and the item is deemed 'reissuable' when no longer required.

Assistive technology owned by the VA&EP service provider can be re-issued, except in the case of:

- home modifications
- vehicle modifications
- transfer aids such as ceiling hoist tracking and stair lifts, including tracking that is attached to a wall
- personal use items such as wigs, orthoses/shoes, lymphoedema garments and voice aids
- low-cost items such as over-toilet frames and bath seats

The applicant can elect to retain ownership of an assistive technology asset where they contribute more than 50 per cent of the item cost. Applicants that own items are responsible for the cost of ongoing repairs, preventative maintenance and applicable annual electrical safety checks.

In instances where an applicant wishes to own the item but the subsidy covers its full cost, the applicant must contribute more than 50 per cent of the item cost. The VA&EP will subsidise the remaining cost.

Individual VA&EP service providers may have additional loan duration and ownership conditions.

Refurbished items

Clients are unable to access funding towards the cost of a new item if the VA&EP service provider has confirmed that a refurbished item is available. These items can often be provided quickly and generally at lower/no cost to the applicant.

The VA&EP experiences high demand and clients may experience lengthy wait times to access subsidies.

Quality standards of assistive technology supplied

Assistive technology available through the VA&EP conform to one or more of the following requirements:

- the relevant Australian Standards or International Standard, if applicable.
- Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) registration (class 1 medical devices), if applicable.

The primary consideration guiding assistive technology purchases by the VA&EP is client safety. The quality and durability of assistive technology is balanced against:

- delivery and set-up costs
- training requirements
- warranty provisions
- the availability of spare parts.

Procurement strategies are undertaken to maximise the purchasing power of the VA&EP service and optimise value for money. Australian-made assistive technology is preferred.

Repairs, maintenance and replacement

The VA&EP service provider will fund necessary repairs on items it owns. SWEPP provides a 24/7 emergency repair service for items they own.

Clients are responsible for:

- contacting their assistive technology practitioner to discuss the ongoing suitability of the issued item if their functional needs change
- advising their VA&EP service provider of the need to undertake a repair

If neglect beyond usual wear and tear or misuse of an item is established, the VA&EP will not be responsible for repairs.

Requests for repairs to assets owned by VA&EP service providers are prioritised based on the client's safety, the availability of back-up assistive technology and, if applicable, their carer, using the Priority of Access framework.

Cases where assistive technology is defective, unsafe or fails to meet prescribed construction, performance and design standards, will be reported to Consumer Affairs Victoria.

Where a manufacturer recommends replacing an item after a period of time (for example, 5 years), the VA&EP service provider will arrange a comprehensive assessment to establish:

- the general condition of the item
- if the item is operating safely
- if it is financially viable to continue to fund repairs

Based on findings against these criteria, the VA&EP service provider may not replace the item.

Replacement items may be supplied subject to any time limit thresholds specified in the [Category-specific subsidy and eligibility information](#) section of this document when:

- the assistive technology no longer meets the functional needs of the client or is no longer useable
- it is more economical to replace the assistive technology than to pay for further repairs
- a client's situation or condition has changed and replacing the item is clinically justified
- a wheelchair/scooter supplied through the VA&EP was stolen or intentionally irreparably damaged by an unknown perpetrator and the client does not have insurance cover.

An application to replace the assistive technology should be submitted to the VA&EP service provider if applicable.

Write-off and disposal of items with an asset number

The VA&EP service provider must determine the financial viability of an asset including the cost of repairs, retrieval, safety requirements, potential to re-issue and use of suitable parts.

In cases where the VA&EP service provider deems that the item is no longer viable, the VA&EP service provider should document the asset write-off.

Where a client wishes to keep assistive technology that the VA&EP service provider has deemed unviable to continue to maintain, ownership of the assistive technology is transferred to the client who assumes full liability for safe use and maintenance of that item. The client is then responsible for arranging and paying for all future repairs or maintenance of that item. This option is not available for items where it has been determined the assistive technology is unsafe.

Category-specific subsidy and eligibility information

This section outlines the assistive technology that can be supplied by VA&EP service providers for each program category. Each section provides:

- maximum subsidy amounts available
- qualification requirements for practitioners assessing program applicants
- additional client eligibility requirements.

The State-wide Equipment Program (SWEP) has developed several guides and assistive technology practitioner manuals providing information about applications, assessment and item availability for each program category. These can be accessed from the [SWEP website](https://swep.bhs.org.au/practitioner-manuals.php) <<https://swep.bhs.org.au/practitioner-manuals.php>>

The SWEP AT categories include:

- [Domiciliary Oxygen Program](#)
- [Continence aids](#)
- [Lymphoedema Compression Garment Program](#)
- [Laryngectomy Program](#)
- [Beds, pressure-reducing mattresses and accessories](#)
- [Environmental control units](#)
- [Specialised bathing and toileting](#)
- [Orthoses](#)
- [Wheelchairs and mobility scooters](#)
- [Specialised seating](#)
- [Walking aids](#)
- [Transfer equipment](#)
- [Wigs](#)
- [Home modifications](#)
- [Vehicle Modification Subsidy Scheme \(VMSS\)](#)

[Appendix A](#) provides a summary of subsidy amounts and assistive technology practitioner qualification requirements across each program category.

Domiciliary Oxygen Program

Subsidised items

Items	Maximum subsidy available
• Stationary oxygen concentrators • Portable oxygen cylinders with an oxygen-conserving device or standard regulator • Portable oxygen concentrators • Tubing and nasal cannulas • Oxygen cylinder trolley or carry bag	\$2,400 per annum

Qualification requirements for assessing practitioners

Assistive technology practitioners assessing applicant eligibility for this program category are required to have the following qualifications.

Assistive technology practitioner qualification requirements
Specialist respiratory and sleep medicine physician OR Specialist palliative medicine physician OR Specialist medical oncologist OR Specialist cardiologist OR Specialist general physician (with respiratory interest) AND Current SWEP ATP registration to prescribe domiciliary oxygen Children under 18 years: If the applicant is a child under 18 years, the assistive technology practitioner must also hold a paediatric professional qualification.

Additional client eligibility criteria

- To be eligible for subsidised oxygen through the Domiciliary Oxygen Program, the applicant's clinical test results must meet the Thoracic Society of Australia and New Zealand's (TSANZ) guidelines for domiciliary oxygen provision.
- The following TSANZ position papers are used to determine eligibility and the type and quantity of product to be supplied up to the maximum subsidy:
 - For information about **adult eligibility**, see the TSANZ position paper: [Adult domiciliary oxygen therapy position statement](https://www.mja.com.au/journal/2005/182/12/adult-domiciliary-oxygen-therapy-position-statement-thoracic-society-australia) <https://www.mja.com.au/journal/2005/182/12/adult-domiciliary-oxygen-therapy-position-statement-thoracic-society-australia> or TSANZ's [Clinical practice guideline on adult domiciliary oxygen therapy](https://thoracic.org.au/clinical-documents/oxygen/) <https://thoracic.org.au/clinical-documents/oxygen/>
 - For information about **child eligibility**, see the TSANZ position paper: [Respiratory management of infants with chronic neonatal lung disease beyond the NICU](https://thoracic.org.au/clinical-documents/oxygen/) <https://thoracic.org.au/clinical-documents/oxygen/>
- An **annual review** is required to determine ongoing eligibility and to check that the current prescription meets the client's clinical needs. This may be completed by a General Practitioner.

Repeat testing is at the discretion of the credentialled medical practitioner, who must meet the assistive technology practitioner qualification requirements.

- SWEPP should notify the client one month before the annual review is required.
- Children can be assessed using pulse oximetry, rather than via a full assessment.

Supply and storage requirements

- Oxygen usage will be monitored by SWEPP. When oxygen usage does not appear to conform with the prescription, it will be investigated and referred to the client's practitioner.
- Back-up cylinders may be supplied in special circumstances such as in localities where frequent power outages occur. Contact SWEPP for more information.
- Clients are responsible for ensuring free-standing cylinders are stored safely.

Exclusion criteria	Details
Prohibited uses	Domiciliary oxygen is not available for any of the following: • occasional use • use with nebulisers • use with suctioning equipment • for occasional exacerbations of asthma
Current tobacco, vape and/or e-cigarette use	Domiciliary oxygen will not be supplied to anyone who is a current smoker or who has resumed active smoking once approved for domiciliary oxygen. Smoking includes the use of tobacco, vapes and/or E-cigarettes.

Termination of supply for clients found to be smoking

If a client who is receiving subsidised domiciliary oxygen is found to be smoking, both they and their practitioner will be notified of their subsidised oxygen supplies being immediately terminated. The supplier will be instructed to withdraw the assistive technology, regardless of the severity of the client's underlying medical condition. Funding and oxygen supplies will only recommence once the client has demonstrated that they have completely abstained from smoking for at least four weeks.

Continence aids

Subsidised items

Items	Maximum subsidy available
Disposable continence products - Intermittent catheters, long-term catheters and associated equipment: catheter straps, drainage bags, bottles, tubing, connectors and straps, catheter change packs - Condom drainage systems and associated equipment: straps, tubing, connectors, valves, bottles, bags, holders	\$1,200 per year Recommended quantities are outlined in the SWEP Practitioner Manual for Continence Aids available on the SWEP website.
Specialised continence products - Anal irrigation system and accessories - Anal plugs	
Washable continence products - Mattress protectors - Bed pads - Pillow protectors - Doona covers - Chair pads - Floor mats - Washable briefs/pads	

Qualification requirements for assessing practitioners

Assistive technology practitioners assessing applicant eligibility for this program category are required to have the following qualifications.

Assistive technology practitioner qualification requirements
Current general AHPRA registration as a Registered Nurse WITH Graduate certificate in Nursing (urological and continence) or equivalent AND Current SWEP ATP registration to prescribe continence items
OR employed in a relevant specialty context relating to bladder or bowel dysfunction (e.g. Nurse Continence Specialist/ Continence Nurse Advisor / Urology Nurse/ Clinical Nurse Consultant (in a related context) AND Current SWEP ATP registration to prescribe continence items
OR if endorsed as a Nurse Practitioner, applying advanced clinical nursing practice in a relevant specialty context. AND Current SWEP ATP registration to prescribe continence items

Additional client eligibility criteria

- Clients of the continence program are required to undertake a review with their assistive technology practitioner every two years. A new application is required to confirm ongoing supply, additional products or prescription changes for all items except washable products.
- All washable products presented in the table above are funded as a one-off order. In exceptional circumstances additional items may be supplied where a recommendation is received from a SWEP-registered practitioner who can provide clinical justification for the need for additional washable items.
- Clients accessing continence products from SWEP may also be able to access supports from other programs such as the Commonwealth Government's Continence Aids Payment Scheme. For further information about this scheme, visit the [Australian Government Continence Aids Payment Scheme website](https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/continence-aids-payment-scheme)
<<https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/continence-aids-payment-scheme>>

Lymphoedema Compression Garment Program

Subsidised items

Items available per year, per affected limb	Maximum subsidy available
Adults over 18 years of age - Up to 4 sets of compression garments per year - OR 3 sets of compression garments & 1 adjustable wrap set - OR 2 adjustable wraps sets	Ready to Wear (RTW): Per set of garments per affected limb \$150 Made to Measure (M2M): Per set of garments per affected limb where RTW is not compatible with limb size/shape or compression class not available in RTW \$300
Child under 18 years of age 6 sets of compression garments - OR 5 sets of compression garments & 1 adjustable wrap set - OR 2 sets of adjustable wraps sets	Adjustable Wrap Set (AWS): Per set of garments per affected limb \$150
Donner subsidy available as 'once off' only	Donner \$60

Program limits and exclusions

- Garments are available for limbs only.
- Where more than one item for the same limb is requested, the assistive technology practitioner must confirm that each item is integral for the functionality of the other for the request to count as "one item".
- SWEP do not fund padding or additional liners

Qualification requirements for assessing practitioners

Assistive technology practitioners assessing applicant eligibility for this program category are required to have the following qualifications.

Assistive technology practitioner qualification requirements
Current general AHPRA registration as an Occupational Therapist OR Physiotherapist OR Registered Nurse OR Nurse Practitioner OR Medical Practitioner WITH completion of an Australasian Lymphology Association (ALA) endorsed course (consistent with the scope of practice of your primary health profession, your role and chosen scope of practice) AND Current SWEP ATP registration to prescribe lymphoedema garments
OR ALA Accredited Lymphoedema Practitioner on the National Lymphoedema Practitioner Register, working within the scope of practice of their primary health profession(s) and the competencies achieved through undertaking accredited lymphoedema training WITH Current general AHPRA registration (where applicable) or Professional Association membership (where applicable and as determined by ALA) AND Current SWEP ATP registration to prescribe lymphoedema garments

Additional client eligibility criteria

Garments are available to people who:

- have been medically assessed as having either primary or secondary lymphoedema or sub-clinical lymphoedema
- the practitioner has confirmed intended compliance with recommended use
- Priority of access is given to
 - Applicants established for priority of access under the VA&EP priority of access framework
 - First-time garment users
 - Children <18 years of age

Compliance with quality standards

Compression garments funded by the VA&EP must comply with the following quality standards:

- TGA-registered compression garments that guarantee the level of compression stated to evidence medical efficacy for the treatment of lymphoedema
- Supplier confirmation of garment compliance with any relevant International Standard and compression garment classification level (I – IV)
- Standard 101 certification (Oeko Tex) where relevant

Laryngectomy Program

Subsidised items

Items	Maximum subsidy available
Electrolarynx voice aids	\$1,500 per five years
Voice prosthesis • standard • specialised	\$450 maximum subsidy per voice prosthesis – up to a maximum of three per year
Laryngectomy consumables	\$5,000 per annum As per recommended quantities. Refer to SWEP website <https://swep.bhs.org.au/laryngectomy-consumables-program.php>

Qualification requirements for assessing practitioners

Assistive technology practitioners assessing applicant eligibility for this program category are required to have the following qualifications.

Assistive technology practitioner qualification requirements
Speech Pathologist eligible for membership of Speech Pathology Australia AND Current SWEP ATP registration to prescribe both laryngectomy and communication items

Additional client eligibility criteria

In addition to meeting the VA&EP eligibility criteria to access laryngectomy consumables, an applicant must meet either of the following criteria:

- the applicant must have undergone a recent surgical procedure for a laryngectomy, and completed an appropriate trial of consumable products/items (for a minimum 30 days post discharge)
- **OR** the applicant must be able to provide evidence of current use of self-funded consumables

Beds, pressure-reducing mattresses and accessories

Subsidised items

Items	Maximum subsidy available
Beds - Powered, with a minimum of three functions - Bariatric	\$2,000
Pressure-reducing devices - Pressure-reducing mattress - Wedges and postural support systems	\$1,070 The maximum subsidy for pressure-reducing items is \$1,070 every two years across all equipment categories.
Accessories - Self-help pole / bed blocks / bed raisers / bed extensions - Bed rails / bed rail covers	\$200 per item/set

Qualification requirements for assessing practitioners

Assistive technology practitioners assessing applicant eligibility for this program category are required to have the following qualifications.

Assistive technology practitioner qualification requirements
Current general AHPRA registration as an Occupational Therapist OR a Physiotherapist. AND Current SWEP Assistive Technology Practitioner (ATP) registration to prescribe this Assistive Technology (AT) category

Environmental control units

An environmental control unit (ECU) is a switching mechanism that can enable a person with a disability to operate a variety of electrical appliances or devices.

Subsidised items

Items	Maximum subsidy available
ECU with single function control ECU with multi-function standard controls ECU with multi-function complex controls	\$3,000
ECUs included in an electronic communication device	\$2,300

Qualification requirements for assessing practitioners

Assistive technology practitioners assessing applicant eligibility for this program category are required to have the following qualifications.

Assistive technology practitioner qualification requirements
Current general AHPRA registration as an Occupational Therapist. AND Current SWEP ATP registration to prescribe this AT category

Specialised bathing and toileting

Subsidised items

Items	Maximum subsidy available
Shower stools and chairs, bath seats, over-toilet frames, toilet surrounds, toilet seat raisers and extensions	\$90
Specialised paediatric hygiene equipment • potty chairs • in-bath seats	\$500
Fixed commode	\$200
Mobile shower commode • modifications • pressure-reducing components	\$1,000 \$500 \$1,070 (the maximum subsidy for pressure-reducing items is \$1,070 every two years across all equipment categories).
Change table (Supported Accommodation Equipment Assistance Scheme consumers only)	\$2,000
Shower trolley	\$1,000
Complex and customised showering/bathing/toileting	\$1,000

Qualification requirements for assessing practitioners

Assistive technology practitioners assessing applicant eligibility for this program category are required to have the following qualifications.

Assistive technology practitioner qualification requirements
Current general AHPRA registration as an Occupational Therapist. OR Physiotherapist. AND Current SWEP ATP registration for this AT category

Orthoses

Subsidised items

Items	Maximum subsidy available
Foot orthosis	\$200 per item per year
Ankle-foot orthosis (see SWEP website for list)	\$1,200 per item per year
Knee-ankle-foot orthosis	\$2,200 per item
Basic upper limb; wrist, hand; elbow; combined, static and functional Basic spinal; lumbo-sacral or thoraco-lumbo-sacral Dynamic upper limb orthoses	\$1,200 per item per year
Safety helmet (specialised/custom made)	\$200 per item per year
Shoe modifications	\$200 per pair
Extra depth/width footwear where not available over-the-counter	\$200 per pair per year
Custom made footwear	\$450 per pair per year
Fitting fee per application	\$75

Funding limits

The VA&EP will fund:

- one item per limb. Requests for the supply of more than one item for the same limb will only be considered where an assistive technology practitioner confirms that each item is integral to the functionality of the other.
- one replacement of footwear after a minimum of 12 months, or 6 months for clients under 18 years of age.
- a once-off fitting fee where the device is fitted to the client by the supplier.

The VA&EP will not:

- provide a shoe modification subsidy in conjunction with custom-made footwear
- fund over-the-counter aids including:
 - shoes
 - foam bands (tubular sponge protective devices) insoles
 - wrist, ankle and knee braces/splints
 - back/hernia support
 - cervical collars.

Qualification requirements for assessing practitioners

Assistive technology practitioners assessing applicant eligibility for this program category are required to have the following qualifications.

Assistive technology practitioner qualification requirements
Current general AHPRA registration as an Occupational Therapist OR Physiotherapist OR Podiatrist OR Orthotist/Prosthetist with full membership of the Australian Orthotics and Prosthetics Association. OR Current certification as a Pedorthist (CPedAu or CPedCM AU) with Australian Pedorthists Registration Board (APRB) AND Current SWEP ATP registration to prescribe this AT category

Wheelchairs and mobility scooters

Subsidised items

Items	Maximum subsidy available
Manual wheelchair (≥ 16 kg)	\$1,000
Lightweight manual wheelchair/stroller (< 15 kg)	\$1,250
Powered wheelchair	\$6,000
Power assist	\$5,000
Mobility scooter	\$4,000
Customisation of strollers, manual and powered wheelchairs	\$2,750
Pressure cushions including: • adjustable/contoured/moulded or combinations • wedges/blocks or obliquity • moulded or matrix seating systems • removable additions to cushions	\$1,070 (the maximum subsidy for pressure-reducing items is \$1,070 every 2 years across all equipment categories).

Qualification requirements for assessing practitioners

Assistive technology practitioners assessing applicant eligibility for this program category are required to have the following qualifications.

Assistive technology practitioner qualification requirements
Current general AHPRA registration as an Occupational Therapist. OR Physiotherapist AND Current SWEAT ATP registration to prescribe this AT category

Additional client eligibility criteria

- The assistive technology practitioner is responsible for ensuring the applicant can use the selected wheelchair or scooter safely in a range of environments including the applicant's residence and local community.
- It is mandatory that the client organises a review of their capacity to safely use the wheelchair or scooter provided. This must occur at least every 2 years.

Supply guidelines

- One primary (main), manual or powered wheelchair or mobility scooter may be supplied to eligible applicants.
- One back-up manual or powered wheelchair or mobility scooter may be supplied **from refurbished stock** if it is available and not required as a primary item for current applicants. Custom modifications are not funded for back-up wheelchairs/scooters.
- The **replacement** of a manual or powered wheelchair or mobility scooter will be considered after a **minimum of seven years or subject to reassessment**.

- The state speed limit for wheelchairs and scooters is 10 kilometres per hour on level ground. SWEP will only purchase items that do not exceed this limit.
- Wheelchair customising could include additional specialised and necessary items such as adapting brakes, seating adaptations, heel cups and elevating leg rests.
- The VA&EP does not fund wheelchair/scooter accessories such as baskets or canopies.

Specialised seating

Subsidised items

Items	Maximum subsidy available
Basic specialised seating with or without adjustable legs/armrests/seat depth including low and high-back chairs and adjustable kitchen stools and indoor base for seating systems	\$500
Specialised seating with in-built pressure reducing device	\$1,070 (the maximum subsidy for pressure-reducing items is \$1,070 every two years across all equipment categories.)
Powered lift recliner chair	\$1,000
Chair raisers	\$200
Swivel bases for disability specific car seat (VicRoads-approved)	\$500

Qualification requirements for assessing practitioners

Assistive technology practitioners assessing applicant eligibility for this program category are required to have the following qualifications.

Assistive technology practitioner qualification requirements
Current general AHPRA registration as an Occupational Therapist. OR Physiotherapist. AND Current SWEP ATP registration to prescribe this AT category

Walking aids

Subsidised items

Items	Maximum subsidy available
Walking frames • pick-up frame • posterior walker • wheeled walker	\$300

Qualification requirements for assessing practitioners

Assistive technology practitioners assessing applicant eligibility for this program category are required to have the following qualifications.

Assistive technology practitioner qualification requirements
Current general AHPRA registration as an Occupational Therapist. OR Physiotherapist. AND Current SWEP ATP registration to prescribe this AT category

Transfer equipment

Subsidised items

Items	Maximum subsidy available
Basic transfer equipment – slide boards, slide sheets, rotating seats, turn tables, transfer belts and transfer benches	\$200
Mobile floor hoist (includes up to two slings where required)	\$2,600
Ceiling hoist (fixed or portable, includes up to two slings)*	\$3,300
Ceiling tracking	\$300
Replacement hoist sling	\$300
Kitchen trolley	\$135
Portable ramps	\$400

Qualification requirements for assessing practitioners

Assistive technology practitioners assessing applicant eligibility for this program category are required to have the following qualifications.

Assistive technology practitioner qualification requirements
Current general AHPRA registration as an Occupational Therapist. OR Physiotherapist. AND Current SWEP ATP registration to prescribe this AT category

Program limits and exclusions

- There is a limit of one hoist per client.

*Supported Accommodation Equipment Assistance Scheme consumers are not eligible for funding towards ceiling hoists and tracking

Wigs

Subsidised items

Items	Maximum subsidy available
Two wigs	\$240
One wig (child 16 years or younger)	\$600

Qualification requirements for assessing practitioners

This program does not require applicants to receive an assessment from a qualified assistive technology practitioner. Applicants are required to submit an eligibility form with confirmation of diagnosis from treating medical practitioner. Requests for support can be received from the supplier and/or client.

Additional client eligibility criteria

- The wig subsidy may be provided to people with permanent loss of hair because of disease or disability.
- Replacement wigs are available after two years.

Home modifications

Subsidised items

Items	Maximum subsidy available
Minor home modifications scoped to cost ≤ \$1,300 including: rails; door fittings; hand-held showers and switchcocks; removal of shower screen, widening of doors, repositioning of light switches; taps (lever style); slip-resistant applications; shelving for wheelchair access and bidets – toilet type attachment. Threshold ramps, single steps, or platform modifications may only be made at one existing entry/access point to the dwelling.	\$4,000 per person per lifetime
Moderate Home modifications scoped to cost > \$1,300 and <\$10,000 including: ramps or step modifications for two or more steps including platform steps to one existing entry/access point to the dwelling; bathrooms; kitchen and laundry; repositioning of items related to disability and bidets separate to toilet. Internal and external stair lifts. If ramps do not comply with AS 1428.1, the AT practitioner will be required to acknowledge non-compliance with the standard, and the consumer will be required to sign an acknowledgement and release from any claim, demand, action, proceeding, judgement, penalty, damage, loss, cost, expense or liability incurred in respect to the ramp not complying with AS1428.1	
Major Home modifications scoped to exceed \$10,000 including: ramps; step modifications to one existing entry/access point to the dwelling; bathrooms; kitchen and laundry. Internal and external stair lifts.	

Qualification requirements for assessing practitioners

Assistive technology practitioners assessing applicant eligibility for this program category are required to have the following qualifications.

Assistive technology practitioner qualification requirements
Current general AHPRA registration as an Occupational Therapist. AND Current SWEPP ATP registration to prescribe this AT category

Additional client eligibility criteria and funding limits

Additional client eligibility criteria:

- Clients that are also participants in the Commonwealth AT-HM scheme are not eligible to apply for funding for home modifications if receiving high-tier AT-HM funds.
- Clients living in residential services and accommodation services owned or operated by non-profit organisations, businesses, trust funds or any other type of organisations are not eligible to apply for funding for home modifications.

Funding limits:

- The intent of the home modification subsidy is to support the modification of existing structures, including existing rooms and access points, to help meet functional need and/or to enhance the safety of the client and their carer/s.
- The VA&EP will fund the gap between a standard household item and a disability-specific item in new homes or homes under construction up to the available subsidy amount.
- The VA&EP will not fund:
 - non-disability-specific household items (for example, standard shower screens, shower bases with steps and toilets). However, the VA&EP may fund the **repositioning** of a non-disability-specific household item if related to the applicant's disability.
 - capital improvement works
 - the creation of new or additional rooms or entry/access points
 - general home maintenance of existing items or access points, even if such works would improve access to or within the home
 - pathways and driveways
 - the cost of asbestos removal, which is the responsibility of the property owner.

Please refer to the SWEP home modifications page for additional information on [home modifications](https://swep.bhs.org.au/home-modifications.php) <<https://swep.bhs.org.au/home-modifications.php>>. This site includes information for applicants, assistive technology practitioners and builders.

Vehicle Modification Subsidy Scheme (VMSS)

VA&EP will fund the following vehicle modifications when the client is a passenger

Subsidised items

Items	Maximum subsidy available
Passenger modifications for access or safe travel: • Transfer and access modifications • Roof hoists • Trailers and wheelchair carriers • Lowered floor modifications • Seating modifications • Seat belt modifications • Power-operated tailgate • Boot crane • Client and/or wheelchair lift • Oxygen cylinder restraint systems • Wheelchair restraint systems • Air conditioning (for thermoregulatory conditions related to a disability)	\$10,000, per person, over a seven-year period
Depreciated Subsidy towards an Already Modified Second-hand Vehicle • Contribution to existing modification in a second-hand (already modified) vehicle 2 nd hand imported vehicle that has been modified to Australian Design Rules https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/infrastructure-transport-vehicles/vehicles/vehicle-design-regulation/australian-design-rules	

Qualification requirements for assessing practitioners

Assistive technology practitioners assessing applicant eligibility for this program category are required to have the following qualifications.

Assistive technology practitioner qualification requirements
Current general AHPRA registration as an Occupational Therapist. AND Current SWEP ATP registration to prescribe this AT category

VA&EP will fund the following vehicle modifications when the client is a driver

Subsidised items

Items	Maximum subsidy available
Any driver modifications • Accelerator modification • Brake and hand control • Access modification • Contribution to existing modification in a second-hand (already modified) vehicle • 2nd hand imported vehicle that has been modified to Australian Design Rules <https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/infrastructure-transport-vehicles/vehicles/vehicle-design-regulation/australian-design-rules> It is noted that all modifications listed in the 'passenger' section can also be accessed by consumers who are drivers	\$10,000, per person, over a seven-year period

Qualification requirements for assessing practitioners

Assistive technology practitioners assessing applicant eligibility for this program category are required to have the following qualifications.

Assistive technology practitioner qualification requirements
Current general registration as an Occupational Therapist WITH Post-graduate training in driver assessment and rehabilitation, with both theory and practicum delivered in line with the <i>Australian Competency Standards for Occupational Therapy Driver Assessors</i>. OTA (2018). AND Current SWEAT ATP registration to prescribe this AT category

Additional client eligibility criteria

To be eligible for a subsidy through the VMSS, clients:

- require modifications to a primary (main) vehicle that is owned by the applicant or their family to enable travel
- may be required to undertake assessment by an Occupational Therapist with Post-graduate training in drive assessment and rehabilitation (for driver related modifications when the applicant is the driver).

If the applicant's existing primary vehicle is unable to be modified, in some circumstances applicants may apply for a subsidy towards the modification component of an already modified second-hand vehicle. Restrictions to this occur where the modification is not transferrable to another vehicle.

The subsidy is not available:

- where the vehicle does not meet the standard benchmark for definition of older/high mileage vehicles (<10 years old and/or < 160,000 kilometres on the odometer)

- for modifications and/or imported modified vehicles that do not comply with [Australian Design Rules](https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/infrastructure-transport-vehicles/vehicles/vehicle-design-regulation/australian-design-rules) <<https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/infrastructure-transport-vehicles/vehicles/vehicle-design-regulation/australian-design-rules>>
- where the vehicle does not comply with VicRoads Standards for Registration (refer to Transport Victoria publication, *Vehicle Standards Information 8 'Guide to modification for motor vehicles'* <<https://transport.vic.gov.au/road-and-active-transport/registration-and-licensing/registration/standard-and-non-standard-vehicle-information/vehicle-standards-information/guide-to-modification-for-motor-vehicles>>)

In exceptional circumstance applications from clients with vehicles older than 10 years may be considered by the VA&EP service provider where the modification is fully removable and transferrable to another vehicle.

Where the VMSS subsidy is applied to the modification component of a second hand already modified vehicle, the following conditions apply:

- The seller is a licensed motor car trader (LMCT)
- A current certificate of roadworthiness is provided
- Warranty for the modified component is incorporated
- VASS certificate required [Vehicle Assessment Signatory Scheme approval certificate](https://transport.vic.gov.au/road-and-active-transport/registration-and-licensing/registration/standard-and-non-standard-vehicle-information/modified-and-non-standard-vehicles/vass-approval-certificate) <<https://transport.vic.gov.au/road-and-active-transport/registration-and-licensing/registration/standard-and-non-standard-vehicle-information/modified-and-non-standard-vehicles/vass-approval-certificate>>
- The subsidy is calculated based on a 10% depreciation rate per year based on the year the modification was initially fitted

A VMSS subsidy is not available as a contribution towards the cost of:

- the actual vehicle
- modifying multiple vehicles
- non-disability-specific items such as rear-vision cameras, rear-parking sensors, global positioning system devices, mirrors and cruise control
- vehicle transmission conversion
- vehicle running costs, statutory charges or insurance premiums
- modifications to vehicles owned by organisations
- items of second-hand vehicle related modifications.

Other schemes under the VA&EP

Electronic Communication Devices Scheme administered by Yooralla

Subsidised items

Items	Maximum subsidy available
• Speech-generating devices • Hardware, software and applications (apps) to support verbal communication (including spoken and written) • Peripherals to support access to verbal communication (including spoken and written) such as specialised switches, alternative keyboards and mouse • Voice amplifiers • External speakers	\$9,500
Switch and/or mounting system (for accessing a speech generating device) when the Environmental Control Unit is included in the electronic communication device.	\$2,300

Qualification requirements for assessing practitioners

Assistive technology practitioners assessing applicant eligibility for this program category are required to have the following qualifications.

Assistive technology practitioner qualification requirements
Registered speech pathologist and/or Occupational Therapist.

Additional client eligibility criteria

- An occupational therapist report is required if the communication aid user is unable to directly access the electronic communication device or requires a mounting system.
- Residents of residential aged care facilities are eligible to apply.
- Communication aid users with assistive technology that is five years old or no longer meets their needs may apply for a [review of their device](https://www.yooralla.com.au/assistive-technology/electronic-communication-devices-scheme-ecds/) <<https://www.yooralla.com.au/assistive-technology/electronic-communication-devices-scheme-ecds/>>.

Smoke Alarm Scheme administered by Expression Australia

Subsidised items

Items	Maximum subsidy available
A 'Visit Package' of the necessary components to give a person a visual and tactile (vibrating) alert to the smoke alarm, including a • Visit Flash • Visit Bed Shaker • Visit Smoke Transmitter (Additional Visit Smoke Transmitters can be connected to this pack at client's own cost) The Visit Flash is placed beside the bed and connected to the Visit Bed Shaker. When the Visit Smoke alarm is activated it sends a radio signal to the Visit Flash. The Visit Flash is connected to power via a mains adaptor and has a built-in rechargeable battery backup.	\$450.00 with a \$50.00 client contribution / gap payment \$500.00 for pension concession card holders (the gap payment contribution is waived)

Qualification requirements for assessing practitioners

Assistive technology practitioners assessing applicant eligibility for this program category are required to have the following qualifications.

Assistive technology practitioner qualification requirements
Audiologist AND Full member of Audiology Australia (AAudA)

Additional client eligibility criteria

The applicant must be deaf or hard of hearing with either:

- a severe to profound loss (≥ 70 dB average hearing loss at 500Hz, 1000Hz and 2000Hz in both ears) when tested by an audiologist
- OR a severe high frequency hearing loss (≥ 70 dB average hearing loss at 2000Hz, 3000Hz & 4000Hz in both ears) when tested by an audiologist
- or have a cochlear implant.

Eligible clients can access one Visit Package and are eligible for a replacement every 10 years if the client still meets eligibility criteria.

Visit the Expressions Australia website for more information on the [Smoke Alarm Subsidy](https://www.expression.com.au/services/smoke-alarm-subsidy)

<<https://www.expression.com.au/services/smoke-alarm-subsidy>>

Freedom Solutions

Designs, manufactures and adapts specialised and customised equipment to meet the specific needs of eligible people.

Visit the [Freedom Solutions](https://freedom solutions.org.au/) website for more information on the scheme.

<<https://freedom solutions.org.au/>>

Low Cost Vision Aids Scheme administered by Vision Australia Foundation

Provides low-cost eye care and visual aids (glasses, contact lenses) for eligible people who are blind or have low vision.

Visit the [Victorian Eyecare Service](https://www.aco.org.au/ves/#about-ves) website for more information.

<<https://www.aco.org.au/ves/#about-ves>>

Equipment library administered by MND Victoria

Visit the [MND Victoria](https://www.mnd.org.au/equipment-service) website for more information. <<https://www.mnd.org.au/equipment-service>>

Appendix A: Subsidy amounts and AT practitioner qualification requirements by category

Program category	Subsidised items	Maximum subsidy available	AT practitioner qualification requirements
Domiciliary Oxygen Program	- Stationary oxygen concentrators - Portable oxygen cylinders with an oxygen-conserving device or standard regulator - Portable oxygen concentrators - Tubing and nasal cannulas - Oxygen cylinder trolleys and carry bags	\$2,400 per year	Specialist respiratory and sleep medicine physician OR Specialist palliative medicine physician OR Specialist medical oncologist OR Specialist cardiologist OR Specialist general physician (with respiratory interest) AND Current SWEPP ATP registration to prescribe domiciliary oxygen Children under 18 years: If the applicant is a child under 18 years, the assistive technology practitioner must also hold a paediatric professional qualification.
Continence aids	Disposable continence products - Intermittent catheters, long-term catheters and associated equipment: catheter straps, drainage bags, bottles, tubing, connectors and straps, catheter change packs - Condom drainage systems and associated equipment: straps, tubing, connectors, valves, bottles, bags, holders	\$1,200 per year	Current general AHPRA registration as a Registered Nurse WITH Graduate certificate in Nursing (urological and continence) or equivalent AND Current SWEPP ATP registration to prescribe continence items
	Specialised continence products - Anal irrigation system and accessories - Anal plugs		OR employed in a relevant specialty context relating to bladder or bowel dysfunction (e.g. Nurse Continence Specialist/ Continence Nurse Advisor / Urology Nurse/ Clinical Nurse Consultant (in a related context) AND Current SWEPP ATP registration to prescribe continence items
	Washable continence products - Mattress protectors - Bed pads - Pillow protectors - Doona covers - Chair pads - Floor mats - Washable briefs/pads		OR if endorsed as a Nurse Practitioner, applying advanced clinical nursing practice in a relevant specialty context. AND Current SWEPP ATP registration to prescribe continence items

Lymphoedema Compression Garment Program	Per affected limb: adults over 18 years of age - Up to 4 sets of compression garments per year - OR 3 sets of compression garments & 1 adjustable wrap set OR 2 adjustable wraps sets	\$150 - Ready to Wear (RTW): Per set of garments per affected limb \$300 - Made to Measure (M2M): Per set of garments per affected limb where RTW is not compatible with limb size/shape or compression class not available in RTW \$150 - Adjustable Wrap Set (AWS): Per set of garments per	Current general AHPRA registration as an Occupational Therapist OR Physiotherapist OR Registered Nurse OR Nurse Practitioner OR Medical Practitioner WITH completion of an Australasian Lymphology Association (ALA) endorsed course (consistent with the scope of practice of your primary health profession, your role and chosen scope of practice) AND Current SWEP ATP registration to prescribe lymphoedema garments
	Per affected limb: children under 18 years of age 6 sets of compression garments - OR 5 sets of compression garments & 1 adjustable wrap set OR 2 sets of adjustable wraps sets		OR ALA Accredited Lymphoedema Practitioner on the National Lymphoedema Practitioner Register, working within the scope of practice of their primary health profession(s) and the competencies achieved through undertaking accredited lymphoedema training WITH Current general AHPRA registration (where applicable) or Professional Association membership (where applicable and as determined by ALA) AND Current SWEP ATP registration to prescribe lymphoedema garments
	Donner subsidy available as 'once off' only	\$60 (cost of donner)	
Laryngectomy Program	Electrolarynx voice aids	\$1,500 per five years	Speech Pathologist eligible for membership of Speech Pathology Australia AND Current SWEP ATP registration to prescribe both laryngectomy and communication items
	Voice prosthesis - Standard - specialised	\$450 maximum subsidy per voice prosthesis – up to a maximum of three per year	
	Laryngectomy consumables	\$5,000 per year	
Beds, pressure-reducing mattresses and accessories	Beds - Powered, with a minimum of three functions - Bariatric	\$2,000	Children under 18 years Specialist paediatric respiratory and sleep medicine physician OR Specialist paediatrician / Specialist neonatologist OR Specialist paediatric palliative medicine physician OR Specialist medical paediatric oncologist OR Specialist paediatric cardiologist (all as determined by AHPRA). AND Current SWEP ATP registration for relevant AT category
	Pressure-reducing devices - Pressure-reducing mattress - Wedges and postural support systems	\$1,070 every two years across all equipment categories	
	Accessories - Self-help pole / bed blocks / bed raisers / bed extensions - Bed rails / bed rail covers	\$200 per item/set	
Environmental control units (ECUs)	- ECU with single function control - ECU with multi-function standard controls	\$3,000	Current general AHPRA registration as an Occupational Therapist. AND

	ECU with multi-function complex controls		Current SWEP ATP registration to prescribe this AT category
	ECUs included in an electronic communication device	\$2,300	
Specialised bathing and toileting	Shower stools and chairs, bath seats, over-toilet frames, toilet surrounds, toilet seat raisers and extensions	\$90	Current general AHPRA registration as an Occupational Therapist. OR Physiotherapist. AND Current SWEP ATP registration for this AT category.
	Specialised paediatric hygiene equipment - potty chairs - in-bath seats	\$500	
	Fixed commode	\$200	
	Mobile shower commode - Modifications - pressure-reducing components	\$1,070 every two years across all equipment and categories	
	Change table (Supported Accommodation Equipment Assistance Scheme consumers only)	\$2,000	
	Shower trolley	\$1,000	
	Complex and customised showering/bathing/toileting	\$1,000	
Orthoses	Foot orthosis	\$200 per item per year	Current general AHPRA registration as an Occupational Therapist OR Physiotherapist OR Podiatrist OR Orthotist/Prosthetist with full membership of the Australian Orthotics and Prosthetics Association. OR Current certification as a Pedorthist (CPedAu or CPedCM AU) with Australian Pedorthists Registration Board (APRB) AND Current SWEP ATP registration to prescribe this AT category.
	Ankle-foot orthosis (see SWEP website for list)	\$1,200 per item per year	
	Knee-ankle-foot orthosis	\$2,200 per item	
	Basic upper limb; wrist, hand; elbow; combined, static and functional Basic spinal; lumbo-sacral or thoraco-lumbo-sacral Dynamic upper limb orthoses	\$1,200 per item per year	
	Safety helmet (specialised/custom made)	\$200 per item per year	
	Shoe modifications	\$200 per pair	
	Custom made footwear – where not available OTC	\$450 per pair per year	
	Fitting fee per application	\$75	
Wheelchairs and mobility scooters	Manual wheelchair (≥ 16 kg)	\$1,000	Current general AHPRA registration as an Occupational Therapist. OR Physiotherapist AND Current SWEP ATP registration to prescribe this AT category.
	Lightweight manual wheelchair/stroller (< 15 kg)	\$1,250	
	Powered wheelchair	\$6,000	
	Power assist	\$5,000	
	Mobility scooter	\$4,000	
	Customisation of strollers, manual and powered wheelchairs	\$2,750	
	Pressure cushions including: - adjustable/contoured/moulded or combinations - wedges/blocks or obliquity - moulded or matrix seating systems - removable additions to cushions	\$1,070 every 2 years across all equipment categories	
Specialised seating	Basic specialised seating with or without adjustable legs/armrests/seat depth including low and high-back chairs and adjustable kitchen stools	\$500	Current general AHPRA registration as an Occupational Therapist. OR Physiotherapist.

	Specialised seating with in-built pressure reducing device	\$1,070 every 2 years across all equipment categories	AND Current SWEP ATP registration to prescribe this AT category.
	Powered lift recliner chair	\$1,000	
	Chair raisers	\$200	
	Swivel bases for disability specific car seat (VicRoads-approved)	\$500	
Walking aids	Walking frames - pick-up frame - posterior walker - wheeled walker	\$300	Current general AHPRA registration as an Occupational Therapist. OR Physiotherapist. AND Current SWEP ATP registration to prescribe this AT category.
Transfer equipment	Basic transfer equipment – slide boards, slide sheets, rotating seats, turn tables, transfer belts and transfer benches	\$200	Current general AHPRA registration as an Occupational Therapist. OR Physiotherapist. AND Current SWEP ATP registration to prescribe this AT category.
	Mobile floor hoist (includes up to two slings where required)	\$2,600	
	Ceiling hoist (fixed or portable, includes up to two slings) *	\$3,300	
	Ceiling tracking	\$300	
	Replacement hoist sling	\$300	
	Kitchen trolley	\$135	
	Portable ramps	\$400	
Wigs	Two wigs	\$240	This program does not require applicants to receive an assessment from a qualified assistive technology practitioner. Requests for support can be received from the supplier and/or client.
	One wig (child 16 years or younger)	\$600	
Home modifications	Minor home modifications including: rails; door fittings; hand-held showers and switchcocks; removal of shower screen, widening of doors, repositioning of light switches; taps (lever style); slip-resistant applications; shelving for wheelchair access and bidets – toilet type attachment. Threshold ramps, single steps, or platform modifications may only be made at one existing entry/access point to the dwelling.	\$4,000 per person per lifetime	Current general AHPRA registration as an Occupational Therapist. AND Current SWEP ATP registration to prescribe this AT category

	Mod to major home modifications including: ramps or step modifications for two or more steps including platform steps to one existing entry/access point to the dwelling; bathrooms; kitchen and laundry; repositioning of items related to disability and bidets separate to toilet. Internal and external stair lifts. If ramps do not comply with AS 1428.1, the AT practitioner will be required to acknowledge non-compliance with the standard, and the consumer will be required to sign an acknowledgement and release from any claim, demand, action, proceeding, judgement, penalty, damage, loss, cost, expense or liability incurred in respect to the ramp not complying with AS1428.1		
Vehicle Modification Subsidy Scheme (VMSS)	When the client is a passenger		
	Passenger modifications for access or safe travel: • Transfer and access modifications • Roof hoists • Trailers and wheelchair carriers • Lowered floor modifications • Seating modifications • Seat belt modifications • Power-operated tailgate • Boot crane • Client and/or wheelchair lift • Oxygen cylinder restraint systems • Wheelchair restraint systems Air conditioning (for thermoregulatory conditions related to a disability)	\$10,000, per person, over a seven-year period	Current general AHPRA registration as an Occupational Therapist. AND Current SWEP ATP registration to prescribe this AT category
	Depreciated Subsidy towards an Already Modified Second-hand Vehicle • Contribution to existing modification in a second-hand (already modified) vehicle 2nd hand imported vehicle that has been modified to Australian Design Rules		
	When the client is a driver		
	Any driver modifications • Accelerator modification • Brake and hand control • Access modification • Contribution to existing modification in a second-hand (already modified) vehicle • 2nd hand imported vehicle that has been modified to Australian Design Rules It is noted that all modifications listed in the 'passenger' section	\$10,000, per person, over a seven-year period	Current general AHPRA registration as an Occupational Therapist. AND Current SWEP ATP registration to prescribe this AT category

	can also be accessed by consumers who are drivers		
Electronic Communication Devices Scheme administered by Yooralla	• Speech-generating devices • Hardware, software and applications (apps) to support verbal communication (including spoken and written) • Peripherals to support access to verbal communication (including spoken and written) such as specialised switches, alternative keyboards and mouse • Voice amplifiers • External speakers	\$9,500	Registered speech pathologist AND/OR Occupational Therapist.
	Switch and/or mounting system (for accessing a speech generating device) when the Environmental Control Unit is included in the electronic communication device.	\$2,300	
Smoke Alarm Scheme administered by Expression Australia	A 'Visit Package' of the necessary components to give a person a visual and tactile (vibrating) alert to the smoke alarm, including a • Visit Flash • Visit Bed Shaker • Visit Smoke Transmitter (Additional Visit Smoke Transmitters can be connected to this pack at client's own cost)	\$450.00 with a \$50.00 client contribution / gap payment \$500.00 for pension concession card holders (the gap payment contribution is waived)	Audiologist AND Full member of Audiology Australia (AAudA)