

## Needs Based Assessment:

Understanding eligibility and access to the  
**Specialist Dementia Care Program**





# What is Dementia Support Australia?

Dementia Support Australia (DSA) is a free nationwide service for people living with dementia and their carers. Accredited consultants provide advice and recommendations to people who care for someone with dementia where behaviours are a risk to themselves or others. DSA offers support **24 hours a day, 365 days a year throughout Australia.**

**DSA provides a three-level support service based on the needs of the person with dementia**



A PARTNERSHIP LED BY **HammondCare**



**Dementia Behaviour Management Advisory Service** supports staff and carers with client focused information, assessment and advice



**DBMAS** | dementia behaviour management advisory services  
Helping Australians with dementia, and their carers

**Severe Behaviour Response Teams** are a responsive mobile workforce available to provide timely expertise and advice to residential carers and staff



**SBRT** | Severe Behaviour Response Teams  
Funded by the Australian Government

**Needs Based Assessment Program** determines eligibility for the **Specialist Dementia Care Program (SDCP)**



**Needs Based Assessment**  
Eligibility for SDCP



Each support service can be accessed independently. DSA identifies the optimal service level for each client via a team of health professionals with extensive experience of supporting people living with dementia.

# What is the Specialist Dementia Care Program?

The Specialist Dementia Care Program is a new government initiative that provides individualised care for people who are experiencing severe behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia and are unable to be adequately cared for in a standard residential aged care setting.

The Specialist Dementia Care Program (SDCP) offers *temporary, transitional care* to stabilise and reduce a person's behavioural symptoms with the aim of enabling them to transition to a less intensive care setting.

## Who can refer

DSA can take client referrals from anyone, including families, residential care home staff, GPs, hospitals, Specialists and Aged Care Assessment Teams, or older persons mental health units. Referrals require supporting documentation from treating clinicians, and appropriate consent.

## Benefits for a client

There are a number of benefits for a person with severe behaviours related to their dementia living in an SDCP:

- Tailored and personalised approach to care
- The care environment is specifically designed for a person with dementia
- Specialist expertise in supporting a person with dementia
- Personalised care to stabilise client behaviours to enable supported transition out of an SDCP

“DSA aims to improve the quality of life and care for the person with dementia and their carers when behaviours are impacting their care”

# Who is eligible for the Specialist Dementia Care Program?

There are three key principles for eligibility.

The behaviours and psychological symptoms of the person:

1. are primarily as a result of dementia
2. are severe or very severe (aggression, severe agitation, vocalisation).
3. have not responded to trials of other specialist services.

The person is also required to have been assessed to be eligible for placement in a residential aged care home.

## Where are the Specialist Dementia Care Units?

The Australian Government aims to establish at least one specialist dementia care unit in each of the 31 Primary Health Network regions.

To find out more about the SDCP, visit the Department of Health website at: [www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/specialist-dementia-care-program-sdcp](http://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/specialist-dementia-care-program-sdcp)

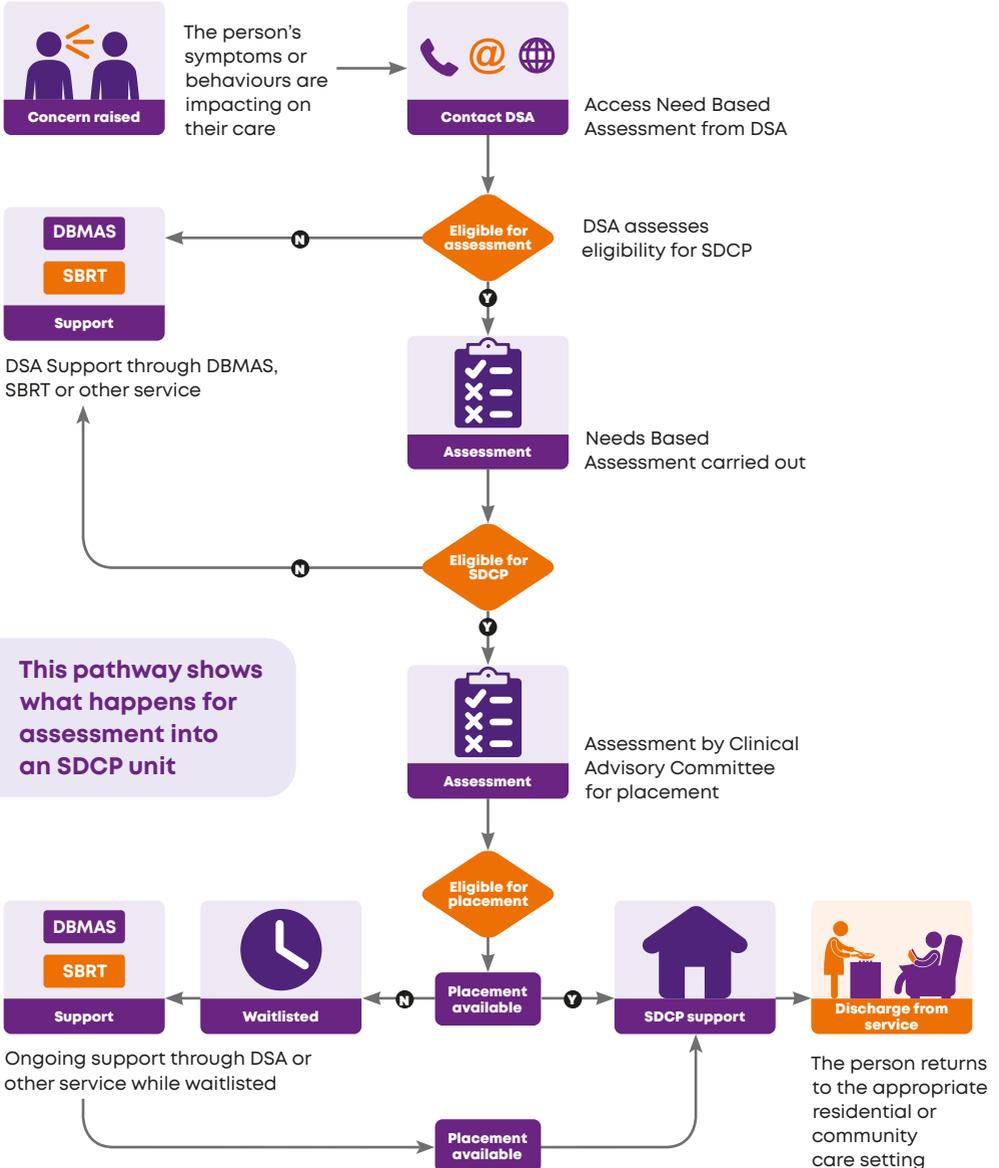


1800 699 799

[dementia.com.au](http://dementia.com.au)

# How we assess for eligibility

Dementia Support Australia assesses whether a person is eligible for the SDCP through its **Needs Based Assessment (NBA)** program.



This pathway shows what happens for assessment into an SDCP unit

# The role of family and service provider in the assessment process

## Written consent

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Dementia Support Australia aims to keep the person living with dementia informed and involved in decisions that affect their care. When this is not possible it's important to gain consent from the legally appointed person responsible for care.



The Needs Based Assessment program can only progress once the service provider has obtained written consent.

A consent form is available to download from [dementia.com.au](https://dementia.com.au) for signing. The signed form can be scanned and emailed, or given to the DSA Consultant as the first step during the assessment.

## Length of stay

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It is expected that the usual length of stay will be around 12 months, but could be shorter or longer depending on the needs of the individual.



A person does not leave a Specialist Dementia Care Unit until suitable accommodation is found.



1800 699 799

[dementia.com.au](https://dementia.com.au)

## Contact us

To refer a client, please call us anytime on **1800 699 799**, fill in an online form at **dementia.com.au** or fax us on **1800 921 223**

For feedback or questions please email us at **assessment@dementia.com.au**

## More information

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**Department of Health**  
[www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au)

**Dementia Support Australia**  
[www.dementia.com.au](http://www.dementia.com.au)



The Specialist Dementia Care Program is funded by the Australian Government.

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**Australian Government**

**DS**  **Dementia Support Australia**

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