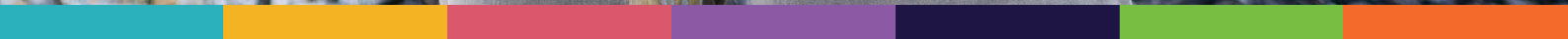




Australian Government

**Department of Health
and Aged Care**

CHANGES TO AGED CARE IN AUSTRALIA



CHANGES TO AGED CARE

The Australian Government is making positive changes to aged care.

These changes – known as the aged care reforms – will improve aged care in Australia now and into the future.

Many of these changes are in response to the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety.

Our vision is to deliver the highest quality person-centred care for older people, where and when they need it.

Some of these changes include:

- introducing the **24/7 registered nurse responsibility**, which means a registered nurse must be on-site and on duty in all aged care homes 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- introducing a sector average of **200 mandatory care minutes** per resident per day to make sure people living in aged care homes have their clinical and personal care needs met each day – this will increase from 1 October 2024 to 215 minutes
- establishing a **Food, Nutrition and Dining Hotline**, where older people in aged care homes, their families and carers can ask questions, get advice and make complaints about their food
- introducing **Star Ratings** to help older people, their families and carers to more easily compare aged care homes and make informed choices
- funding a **15% wage rise for more than 250,000 aged care workers**, recognising the value of aged care workers and the important work they do
- capping **care management and package management fees for Home Care Packages** at 20% and 15% of the respective package levels to improve transparency and accountability around home care pricing and fees
- introducing **face-to-face support** in Services Australia service centres to help older people and their families and carers access the aged care system
- ensuring **specialisations** on My Aged Care are independently verified to help older people from diverse groups choose an aged care provider best suited to their needs
- expanding the **National Aged Care Mandatory Quality Indicator Program** with 6 additional quality indicators including consumer experience and quality of life of older people
- introducing a **Code of Conduct for Aged Care** to help ensure that services are delivered to older people in a safe, competent and respectful manner.

More to come in 2024

In this booklet you can:

- find out how to access aged care (**page 4**)
- read about the latest changes to aged care (**page 8**)
- learn how to have your say (**turn to the back cover**).

Find out more about the changes and have your say:

 **AgedCareEngagement.**
health.gov.au/get-involved



A message from the Hon Anika Wells MP

Minister for Aged Care
Minister for Sport



We're lifting the standard of aged care in Australia.

The journey to lift the standard of aged care in Australia began on 1 March 2021 when the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety's final report was tabled in Parliament.

The 3-year anniversary of this date gives us the opportunity to look back and reflect on the positive change we have made to aged care.

We have an ambitious vision for aged care in Australia. We're well on our way towards an aged care sector older people and their families trust, and people want to work in.

The past 12 months have been big.

One of our proudest achievements was funding the biggest ever wage rise for more than 250,000 aged care workers. We want a valued workforce with the right skills and knowledge to look after our loved ones. This wage rise is already attracting and retaining more staff.

We also introduced the 24/7 registered nursing requirement in residential aged care, which means older people can access the clinical care they need, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. We also introduced mandatory minimum care requirements, which are set to increase this year. This reduces unnecessary hospital visits and provides peace of mind for families and carers.

Last year, the Aged Care Taskforce was established to assess funding options for aged care that are sustainable and equitable now and into the future. That means aged care in Australia will have funding that is fair and helps create a more vibrant and innovative sector.

In 2024, there's so much more to come. The government is getting closer to a new, rights-based Aged Care Act, working further on the Support at Home program starting in 2025, and supporting sector viability by working through recommendations from the Aged Care Taskforce.

We promised to lift the standard of aged care and we're delivering.

As always, we encourage you to have your say. Together we can continue to make positive, lasting changes to aged care that deliver safety, dignity and respect for older people.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Anika Wells".

Anika Wells
February 2024

GETTING STARTED WITH AGED CARE

We're working to make the aged care system easier to access and navigate.

My Aged Care

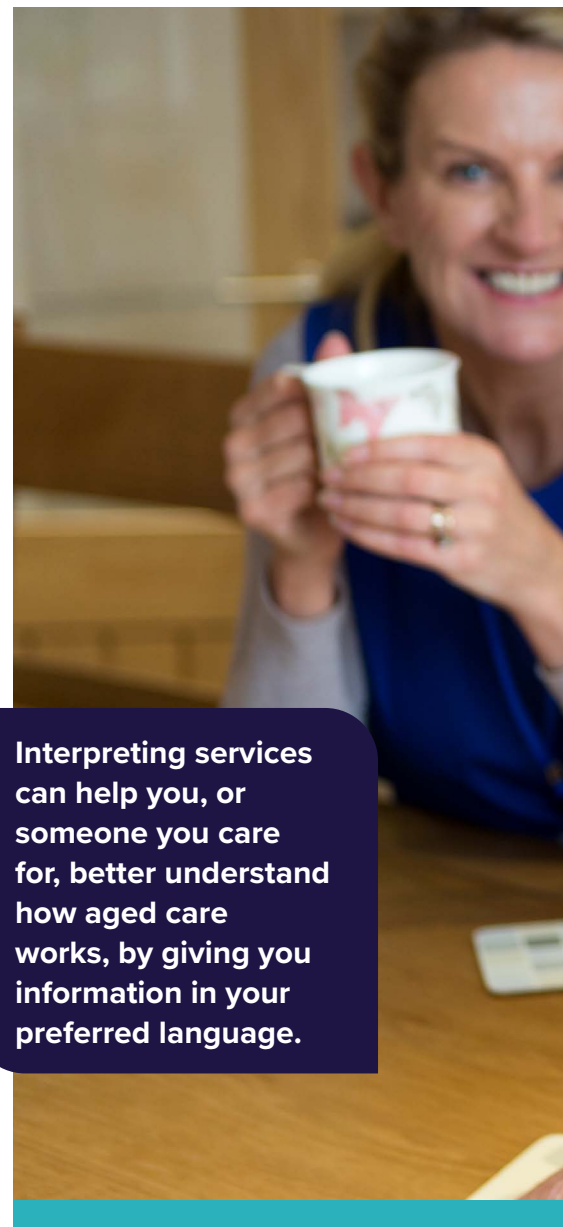
If you need help around the house or are thinking about aged care homes, contacting My Aged Care is the first step. My Aged Care provides:

- information on the different types of aged care services available
- an assessment of needs to identify eligibility and the right type of care
- referrals and support to find service providers that can meet your needs
- information on what you might need to pay towards the cost of your care.




Contact My Aged Care:

-  **1800 200 422**
-  **MyAgedCare.gov.au**
-  **Face-to-face** by speaking with an Aged Care Specialist Officer (to book an appointment call **1800 227 475**).



i Interpreting services can help you, or someone you care for, better understand how aged care works, by giving you information in your preferred language.

iA photograph showing two men in conversation. One man, wearing a striped shirt, is looking towards the other man, who is wearing a light blue shirt and glasses. The man in the striped shirt is holding a black folder or tablet.

People who have difficulty speaking or understanding English can contact My Aged Care through the interpreting service TIS National for the cost of a local call:

1. Call TIS National on 131 450
2. Tell the operator the language you speak
3. Ask the interpreter to call My Aged Care on 1800 200 422

You may need to wait on the line for the interpreter, or the operator may need to call you back when an interpreter is available.



Aged Care Specialist Officers

Aged Care Specialist Officers can give you face-to-face help with My Aged Care. They can give you in-depth information about the different types of aged care services, check if you're eligible for Australian Government funded services and make a referral for you to have an aged care assessment. They can also help you appoint a representative for My Aged Care, provide financial information about aged care services and connect you to local support services.

You can book a free appointment with an Aged Care Specialist Officer at Services Australia service centres in more than 80 locations across Australia. If you have a MyGov account, you can book a video chat appointment.

Find out more:



ServicesAustralia.gov.au/Aged-care-specialist-officer-my-aged-care-face-to-face-services

Translating and Interpreting Services

If you are receiving care, you can get 24/7 phone interpreting through TIS National for the cost of a local call. Ask your aged care provider to call TIS National on 131 450, available 24 hours a day, every day of the year or to visit:



TisNational.gov.au and use their TIS National client code.

Aged care providers can translate key information into languages other than English to help them communicate with you in your preferred language.

Find out more:



diversityagedcare.health.gov.au

The Deaf Connect sign language interpreting and captioning service provides in-person and online sign language interpreting and live captioning to support you to better engage with aged care services.

Find out more:

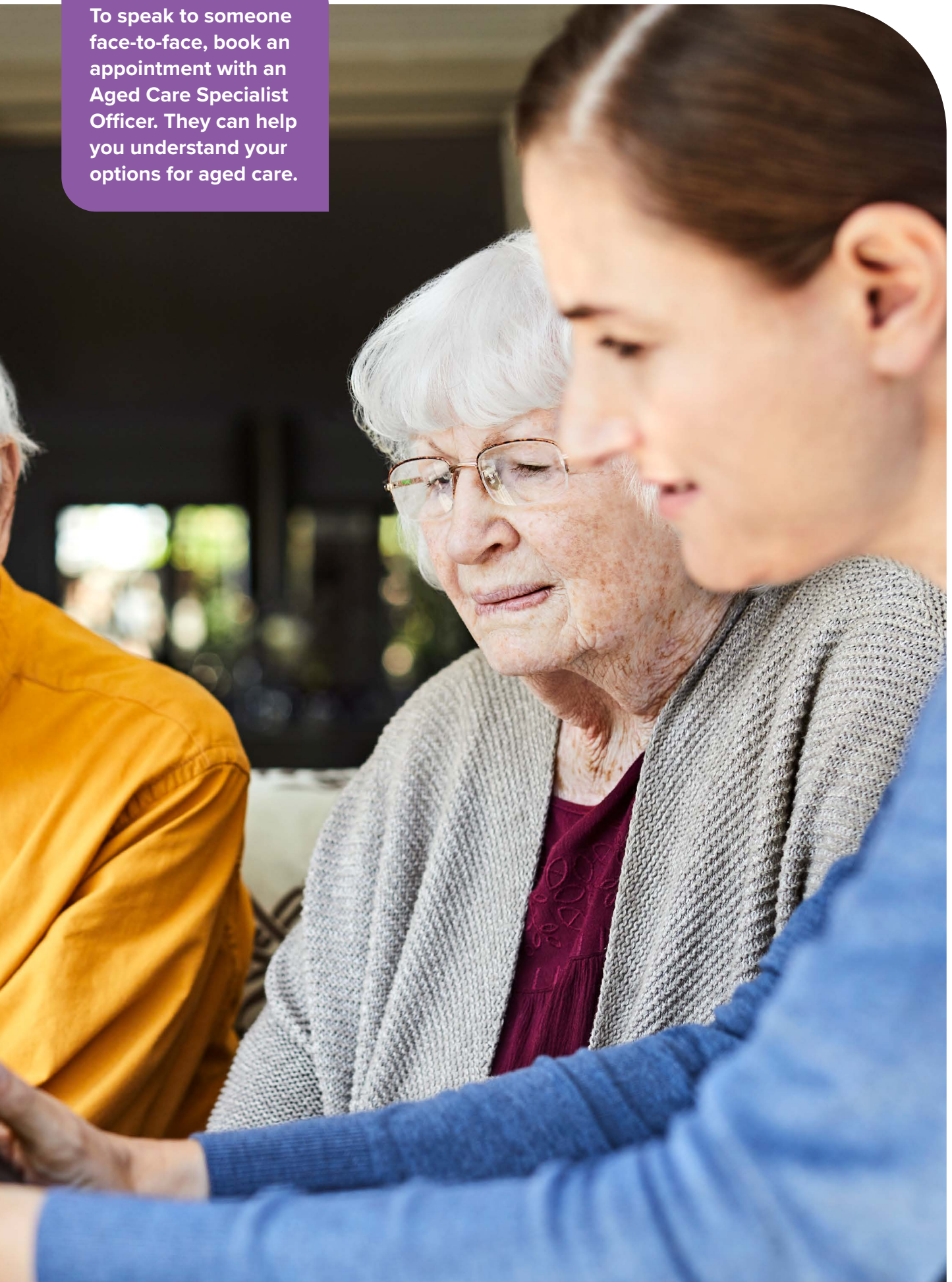


deafconnect.org.au



i

To speak to someone face-to-face, book an appointment with an Aged Care Specialist Officer. They can help you understand your options for aged care.



SHIFTING TO PERSON-CENTRED CARE

We're improving choice and transparency and making it easier to access care that meets your specific needs.

An easier assessment system

We are establishing a new Single Assessment System from 1 July 2024 to simplify and improve access to aged care services.

The new Single Assessment System will simplify and improve access to aged care services by providing a flexible system that can quickly adapt to older people's aged care needs. Under the new system, older people will no longer need to change assessment providers as their needs change.

We are also introducing a new assessment tool to collect better information to ensure service recommendations and referrals are tailored to each person's needs.

Find out more:

 health.gov.au/single-assessment-system

Places to people

From 1 July 2024, the residential aged care system will change to give older people more control to select an aged care home of their choice.

The changes will mean that:

- people will have more ability to choose the aged care home that best meets their needs, in a location of their choice (where there are vacancies)
- if people are unhappy at their current aged care home, they have more flexibility to move as their place is allocated to them, not the aged care home
- aged care homes will start operating in a more competitive market and will need to respond to community expectations to attract people.

i

You can choose a home that suits your lifestyle and there is more flexibility to move around if things change.

Find out more:

 health.gov.au/PlacesToPeople



Publishing finance and operations information of providers on My Aged Care

From early 2024, you will be able to view information using the 'Find a provider' tool on the My Aged Care website related to providers' finance and operations, including:

- how much a provider spends on care, nursing, food, maintenance, cleaning and administration
- activities to support a diverse and inclusive environment
- information on provider income and profits and losses
- details about the diversity of the provider's board
- food preparation
- feedback and complaints received and key improvements.

Publishing this information allows for greater transparency in the aged care sector and will help you make more informed decisions when choosing an aged care provider.

Specialised aged care for people from diverse backgrounds

We have made it easier for older people with diverse needs, backgrounds and lived experiences to access reliable information about their care providers on the My Aged Care website.

Some providers tailor their services and staff to meet the needs of specific groups.

Use the 'Find a provider' tool on the My Aged Care website to find out about a provider's specialisations:

 [MyAgedCare.gov.au/find-a-provider](https://myagedcare.gov.au/find-a-provider)

The strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards


Older people's views were central to the development of a strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards (strengthened Standards). The strengthened Standards reinforce requirements on providers of aged care services to ensure older people can access quality care that is person-centred, safe, coordinated and effective.

Improvements include the focus on diversity, dementia, governance, clinical care, workforce planning and a dedicated standard for food and nutrition.

The strengthened Standards reflect the level of care and services older people can expect from providers of aged care services.

The strengthened Standards are planned to commence in line with the new Aged Care Act.

Find out more:

 health.gov.au/topics/aged-care/aged-care-reforms-and-reviews/royal-commission-into-aged-care-quality-and-safety/the-aged-care-quality-standards

WE'RE BUILDING A NEW AGED CARE ACT

Australia's aged care laws are changing to put the rights and needs of older people first.

A new Aged Care Act is being introduced. It will change how aged care services are delivered to older people in their homes, community settings and aged care homes, and ensure that older people get the care and dignity they deserve.

We have been consulting on the Act in stages and inviting people to provide feedback. Anyone interested in Australia's aged care system can contribute, including older people, their families and carers, aged care providers and workers, researchers and experts.

We'll be working hard to use the latest feedback to finalise the new Act.

Fundamental changes in the aged care sector

The new Act will lead to fundamental changes in the aged care sector, including:

- a simple, single entry point to make access to the aged care system for older people easier
- a fair, culturally safe single assessment process
- rules on supported decision-making to ensure older people have choice and control
- additional protections for whistleblowers to allow reporting without fear of reprisal
- a new approach to regulating aged care providers to ensure delivery of safe, quality aged care services
- strengthening the powers of the regulator, the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission, to manage risk, ensure integrity and support safe and quality aged care

The new Act will include a Statement of Rights to help ensure the needs of older people are at the centre of the new aged care system. It will outline what you should expect when accessing Government-funded aged care services.

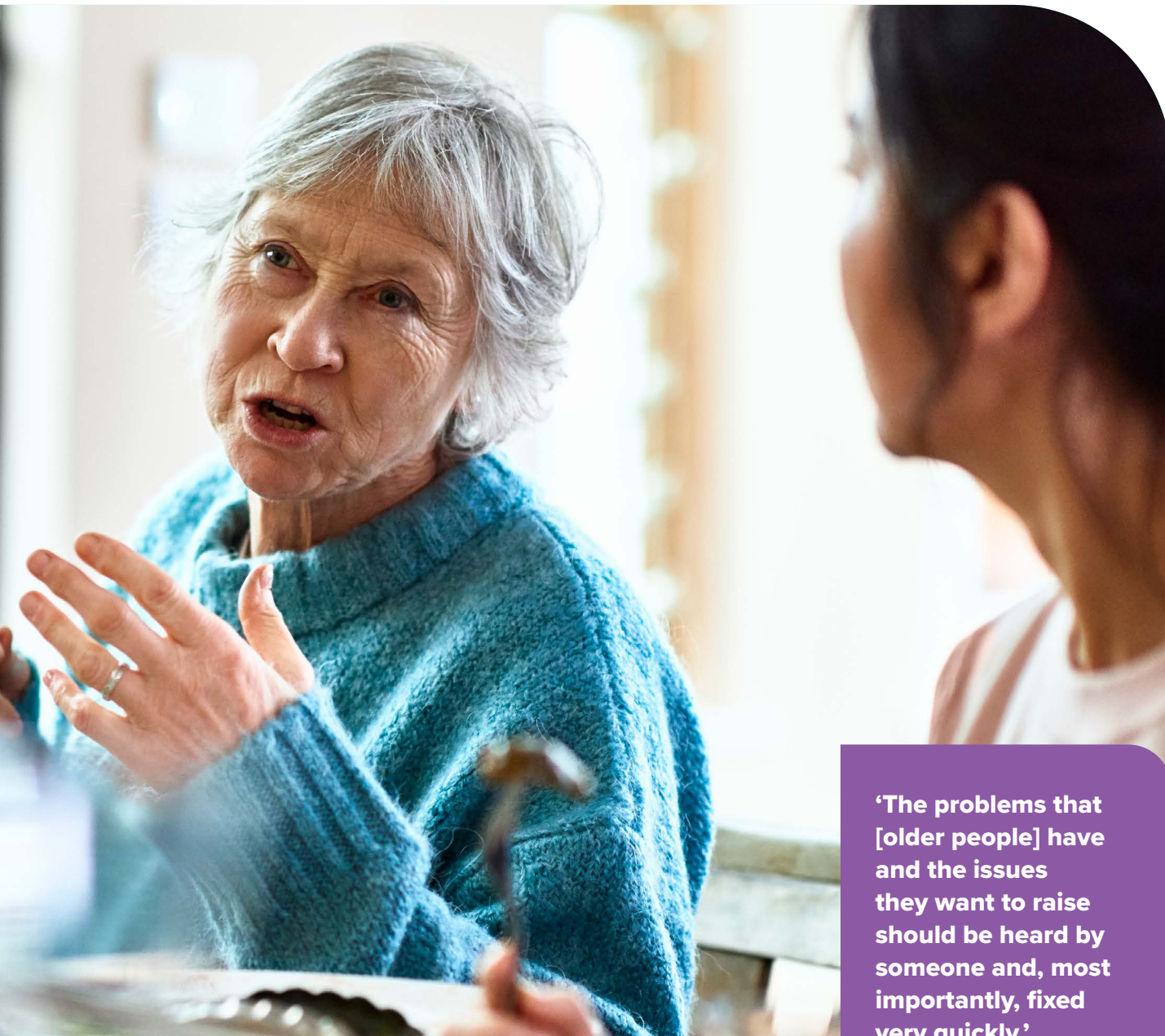
A Statement of Principles will be included to guide decision-making, actions and behaviours required under the new Act.

Learn more about the new Act at:

 health.gov.au/aged-care-act

'The goal of the new Act is to put the rights of older people at the front and centre of their aged care.'

*Craig Gear, CEO OPAN
and Patricia Sparrow,
CEO COTA AUSTRALIA*



A new approach to regulating aged care

We've been working with older people in Australia, their families and carers, providers and the aged care sector to develop a new model for regulating aged care.

The regulatory model sets out how the aged care sector will operate under the new Aged Care Act.

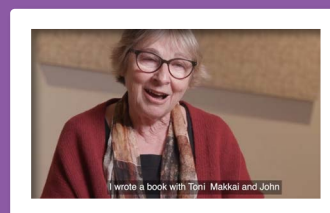
The new model is designed to drive change across the sector, improve outcomes and protections for older people and restore trust in the system.

Find out more:

 health.gov.au/regulating-aged-care

'The problems that [older people] have and the issues they want to raise should be heard by someone and, most importantly, fixed very quickly.'

Emeritus Professor Valerie Braithwaite, aged care expert and member of the Expert Advisory Panel for the new regulatory model



IMPROVING IN-HOME AGED CARE

Changes to in-home aged care will ensure older people can live independently at home for longer and have access to the right level of support.

In-home aged care supports about 1 million older people in Australia. These services range from transport to clinical care, such as nursing and allied health.

We have commissioned a range of work to improve in-home aged care in Australia, including:

- the Aged Care Taskforce, which has provided independent advice to government on funding arrangements for aged care to ensure the aged care system is fair and equitable for all
- a pricing study conducted by the Independent Health and Aged Care Pricing Authority to determine fair and efficient prices for in-home aged care
- a study to develop an inclusions list for assistive technology and home modifications.



‘Older people who need care want to receive it in their own homes. Ageing at home can be central to a person’s sense of identity and independence.’

Final Report: Care, Dignity and Respect, Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety (2021)



Home Care Packages pricing caps

Until the new Support at Home program begins on 1 July 2025, the Home Care Packages Program will continue to operate as normal and provide support to older people at home.

In 2023 we took significant steps to make sure older people will no longer be charged excessive administrative and management costs as part of their Home Care Package.

From 1 January 2023, care management and package management charges were capped at 20% and 15% of the respective package levels. We also banned exit fees, making it easier to change providers, and stopped providers from charging separate brokerage and subcontracting fees.

New Support at Home program

Under the new Support at Home program, there will be improved access to services, equipment and home modifications to help older people to remain healthy, active and socially connected to their community.

From 1 July 2025, the Support at Home program will replace the existing Home Care Packages Program and the Short-Term Restorative Care Programme. The Commonwealth Home Support Programme will transition into Support at Home no earlier than 1 July 2027. We are delivering the new program in 2 stages to minimise disruption and ensure continuity of care for older people.

Find out more:

 health.gov.au/in-home-aged-care-reform

IMPROVING RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE

Aged care homes should be comfortable and safe, and allow people to live a meaningful life.

Compare the quality and safety of aged care homes with Star Ratings

Star Ratings make it easier to compare the quality and safety of aged care homes, helping you choose the right one for you.

Use the 'find a provider' tool on the My Aged Care website to find out more about a specific aged care provider, and view its star rating:

 [MyAgedCare.gov.au/find-a-provider](https://www.myagedcare.gov.au/find-a-provider)

Residents' Experience Survey

The Residents' Experience Survey offers residents an opportunity to share their views on the care they receive at their aged care home. Residents' Experience Survey feedback contributes to each aged care home's Residents' Experience Star Ratings. The de-identified responses are also shared with providers to help them understand what they are doing well and where improvements can be made.



All aged care homes receive an overall Star Rating and a rating against 4 subcategories:

- Residents' Experience
- Compliance
- Staffing
- Quality Measures

Star Ratings use a 5 star (excellent) to 1 star (significant improvement needed) scale.





More nurses delivering more care

Every aged care home across Australia must now have a registered nurse available 24 hours a day, every day of the week. This helps make sure people living in aged care homes have access to the care they need, when they need it.

Since October 2023, aged care homes have had to meet mandatory 'care minutes' targets that reflect the direct care time residents receive from registered nurses, enrolled nurses and personal care workers/assistants in nursing every day. Care time includes, for example, care plan development, wound care, administration of prescribed medications and assistance with residents' daily living routines.

Each aged care home has its care minutes targets updated every 3 months, based on the needs of the residents.

Care minutes contribute to each aged care home's Staffing Star Rating.

In October 2024, the amount of mandatory care minutes that aged care homes must deliver will increase.

Find out more:

 health.gov.au/mandatory-care

'24/7 nursing is important to the future of residential care. It gives everyone peace of mind, knowing there is an RN on duty all of the time.'

Jo Boylan, CEO Clayton Church Homes

Quality indicators

The National Aged Care Mandatory Quality Indicator Program measures important aspects of care that affect a resident's health and wellbeing.

There are 11 quality indicators ranging from weight loss and incontinence care to consumer experience and quality of life.

Residential aged care providers report on this data quarterly, which provides an evidence base that can be used to improve the quality of services provided to people living in aged care homes.

Quality indicators contribute to an aged care home's Quality Measures Star Rating.

Find out more:


 health.gov.au/our-work/qi-program

Food and nutrition

Delicious and nutritious meals and a positive dining experience are important parts of living a healthy and happy life. We are making changes to improve the quality of life for older people living in aged care homes through initiatives to improve food and nutrition.

We have partnered with the Maggie Beer Foundation to deliver the free 'Improving Food in Aged Care through Education and Training' program until early 2026. The program aims to support aged care chefs and cooks to source, prepare and serve nutritious and delicious food.

Find out more:

 health.gov.au/aged-care-food-nutrition



The Maggie Beer Foundation aims to enrich the lives of older people by advocating for healthy and tasty food.



If you have questions or concerns about the food, nutrition or dining experience in an aged care home, you can phone the Food, Nutrition and Dining Hotline.



1800 844 044
(9am to 5pm AEDT
Monday to Friday).



[AgedCareQuality.gov.au/older-australians/health-wellbeing/food-and-nutrition](https://www.AgedCareQuality.gov.au/older-australians/health-wellbeing/food-and-nutrition)

REIMAGINING WHERE WE LIVE

We're encouraging innovation to improve the design of new and existing aged care homes.

Residential aged care accommodation framework

We have been working with older people, their families and carers, the aged care sector and design experts to improve the design of aged care accommodation.

We want to encourage flexibility and innovation in design and support providers to create safe and comfortable living environments that promote independence, function and enjoyment.

Draft National Aged Care Design Principles and Guidelines were developed following extensive consultation and have now been released.

They include 4 key principles:

- enable the person
- cultivate a home
- access to outdoors
- connect with community.

The Design Principles and Guidelines will be introduced from 1 July 2024. They will include improvements that can be made to the design of both new and existing aged care homes.

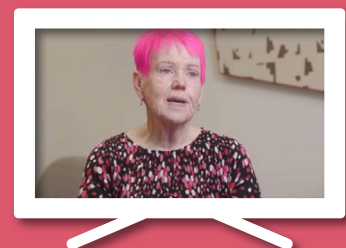
Find out more:

 health.gov.au/designing-residential-aged-care



'If I was designing a residential aged care facility, I would design it in a square. A veggie garden could be in the centre and you could have that social connection if you wanted it'

*Gwenda Darling,
advocate for people
living with dementia
and Council of Elders
member*





DEMENTIA SUPPORT



People living with dementia and their carers will have access to high-quality aged care services, so they can stay in their homes for longer.

National Dementia Support Program

The National Dementia Support Program aims to help people living with dementia, their families and carers understand more about dementia.

It also aims to connect and provide people living with dementia, their families and carers with services that support them to self-manage and live well with dementia for as long as possible.

Find out more:

 health.gov.au/ndsp

Dementia behaviour supports

The Dementia Behaviour Management Advisory Service provides support and advice when behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia impact a person's care or quality of life. Trained consultants help carers and aged care providers to understand the causes and/or triggers of behaviours and assist with developing strategies that optimise function, reduce pain, support other unmet needs and improve engagement.

Find out more:

 dementia.com.au

 health.gov.au/dbmas



Over **400K** Australians are living with **dementia**



Dementia is the leading cause of disease burden in **Australians** over **65**

Nearly **2/3** of **Australians** with **dementia** are **women**



Over half the people in **aged care** homes are **living with dementia**



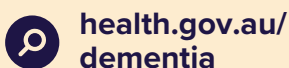


National Dementia Action Plan

The National Dementia Action Plan is a joint initiative between the Australian Government and state and territory governments. The plan will put all people living with dementia, their families and carers at the centre of action on dementia.

To develop the action plan, we sought national feedback on a consultation paper and we are working to finalise and release the plan in 2024.

Find out more:



[health.gov.au/
dementia](https://health.gov.au/dementia)

Respite support services

Respite care is there to support you and your carer for short periods of time. It can give you both a break and can also give you the chance to meet new people.

We are increasing support for people with dementia and their carers through dementia-specific respite services, including through carer education and wellbeing. We are working with a range of organisations to deliver dementia-specific respite programs across all state and territories.

Find out more:



MyAgedCare.gov.au/short-term-care/respite-care



health.gov.au/dementia-respite-care



IMPROVING PALLIATIVE CARE SERVICES

We're improving palliative care services to help people with a life-limiting illness live as comfortably as possible.

Palliative care is support for people living with a life-limiting illness. The aim of palliative care is to give people a good quality of life. This includes making sure you and your family get the care and support you need.

Palliative care is based on individual needs and may involve:

- relief from pain and other physical symptoms
- planning for future medical treatment decisions and goals for your care
- emotional, spiritual and psychological support
- help for families to come together to talk about sensitive issues
- support for people to meet cultural obligations
- counselling and grief support
- referrals to respite care services.

We are improving palliative care services by:

- growing a skilled and high-quality workforce to care for older people by expanding palliative care training and education activities
- supporting the aged care system to embed palliative care as core business
- improving outcomes for older people in aged care homes by helping staff assess symptoms and plan care that is appropriate and person-centred
- improving access to quality palliative care at home.

Find out more:



health.gov.au/palliative-care





SUPPORT FOR REGIONAL, RURAL AND REMOTE COMMUNITIES

We're improving access to aged care for the more than 1 in 3 older people living in regional, rural and remote communities.

More residential aged care places

Multi-Purpose Services (MPS) provide integrated health and aged care services in areas that cannot support both a hospital and a separate aged care home. These facilities support older people to get the care they need in their local community.

Use the 'Find a provider' tool on the My Aged Care website to see if there's an MPS near you:

 [MyAgedCare.gov.au/find-a-provider](https://myagedcare.gov.au/find-a-provider)

Better infrastructure

Through the Aged Care Capital Assistance Program, we are providing infrastructure grants to aged care providers operating in regional, rural and remote areas to build, extend or upgrade their facilities, or build staff accommodation.

The grants will also support specialist providers to build and improve services for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and First Nations communities.

Find out more:

 health.gov.au/accap

Integrated care and place-based initiatives

We are looking into ways to deliver a range of care and support services – such as disability supports, aged care and veterans' services – in regional, rural and remote areas and First Nations communities facing supply gap shortages. These initiatives aim to make providers more viable, provide better access to workforce and improve services for the community.



SUPPORT FOR OLDER FIRST NATIONS PEOPLES



We're making sure First Nations peoples aged 50 years or over can access quality, culturally appropriate aged care services.

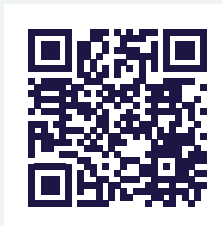
Meeting the needs of First Nations communities

There are initiatives to help older First Nations peoples remain on Country, such as additional funding for remote residential providers delivering services under the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flexible Aged Care Program. This program will continue to ensure older First Nations peoples have access to high-quality, culturally safe care.

We are also building the capacity of Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations to support and develop the First Nations aged care sector and build a local workforce to deliver aged care for First Nations communities.

Find out more:

 [health.gov.au/
first-nations-aged-care](https://health.gov.au/first-nations-aged-care)



'[Home care] gives me the independence to live here in my home and live quite comfortably. The workers coming in from home care have given me a better quality of life.'

Aunty Shirley arranged for an Aboriginal aged care service to provide her with help at home through My Aged Care.





Interim First Nations Aged Care Commissioner

Andrea Kelly has been named as the Interim First Nations Aged Care Commissioner. Andrea is a much-respected First Nations leader and brings 32 years' experience engaging with First Nations communities and developing public policy.

The Interim Commissioner will engage with First Nations communities and stakeholders on the design and functions of a permanent Commissioner role, including where it is located.

The role will also involve advocating for First Nations peoples and providers to ensure ongoing changes to aged care meet the needs of older First Nations peoples.

Elder Care Support

The Elder Care Support program will recruit and train a skilled workforce. The workforce will help older First Nations peoples, their families and carers access aged care services across urban, regional and remote Australia to meet their physical and cultural needs.

The National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation is rolling out the program in phases over 3 years.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander aged care assessment workforce

We are establishing First Nations assessment organisations to provide a culturally safe pathway for older First Nations peoples to access aged care.

With a strong understanding of the aged care needs of older First Nations peoples, these organisations will deliver a more culturally safe and trauma-informed assessment process.

Older First Nations peoples will gain better connections with appropriate care and services and benefit from an increased focus on culturally safe experience and improved assessment outcomes.

Language interpreting services

An interpreter is available for 13 First Nations languages to help people speak with My Aged Care:

My Aged Care on



1800 200 422 and ask for an interpreter



[MyAgedCare.gov.au/support-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-people](https://www.myagedcare.gov.au/support-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-people)

'I am delighted to accept the role of Interim Commissioner and for the opportunity to advocate for and work directly with First Nations people regarding their aged care needs.'

Andrea Kelly, Interim First Nations Aged Care Commissioner



CREATING CONNECTIONS THROUGH VOLUNTEERING

We're helping older people and volunteers create meaningful connections in their community.

Aged Care Volunteer Visitors Scheme

If you or an older person you know would benefit from friendship and companionship, you may like to explore the Aged Care Volunteer Visitors Scheme.

Volunteers who participate in the program are matched with older people and share interests, backgrounds or cultures where possible. Volunteers visit regularly and make a minimum of 20 visits per year. During a visit, you can do anything you both feel like doing, such as enjoy a chat over a cup of tea, take a walk or work on a joint hobby together.

The program creates meaningful friendships and has a positive impact on the lives of older people and volunteer visitors. Visits are available to anyone receiving government-subsidised aged care services in an aged care home or through a Home Care Package, including those on the National Priority System.

We encourage people from diverse backgrounds and experiences to join and be matched with older people from similar backgrounds.

To request a volunteer visitor for yourself or someone else, or to become a volunteer visitor, visit:

 health.gov.au/acvvs





Volunteer visitor story – Peter and Jack

Each week, Peter visits Jack at his home in Adelaide. As a retired man himself, Peter first started to volunteer as a way to expand his social circle.

‘I don’t have a big social circle and I thought this was a good way for me to broaden my social connection and feel as if I’m part of a community,’ says Peter. ‘The trigger for me was the fact that there were no men visiting other men.’

Over time, Peter and Jack have developed a strong friendship. With Peter’s help, Jack has been using a Dictaphone to record his life story.

‘I’ve found this a very useful gadget, because I’m able to put down things which come to mind at any odd time to include in the autobiography. I have done it with Peter’s help, a great deal of help. Hopefully it’ll have a happy ending,’ says Jack.

‘Peter, to me, is a godsend. Without his being here I would find it much more difficult to get on and I really look forward to his coming each week.’

‘I would tell anybody who is capable of doing volunteering to please take it up, because there are many, many people such as myself who would just about die to have a volunteer call on them.’

A VALUED AND SKILLED WORKFORCE

A supported, skilled and diverse workforce will deliver safe, consistent, high-quality aged care services for older people.

A pay rise for aged care workers

The government has invested \$11.3 billion to fund a 15% increase to minimum award wages for aged care workers. This was the interim decision of the Fair Work Commission aged care work value case, and came into effect on 30 June 2023.

This pay rise will make aged care work more attractive and retain staff to address critical workforce shortages, along with a range of workforce programs that are being rolled out across Australia.

Aged care nursing and allied health scholarships

This scholarship program for enrolled and registered nurses, personal care workers and allied health professionals supports the aged care workforce to improve their expertise in areas such as palliative care, dementia care, infection prevention and control, and more.

A guaranteed number of scholarships are available for First Nations peoples.

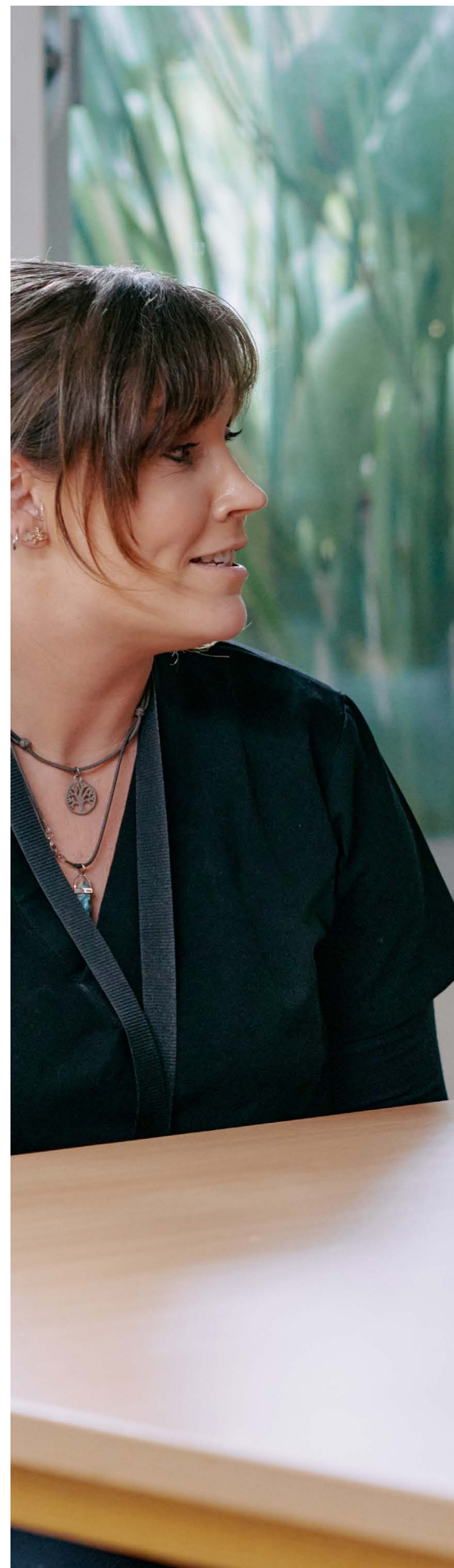
More skilled workers providing appropriate care

The government is providing training opportunities for new and existing aged care workers. There are more opportunities for free or subsidised training through Fee-Free TAFE, such as the Certificate III in Individual Support (Ageing), as well as university places and scholarships.

The Equip Aged Care Learning modules, developed by the University of Tasmania are an excellent resource for people currently working in aged care or seeking employment in the sector. They are also a great resource for families and informal carers to understand the aged care sector. Each module takes around 10 minutes to complete and all modules are free.

Find out more:

 equiplearning.utas.edu.au





Interested in a career
in aged care?



health.gov.au/topics/aged-care-workforce/getting-into-the-workforce

SUPPORT WITH YOUR AGED CARE RIGHTS

All older people have the right to receive safe, high-quality care and services and to be treated with dignity and respect.

National Aged Care Advocacy Program

The National Aged Care Advocacy Program (NACAP) supports older people, their families and representatives to engage with aged care services that meet an older person's individual needs, either in their own home or an aged care home. The NACAP is delivered by the Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN) and their state and territory network members to offer free, independent and confidential advocacy support, information and education to older people.

Aged care advocates will speak up on your behalf if you want them to, and only in a way that represents your wishes. They act confidentially and will always seek your permission before taking action.

Contact OPAN:

 **1800 700 600** between 8am–8pm
Monday to Friday and 10am–4pm on Saturdays

 **opan.org.au**

Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils Australia

The Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils Australia (FECCA) is a national peak body representing Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Contact FECCA:

 **02 6282 5755**

 **fecca.org.au**


Making a complaint


If you have a concern about the care you or someone else is receiving, it's important that you talk about it.

Making a complaint is not 'being difficult'. Most aged care providers do their best to provide quality care and services for older people, but issues can occur so it's important to be able to raise your concerns in a constructive and safe way.

If you have a concern or complaint that you've not been able to resolve by talking with your service provider, the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (the Commission) can help you to resolve your concern or complaint.

Contact the Commission:

 **1800 951 822**

 **AgedCareQuality.gov.au/making-complaint**



AGED CARE COUNCIL OF ELDERS

The Aged Care Council of Elders is a group of older people from diverse backgrounds with lived experiences of ageing and aged care.

The Council helps shape the aged care system by informing older people about the changes to aged care and provides advice to the government about aged care reforms and ageing well.

The Council plays an important role in representing the views of all older people and ensuring the needs of a diverse range of people are considered as changes are made to the aged care system.

Find out more and contact the Council of Elders:



health.gov.au/council-of-elders



Facebook.com/groups/AgedCareCouncilOfElders



LET'S CHANGE AGED CARE TOGETHER

Thousands of people have been involved in shaping the reforms so far through surveys, webinars, online workshops, consultation papers and face-to-face events.

There are plenty of opportunities for you to have your say about the changes to aged care:

Sign up to receive EngAged, our monthly newsletter for older people:

 health.gov.au/aged-care-newsletter-subscribe



Visit the Aged Care Engagement Hub to find out about the latest consultation opportunities and outcomes:

 AgedCareEngagement.health.gov.au/get-involved



'If aged people are given the slightest opportunity to speak, to contribute, to make a difference, they will thrive.'

*Gillian Groom, AO,
member of the
Council of Elders*