



Australian Government



Kathy and Lynette's story

Learn how aged care support is helping Kathy and Lynette to live safely and comfortably in their home.

Kathy is 78 and a transgender woman. She lives with her wife Lynette, aged 76. They are receiving aged care support in their home and have recently applied to access more.

Read their story or [watch](#) their video story.



Kathy and Lynette live together in regional Victoria. Kathy is a transgender woman and is hard of hearing. Both Kathy and Lynette have limited mobility. Kathy enjoys attending her local church while Lynette is a keen embroiderer. They both enjoy spending time with their 13 grandchildren and dog Ranger.

Kathy and Lynette's aged care journey began when Lynette required hip replacements. Together, they got support through My Aged Care to help Lynette when she returned home. This included rails on the steps and in the shower, and a ramp outside to help Lynette use her walker. They were also able to access Meals on Wheels and get a cleaner for their home.

This extra support helped the couple, especially as Kathy started to experience changes that made things more difficult – including deterioration of hearing, arthritis and problems with balance. When Kathy experienced a number of falls, she realised it was time to reach out for aged care supports for herself.

'The real issue for me was recognising that I was potentially a danger to myself or Lynette, dealing with boiling pots and pans. So, that sort of changed our reality because we preferred to be independent... As most people do.'

Kathy's now planning how her own aged care will support her to better hear, stay socially connected and move around her home and her community safely and in a way that works for her. Kathy says help with her hearing is particularly important so she can stay socially connected for her health and mental wellbeing.

'I've found that, especially with the hearing issues that I have, it destroyed my ability to feel I could cope with multiple voices in a social setting. And of course, then you tend to shrink from social discussions. I know for mental health that it's important.'

Finding aged care that works for them

Kathy and Lynette have used recommendations from others to choose providers. This helps them feel confident they'll get supports that work for them.

A key focus for Kathy is having independence to choose aged care that works for her and making sure that she feels safe. Kathy is planning to access self-managed support, so she has more control over the care she receives. This is especially important to her when having aged care support workers in her home and making sure they have the right training.

'I think the discussion about having workers coming to your home is quite complex. Don't we all want safety where we live? Inviting a professional service provider into a home is a risk. Not just for transgender women. And that's why proper training and staff selection is really, really, really important for service providers.'

Kathy feels strongly about living life your way – especially in older age. She encourages others to start thinking about aged care sooner rather than later.



'It's important to move ahead and gather as much information as you can... To have folk in your life that are in a position to help you. If possible, have good conversations with family. Really recognise where you're at on the life path. Don't panic about it, but don't leave it until the last minute, either.'

By accessing aged care support that meets their needs, Kathy and Lynette look forward to continuing to live happily, safely and independently at home.

Sometimes we need extra support or help with everyday tasks as we get older. Like Kathy, LGBTI+ community members can find safe and supportive aged care to help you stay living at home for longer. There are different types of aged care support – from help with day-to-day tasks around the house, getting some short-term care or care in an aged-care home.

Some providers are verified as providing specialised supports for the LGBTI+ community. These are aged care providers whose claims of specialised care have been verified against the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing's Specialisation Verification Framework.

For more information visit MyAgedCare.gov.au or free call 1800 200 422.