



How you can enter an aged care home

Easy Read version

How to use this booklet



The Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care (the Department) wrote this booklet.

When you see the word 'we', it means the Department.



We wrote this information in an easy to read way.

We use pictures to explain some ideas.

Bold

Not bold

We wrote some important words in **bold**.

This means the letters are thicker and darker.



We explain what these bold words mean.

There is a list of these words on page 68.



This Easy Read booklet is a summary of another document. This means it only includes the most important ideas.



You can find the other document on our website.

www.myagedcare.gov.au/resources



You can ask for help to read this booklet.

A friend, family member or support person may be able to help you.



This booklet is quite long.

It includes a lot of information.



You don't need to read it all at once.

What's in this booklet?

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What is an aged care home?



An **aged care home** is where older Australians live when they can't live in their home anymore.

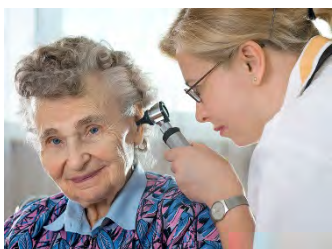
Aged care homes can help you with:



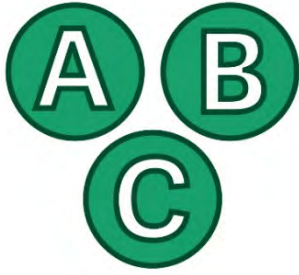
- accommodation services, like having a place to live and getting meals



- personal care, like showering and getting dressed



- care from a nurse.



Different aged care homes can offer different care services.



You can use an aged care home for a:

- short time
- long time.



The Australian Government checks to make sure all aged care homes are good quality.



And all aged care homes must follow the Aged Care Quality **Standards**.

They are rules about how to do things well.



You can read these standards on our website.

www.myagedcare.gov.au/aged-care-quality-standards

Who pays for aged care homes?



You might need to pay for some of the services you receive in an aged care home.

This includes:

- care services
- accommodation.



Funding is money from the Australian Government to pay for supports and services.

The Australian Government provides funding for most of your aged care services.

Who can use aged care homes?



You might be able to use an aged care home if you:

- are 65 years or older
- are 50 years or older and you're a First Nations person
- can't live in your home anymore.



If you are younger than 65, you might still be able to receive care in an aged care home.



You might be able to take part in the **NDIS** if you:

- are younger than 65
- live with disability.

The NDIS is a way the Australian Government supports people with disability.

Staying in an aged care home for a short time



Respite care is when you only stay in an aged care home for a short time.



You might want respite care if:

- you want a break from caring for yourself
- your carers can't take care of you.

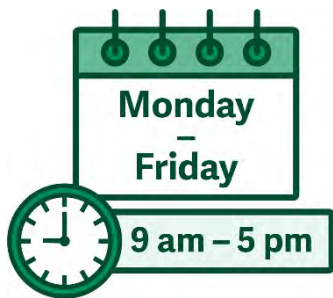


You can get respite care for up to 63 days every year.

You might be able to apply for more if you need it.



If you need emergency respite care, you should call your local Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centre.



You can call them from 9 am to 5 pm on Monday to Friday.

1800 052 222



You can call them outside of these times on this other phone number.

1800 059 059

How to find and move into an aged care home



There are 6 steps you need to take to find and move into an aged care home.



1. Get an assessment



2. Work out how much you need to pay



3. Find an aged care home



4. Work out how you want to pay



5. Make an agreement with your aged care home



6. Manage your services



We explain how to do each step on the following pages.

1. Get an assessment



You will need to complete a free **assessment** to:

- move into an aged care home
- get respite care.



An assessment helps someone work out what support you might need.



You need to contact My Aged Care to get an assessment.



My Aged Care supports older people to find and use the aged care services they need.

This includes their families and carers.

Finding out if you can move into an aged care home



The My Aged Care website has a tool you can use.
We call it the Assessment Eligibility Checker.



www.myagedcare.gov.au/eligibility-checker



You can use this tool to find out if you can get:

- funding
- an assessment.

How to apply for an assessment



You can apply for an assessment on
the My Aged Care website.

[www.myagedcare.gov.au/assessment/
apply-online](http://www.myagedcare.gov.au/assessment/apply-online)



You can also call My Aged Care to apply for an assessment.

1800 200 422



My Aged Care will ask if you want them to keep all of your information in one place.



By keeping your information in one place, you only need to tell your story once.

This includes information about:

- what supports you need
- your assessment.



You can also choose someone you trust to make decisions for you.

We call this person your **representative**.



Your representative can be a family member or friend.



You can ask your representative to apply for an assessment for you:

- online
- over the phone
- in person.



If you need more information about how to choose a representative, you can visit the My Aged Care website.

www.myagedcare.gov.au/arranging-someone-support-you

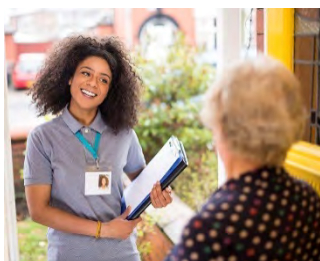
Having an assessment



A **trained assessor** will contact you if you can get an assessment.

A trained assessor is someone who has the skills and knowledge to do an assessment.

They will:



- visit your home



- ask about what supports you need.



A friend, family member or carer can come to your assessment to support you.



If you have questions about the assessment, the trained assessor can answer them.



You can also ask them questions after your assessment.



You can ask My Aged Care for your trained assessor's contact details.



If you want to stay in respite care for longer than 63 days, you can ask your trained assessor.

After your assessment



After your assessment, you will get a letter from My Aged Care telling you if you can live in an aged care home.



If you can't use an aged care home, the letter will explain why.

And it will explain some other services that can support you.



It's a good idea to call My Aged Care if you didn't get a letter after your assessment.



If you need different supports, you can call my Aged Care to ask for a new assessment.

1800 200 422



If you aren't happy with the result of your assessment, you can ask us to check our decision.



Your letter will have information about how to do this.

2. Work out how much you need to pay



Once you know you can live in an aged care home, it's a good idea to work out what you'll need to pay.



The Australian Government provides funding for your aged care home.

But they might not pay for all of it.



If you can afford it, you might need to pay for some of the services you use.

The amount you pay might change depending on:



- how much money you have



- the value of the things you own, like your house or car



- the aged care home you choose.



You can check how much you might need to pay through the My Aged Care website.

www.myagedcare.gov.au/how-much-will-i-pay

Different types of fees

Basic daily fee

Almost everyone needs to pay a basic daily fee.



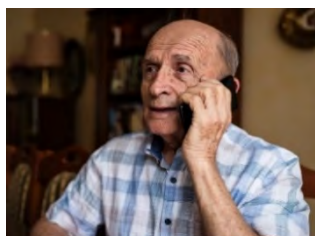
This pays for things like your:

- meals
- power
- laundry.

It might be the only fee you need to pay.

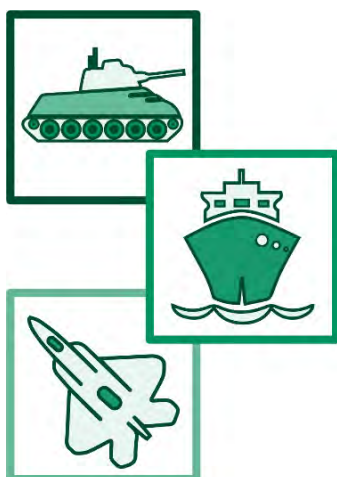


The Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) might pay your basic daily fee if you are a **veteran**.



You can call them to check if they will pay for you.

1300 550 450



Veterans are people who worked in the defence forces, including the:

- army
- navy
- air force.

Accommodation fees



You might need to pay for your accommodation – the room you live in.



You might:

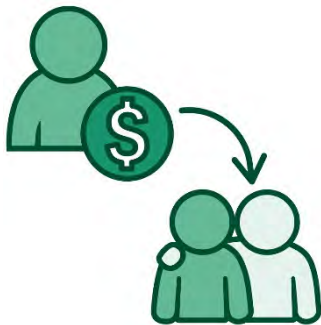
- not pay this fee
- pay for some of it
- pay for all of it.



In Step 4, we explain how you can:

- agree on the price of a room
- pay for your accommodation.

Means tested care fee



You might have to pay a ‘means tested care fee’ if you have over a certain amount of money.



This includes the value of the things you own, like your house.



You might not have to pay a means tested care fee if you are a veteran.

Extra service fees



Some aged care homes have 'extra service status'.

This means they can offer rooms with extra services, like better accommodation or food.



If you agree to stay in a room with extra services, you need to pay the extra service fees.

The Australian Government won't provide funding for extra service fees.

Additional service fees



Some aged care homes have 'additional services' you can pay for.

The Australian Government won't provide funding for additional service fees.

Additional service fees include things you can use, such as:



- paid TV
- a hairdresser.

Getting a means assessment



You should get a **means assessment** to work out:

- what accommodation fee you need to pay
- if you need to pay a means tested care fee.

A means assessment helps us work out exactly how much funding you can receive.

It asks for information about your money, such as:



- how much money you make
- how much money you have in the bank
- the value of the things you own, like your house or car.



You should get a means assessment as soon as possible.

It can take a long time.



You don't have to do a means assessment to get short term respite care in an aged care home.



But you should do one if you want to move into an aged care home for a long time.



If you choose not to do a means assessment, you will have to pay the maximum cost for your care.

The Australian Government won't pay for anything.



You don't have to do a means assessment at all if you:

- don't own your own home
- and
- get payments from Centrelink or DVA.



You can check to see if you need to do a means assessment through the My Aged Care website.

www.myagedcare.gov.au/income-and-means-assessments

Services Australia



Services Australia can do your means assessment.



You can call them to find out:

- what means assessment is right for you
- how your means assessment is going.

1800 227 475



If you want to print out the form, you need to pick the one that's right for you.



There's a form you can print out if you:

- own or partly own your home
- and
- get payments from Centrelink or DVA.

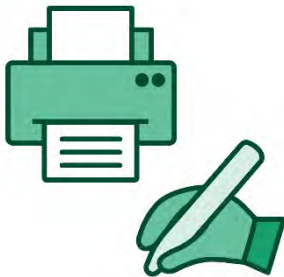
www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/sa485



There's a form you can print out if you don't get payments from:

- Centrelink
- DVA.

www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/sa457



After you print out the form, you need to fill it out.

Then you can:



- upload it on your Centrelink online account

or



- give it to Services Australia by post or in person.

The Department of Veterans' Affairs



DVA might do your means assessment if you are a veteran.



You can call them to find out:

- if they can do your means assessment
- how your means assessment is going.

1800 555 254

Your fee advice letter



After you complete your means assessment you will get a **fee advice letter**.

It explains the most you will have to pay when you move into an aged care home.



You can use the information in the letter within 120 days.



If you need another fee advice letter after this time, you can ask:

- Services Australia
- DVA.



You should take this letter to any meetings you have with aged care homes.

It will help you both understand how much you will pay if you choose to live at their aged care home.



If you didn't need to get a means assessment, you can still ask for your fee advice letter.

You can ask:

- Services Australia
- DVA.



You should also tell them if the amount of money you have changes.

For example, if you sell your house.

They will send you another fee advice letter.



You can take a break now if you'd like to.



You're about halfway through the booklet.

3. Find an aged care home

Contacting an aged care home



You're ready to contact an aged care home once you have your:

- My Aged Care assessment letter
- fee advice letter.



You should take these 2 letters to any meetings you have with aged care homes.



You can visit the My Aged Care website to find an aged care home in your local area.

Make sure to choose the 'aged care homes' from the list of care types.

www.myagedcare.gov.au/find-a-provider



Or you can call your trained assessor and ask if they know any aged care homes in your local area.

They can contact an aged care home for you.



You can ask your trained assessor for a 'referral code'.

A referral code lets an aged care home:



- view your information



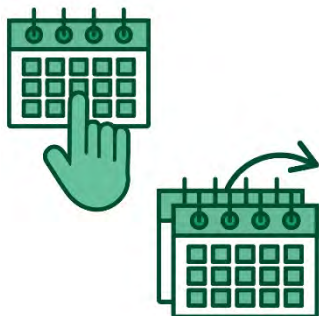
- start planning services for you.



You can also contact an aged care home on your own:

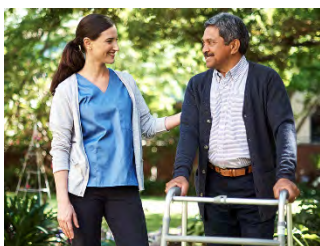
- by calling them
- in person.

Choosing an aged care home



When you choose an aged care home, it's a good idea to think about what services you might need:

- now
- in the future.



You should visit different aged care homes to see what you like.

It's a good idea to check what:



- the accommodation is like



- types of services they offer



- social activities you can take part in.



You should also check how much you might need to pay for:

- care and services
- accommodation
- additional services, like paid TV or a hairdresser.

Questions you can ask an aged care home



We wrote some questions you can ask an aged care home.



What type of care services:

- do you provide?
- don't you provide?



What services will I need to pay for?



Can you help me if I have medical problems?



Can you support my way of life?

This could include your:



- language



- religion



- pets.



What do you serve for meals?

What time do you serve them?



How do you make sure the aged care home is:

- safe?
- private?



What transport is nearby?



What training do the staff have?



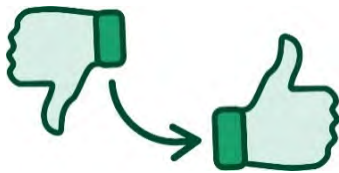
How many staff provide care during the night?



What if I want to stay with my family?



Who checks to make sure the aged care home gives good quality services?



What areas are you trying to make better?



Would you ever ask me to:

- leave the aged care home?
- change rooms?

Star ratings



Star ratings show the quality of an aged care home.

A high star rating means the aged care home is good quality.



Each aged care home will have a star rating that can help you compare aged care homes.

An aged care home's star rating is based on:



- the staff



- the quality of their service



- how well they follow the rules about quality and safety.



An aged care home's star rating is also based on the experiences of people who have stayed there.



You can learn more about star ratings on the Department of Health and Aged Care website: www.health.gov.au/our-work/star-ratings-for-residential-aged-care

Applying to an aged care home



It's a good idea to apply for more than one aged care home.



This is because it's possible the home you want might not have a place for you.



All aged care homes have their own way you can apply.

You should contact them to find out what information they need from you.



They might ask you to fill out a form.



After you choose their services, you will need to sign some agreements with your aged care home.

4. Work out how you want to pay

Getting advice from an expert



It's a good idea to get advice about using your money from an expert.



This is because how you pay for your aged care home might affect:

- payments you get from the government
- your other aged care services
- your partner's aged care services.



You can get advice about using your money through the Financial Information Service.



You can call them for free through Services Australia. Make sure to say 'financial information service' when they ask why you are calling.

132 300



You can also ask for support to help with payments for your aged care home.

You can call Services Australia for financial support.

1800 227 475



You can get more information about getting financial support on the My Aged Care website.

www.myagedcare.gov.au/financial-support-and-advice

Agreeing on the price of a room



All aged care homes must put the prices of their rooms on the My Aged Care website.

www.myagedcare.gov.au/find-a-provider



The price of rooms on the My Aged Care website is the maximum price of the room.



You can talk to the aged care home about paying less for the room.

Your aged care home might agree to bring the price down.



You can also ask someone to talk to the aged care home about the room price instead of you.

This person could be a:

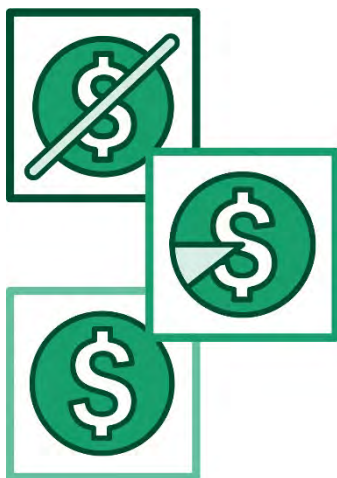
- family member
- lawyer.

Paying for your accommodation



You might have to pay an accommodation fee.

We explained this fee on page 22.



You might have to pay for:

- none of your accommodation
- some of your accommodation
- all of your accommodation.

How you can pay



If you need to pay for your accommodation, you have 28 days to choose how you want to do this.

The 28 days starts from when you move into your aged care home.



There are 3 ways you can choose to pay.

After you choose how you want to pay, you need to make your payments in the same way each time.



1. You could pay a small amount every day.

This is called a 'daily payment'.



This could be useful if you:

- don't have a lot of money saved
- get payments over time, for example from the government.



2. You could pay a larger amount straight away.

This is called a 'lump-sum payment'.



When you leave the aged care home, they will give you back the money you didn't spend from your lump-sum payment.



3. You could also pay through a mix of these 2 options.



You can learn more about paying for your accommodation on the My Aged Care website.

www.myagedcare.gov.au/understanding-aged-care-home-accommodation-costs

Paying for respite care



When you are in respite care in an aged care home, you will have to pay:

- some money every day, called a basic daily fee
- a larger amount before you receive care, called a booking fee.



DVA might pay for you if you are a veteran.

You can call them to check if they will pay for you.

1300 550 450



The government will pay for most of your respite care.



But if you stay longer than 63 days:

- they will stop paying
- you might have to pay more.



If a trained assessor and your aged care home agree, then you:

- can stay in respite care longer
- won't have to pay more than you already are.



This will be part of the agreement you sign with your aged care home.

We talk more about agreements in the next section.

5. Make an agreement with your aged care home



Once you are ready to move into your aged care home, you can sign a:

- resident agreement
- accommodation agreement.



You don't have to sign an accommodation agreement if you're getting respite care.

These documents explain:



- the care and services you can get



- how much you have to pay



- how you can make payments.



They also explain:

- what you need to do
- your **rights**.



Rights are rules that say people must treat you:

- fairly
- equally.



Sometimes these agreements are in the same document.



You have a say in what goes into these documents.

Make sure they include the services you think are important.



Your aged care home must make sure you understand what you are agreeing to.



You don't have to sign these documents if you don't want to.



But even if you don't, you will still have to pay for your services and accommodation.



It's a good idea to make sure you at least sign a document that explains:

- what you need to do
- your rights.



You can ask the Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN) to support you with these documents.

OPAN helps older people get the information they need to:



- make decisions



- understand their rights



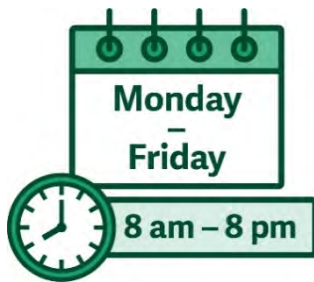
- fix problems.



You can call OPAN.

1800 700 600

You can call OPAN from:



- 8 am to 8 pm, Monday to Friday



- 10 am to 4 pm, Saturday.

What are your rights?



There is a document called the Charter of Aged Care Rights.

It explains the rules everyone must follow when they provide aged care services.



Your aged care home must:

- respect your rights
- follow these rules.



Your aged care home must give you a copy of the Charter.



You can talk to your aged care home if you need someone to help you understand your rights.



We also wrote some Easy Read information about the Charter of Aged Care Rights.

You can find this on the My Aged Care website.

www.myagedcare.gov.au/accessible-all



Your aged care home must also follow the Aged Care Quality Standards.

www.myagedcare.gov.au/aged-care-quality-standards



You can also contact the **Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (Aged Care Commission)**.

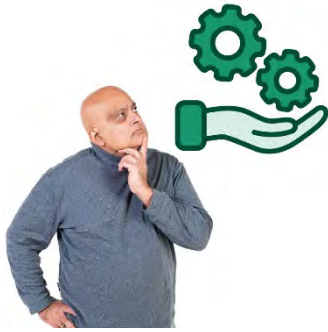
The Aged Care Commission makes sure older Australians:

- are safe
- get good services.



We explain how you can contact the Aged Care Commission on page 61.

6. Manage your services



You also need to think about what services you want to use while you're living in your aged care home.



You can keep using services you already use, like your own:

- doctor
- dentist.



Your aged care home must help you:

- make medical appointments
- find and use health care workers.



They can also help you get transport to your medical appointments.



You might have to pay for your aged care home to help with these services.



Your aged care home will organise social activities for you.

You can let them know about your:

- hobbies
- interests.



You can contact the Aged Care Volunteer Visitors Scheme (ACVVS) if you:

- feel alone
- don't see family or friends often.

The ACVVS can support you to connect with others.



You can ask your aged care home about the ACVVS.



You can also visit the Department of Health website to find out how to contact the ACVVS.

There are different contact details for each state and territory.

www.health.gov.au/our-work/aged-care-volunteer-visitors-scheme-acvvs/contacts



You can also call My Aged Care to contact the ACVVS.

1800 200 422

Going on holiday



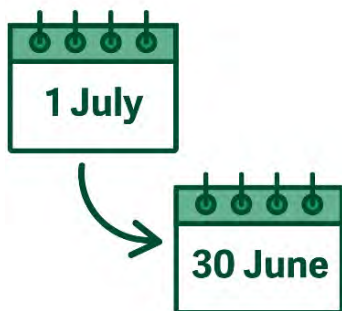
You can spend 52 days away from your aged care home each year.

This is called 'social leave'.



It includes:

- going on holiday
- seeing friends and family.



The year goes from 1 July to 30 June.



Going to hospital doesn't count towards your 52 days of social leave.



While you're away, you still have to pay for your:

- care services
- accommodation.



If you stay away for more than 52 days in a year the Australian Government will stop paying for your:

- care services
- accommodation.



After that, you will have to pay the full means tested care fee to stay at your aged care home.

Changing rooms



If you want to change rooms in your aged care home, you can ask the manager of your aged care home.



You might need to sign a new agreement. Especially if your new room has a different price.

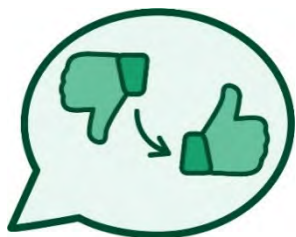


There might be times when your aged care home will make you change rooms even if you don't want to.



If you're worried about this, you should talk to the manager of your aged care home.

Giving feedback



When you give **feedback**, you tell someone what:

- works well
- needs to be better.



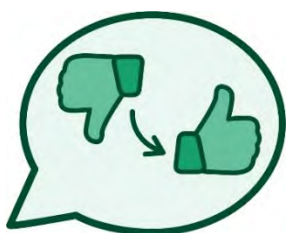
When you make a **complaint**, you tell someone that something:

- has gone wrong
- isn't working well.



Complaints are more serious than feedback.

You should talk to your aged care home if you need to:



- give feedback



- make a complaint.



For example, you might have a problem with a service you receive.



You can have someone to support you when you talk to your aged care home.

For example, a friend or carer.



Your aged care home should tell you how to make a complaint.

And how they will manage it.



If you make a complaint, it should not affect how your aged care home gives you supports and services.

If you need more support to fix your complaint



Sometimes your aged care home can't fix your complaint.



Or you might not want to tell them your problem.



If this happens, you might want to get support from the Aged Care Commission.



You can visit the Aged Care Commission's website.

www.agedcarequality.gov.au



You can call the Aged Care Commission.

1800 951 822



You can email the Aged Care Commission.

info@agedcarequality.gov.au



You can also send a letter to the Aged Care Commission.

They have a mailbox in each state and territory.



You can address your letter to:

Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission
GPO Box 9819



Then you can add your:

- capital city
- state or territory.



You can also ask the Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN) to support you with your complaint.

We explain who the OPAN are on page 51.

More support

Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS)



If you need to talk to someone in a language other than English, you can call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS).

131 450

Deaf Connect



You can visit the Deaf Connect website if you:

- are deaf
- are both deaf and blind
- have a hearing or speech impairment.

Deaf Connect can provide services to support you.

www.deafconnect.org.au

National Relay Service



If you are deaf, or have a hearing or speech impairment, you can call the National Relay Service.

133 677

LiveUp



If you need help to manage your health, you can visit the LiveUp website.

www.liveup.org.au



If you need to talk to someone, you can also call LiveUp.

1800 951 971

Dementia Australia



Dementia Australia has a program called the National Dementia Support Program.

This program supports carers who look after someone who struggles with the way they:



- think or make decisions
- remember
- talk.



You can call Dementia Australia:

- Monday to Friday
- 8 am to 8 pm.

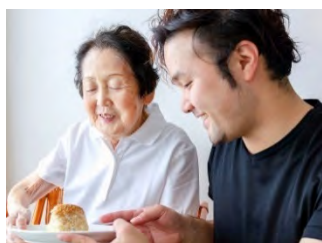
1800 100 500

Dementia Support Australia



Dementia Support Australia also supports people who struggle with the way they:

- think or make decisions
- remember
- talk.



They also support family members and carers.



You can call Dementia Support Australia.

1800 699 799



You can also visit their website.

www.dementia.com.au

National Elder Abuse



Elder abuse is when someone treats an older person badly or hurts them.



If you are worried about elder abuse, you can call National Elder Abuse.

1800 353 374



You can also visit the Compass website.

www.compass.info

Carer Gateway



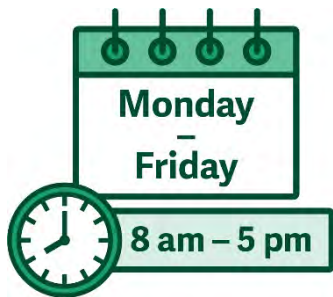
An **unpaid carer**:

- takes care of a family member or friend
- is not paid any money.



Carer Gateway provides services and support to unpaid carers across Australia:

- in person
- over the phone
- online.



You can call Carer Gateway:

- Monday to Friday
- 8 am to 5 pm.

1800 422 737



Select 'Option 1' to speak to someone.



You can also visit the Carer Gateway website.

www.carergateway.gov.au



They can talk to your carer to work out their needs.
And help them find services to support them.

Word list

This list explains what the **bold** words in this document mean.



Aged care home

An aged care home is where older Australians live when they can't live in their home anymore.



Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (Aged Care Commission)

The Aged Care Commission makes sure older Australians:

- are safe
- get good services.



Assessment

An assessment helps someone work out what support you might need.



Complaint

When you make a complaint, you tell someone that something:

- has gone wrong
- isn't working well.



Elder abuse

Elder abuse is when someone treats an older person badly or hurts them.



Fee advice letter

A fee advice letter explains the most you will have to pay when you move into an aged care home.



Feedback

When you give feedback, you tell someone what:

- works well
- needs to be better.



Funding

Funding is money from the Australian Government to pay for supports and services.

Means assessment

A means assessment helps us work out exactly how much funding you can receive.

It asks for information about your money, such as:

- how much money you make
- how much money you have in the bank
- the value of the things you own, like your house or car.



NDIS

The NDIS is a way the Australian Government supports people with disability.



Representative

You can choose someone you trust to make decisions for you.

We call this person a representative.



Respite care

Respite care is when you only stay in an aged care home for a short time.



Rights

Rights are rules that say people must treat you:

- fairly
- equally.



Standards

Standards are rules about how to do things well.



Trained assessor

A trained assessor is someone who has the skills and knowledge to do an assessment.



Unpaid carer

An unpaid carer:

- takes care of a family member or friend
- is not paid any money.



Veteran

Veterans are people who worked in the defence forces, including the:

- army
- navy
- air force.



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