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## Changing needs and aged care

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### Summary

- Aged care services adapt to your changing needs. When using these services, you will still be able to make decisions about your care and finances.
- The Home and Community Care (HACC) program provides a range of services to help you at home.
- You need to contact your local Aged Care Assessment Service (ACAS) for access to more support services, such as a Home Care Package, or if you want to move into a residential aged care home.
- Respite care offers carers a short break from caring. Call Carers Victoria on 1800 052 222 to find out more.
- The Transition Care Program provides extra support after discharge from hospital. Ask your hospital healthcare team for more information.

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If your needs are increasing or you are looking after an older person, you can start to plan for future care needs. Everyone's healthcare and lifestyle needs are different and depend on your stage of life, health, financial situation and the family or other kinds of support you may have.

Most people prefer to live independently for as long as possible, while others may need to move into residential aged care for more help with day-to-day tasks or health care.

Whatever your situation, your needs may change as you get older. It is a good idea to think about the kind of care you will want so that if the time comes that you need more assistance, your family or support network can help you make the transition as smoothly as possible.

There is a wide range of charitable, community-based, local government, private, religious and state government aged care providers offering different services, including home support and respite care services (which can help you to stay at home longer), and residential aged care.

### Independent living

There is a range of home care services that can help you remain in your home.

### Getting help in the home

Home support services can provide a coordinated range of help around your home.

Types of home help include:

- personal care such as bathing and dressing
- housework
- social activities
- meals and food preparation
- transport
- physical exercise
- **mobility aids and other products**
- nursing care
- allied health services, including **occupational therapy**, **physiotherapy** and **podiatry**
- gardening, home maintenance and modifications

- counselling.

### **Home and Community Care for Younger People (HACC PYP) Service**

The HACC PYP program provides services to support younger people with disabilities, and their carers. These services help people live as independently as possible in the community.

Find out more about [HACC PYP service](#).

### **My Aged Care home support**

As well as HACC PYP, the [Commonwealth Home Support Program](#) (CHSP) also provides respite and carer services, day therapy and assistance with housing for older people living in insecure accommodation or at risk of homelessness.

For more information on how to access these services, visit the [My Aged Care](#) website or call [1800 200 422](#).

### **My Aged Care Assessment Services**

An assessment is required to access Commonwealth Government funded services for older people (aged 65 and over, and Aboriginal people aged 50 and over). Assessments determine a person's eligibility for services and assess their care and support needs.

There are two levels of assessment:

**Regional Assessment Services (RAS)** conduct Home Support Assessments to assess people for eligibility for entry level home help services through the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP).

**Aged Care Assessment Services (ACAS)** conduct comprehensive assessments to assess people for eligibility to access higher level services, including Commonwealth-funded residential aged care, residential respite care, Transition Care Programme (TCP), Short Term Restorative Care Program, Home Care Packages, as well as the CHSP.

Assessments are free of charge and can be requested by contacting [My Aged Care](#). Call [1800 200 422](#).

### **Accessing a Home Care Package**

For more information on accessing a [Home Care Package](#), call My Aged Care on [1800 200 422](#) or see the 'Steps to enter an aged care home' to receiving a [Home Care Package booklet](#).

### **Aged care homes**

If you need more help with day-to-day tasks or healthcare it might be time to consider other options, such as moving into a residential aged care home (also known as a 'residential aged care service') where you will have continuous support and care.

This might be a decision that you make yourself, with your family or your support network. Deciding to move into a residential aged care home is often an emotional time where there may be some uncertainty about the future.

Residential aged care services can support your changing needs and you can either move in permanently or for a short stay ('respite').

Services available in residential aged care homes include help with:

- day-to-day tasks such as cleaning, cooking, laundry,
- personal care such as dressing, grooming, going to the toilet and taking your medicines
- nursing care such as wound care or catheter care.

### **Accessing residential aged care**

Before you can live in a residential aged care home you will need to have an ACAS assessment.

For more information, call My Aged Care on [1800 200 422](#) or see the 'Steps to enter an aged care home' [aged care home booklet](#).

## **Respite care**

Caring for someone can be a very tiring experience. If you are caring for an older family member and need a short break, respite care is a good option to consider. Respite care services give you a chance to get some rest, enjoy some personal social activities or catch up on things that you need to do in your own life.

Respite services include:

- in-home care
- social activities and day outings
- overnight care
- short stays in aged care homes
- emergency assistance if something happens to you.

## **Accessing respite care services**

The best place to start is to contact your local council and talk to them about your situation. They will explain how they can help and how much this will cost.

If your family member needs to stay in a residential aged care home for you to have a proper break, you need to book a meeting with the ACAS. They can tell you what care you are eligible for and what aged care homes are available on a short-term basis.

Visit [My Aged Care](#) or call [1800 200 422](tel:1800200422) for information about respite care services in your area.

## **Transition (after hospital) care**

If you are about to be discharged from hospital but you feel that you may need extra support for a while, the Transition Care Program (TCP) could be a good option for you

The TCP provides short-term care and services for older people after they leave hospital. This allows people to continue their recovery out of hospital while appropriate long-term care is arranged.

TCP services include:

- allied health such as physiotherapy, dietetics and podiatry
- case management
- nursing support
- personal care.

You can have the TCP in either a residential aged care home or in your own home, depending on the type of care you need. Some people have the TCP in both settings during their time on the program.

Before you can start the TCP, you need an ACAS assessment while you are still in hospital.

The TCP will start when you leave hospital. Most people will stay on the program for six to eight weeks.

The longest you can stay on the program is 12 weeks, although you can get an extension of up to another six weeks if there are exceptional circumstances.

Throughout this time your case manager will work with you to arrange suitable long-term support.

## **Accessing Transition Care Program services**

If you think you might benefit from the TCP services, talk to your doctor or healthcare team at the hospital.

## **The cost of aged care services**

The Commonwealth Government covers most of the costs for aged care services in Australia but, depending on your financial situation, you may have to pay something for the costs of your care, accommodation and daily living.

How much you will have to pay for HACC services depends on your income and the kind of home help services you need.

How much you will need to pay for residential aged care services will be set out in a Resident Agreement between you and the aged care home.

Visit **My Aged Care** or call 1800 200 422 for more information about the costs of aged care. The My Aged Care website also includes helpful **Fee Estimators** for Home Care Packages and for **residential care**.

### **Where to get help**

- Your healthcare team at hospital
- Your local GP (doctor)
- **My Aged Care**
- **Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centre**, call **1800 052 222**
- Your local council (HACC Program)
- Your local community health centre or district nursing service
- Your migrant resource centre or ethnic or Koori organisation
- **Carers Victoria**, call **1800 242 636**
- **Seniors Information Victoria** - for free information for older Victorians, call **1300 13 50 90**
- **Seniors Rights Victoria**, call **1300 368 821**
- **Council on the Ageing Victoria**, call **(03) 9655 2100**
- **Aged Care Complaints Commissioner**, call **1800 550 552**
- **Carer Gateway** - for aged care services information for carers.

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