

## What is Residential Aged Care?

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Residential aged care is for older people who can no longer live at home. Reasons for moving into residential aged care include illness, disability or bereavement.

An aged care home will ensure that you have all the care that you need, whether you need assistance with everyday tasks such as showering, or require 24-hour nursing care.

Residential aged care can be offered as permanent or short-term care. Short-term care is called 'respite care' and is available to individuals who are normally cared for at home. More information on respite care can be found in Information Guide 11.

Residential aged care homes that receive funding or subsidies from the government are regularly monitored to ensure resident safety and a high standard of care.

Depending on your care needs there are alternatives to residential aged care, including home care, independent living units and retirement villages.

### What Services do Aged Care Homes Provide?

All aged care homes must provide a specified range of care and services to residents. These requirements vary according to each resident's care needs. For all residents, services should include such things as:

- Staff to provide help at all times, including in emergency situations;
- Assistance with daily living activities such as bathing, showering, dressing and mobility;
- Assistance with medications;
- Meals and refreshments, taking into account special dietary needs;
- Basic furnishings including carpets, curtains, chairs, beds and bed linen, bath towels, face washers, soap and toilet paper;

- A laundry service, cleaning services and maintenance of buildings and grounds; and
- Social activities.

For residents with high level care needs, services will also include such things as basic medical and pharmaceutical supplies, nursing services and therapy services.

### What is 'Extra Service'?

Some aged care homes offer an extra service option. This means that the home is able to provide you with a higher standard of accommodation and service (at an additional charge). If you pay for extra service, you may receive a bigger room or wine with your meals. The fees and types of services included will vary from home to home.

Extra service does not mean that you will be provided with a higher standard of care (such as nursing care) as *all* aged care homes have to provide the same high quality care to their residents.

### Who Provides the Care in Aged Care Homes?

All residential aged care homes are required to employ suitably skilled and qualified staff to provide assistance to residents. For example, all residents with high level care needs must have any nursing services carried out by a registered nurse.

Additionally, all residents must be provided with assistance in obtaining services from their health practitioner such as their family doctor. While you may wish the aged care home to arrange visits to a health practitioner on your behalf, you can continue to see those practitioners you usually do.

### Are Aged Care Homes Monitored to Ensure the Safety and Wellbeing of Residents?

Yes. The Australian Government monitors the quality of care and services provided in government funded or subsidised aged care homes. Each home must meet required

### Important

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# *Simplifying access to aged care*

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accreditation standards and demonstrate continuous improvement regarding the quality of care and services provided to residents.

The Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency assesses aged care homes for accreditation, and monitors homes to ensure their ongoing compliance with the accreditation standards.

The Department of Social Services may impose sanctions on aged care homes that do not meet the required standards.

### **Do Aged Care Homes Provide Care for Specific Cultural or Linguistic Groups?**

Yes, there are aged care homes that cater for specific cultural and linguistic groups.

### **What Care Options are Available for People with Dementia?**

People with dementia are welcomed at many aged care homes. In some aged care homes care is provided in specialised dementia units or wings. Your Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT) assessment will determine whether you are eligible for this type of care.

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