

Your Rights and Entitlements

Your Home, Your Right to Choose – your guide to aged care that's centred around you

Moving into an aged care home can be a daunting, confusing and emotional time. A person's experience can be influenced by the way they are treated and the care they receive from the moment they enter their chosen home.

The staff in your new home should take the time to get to know you, your preferences and what is important to you. The experienced staff will work with you and your loved ones to create an individual care plan. They will focus on your overall health, wellness and enjoyment to ensure they provide you with quality care, special activities, and tasty home cooked meals.

To best meet your needs, it is important your new home understands your life history. You should be asked what your personal preferences are, your dislikes, if you need assistance with personal care and when you would like this assistance. The staff will endeavour to maintain your current lifestyle and will support you as you adjust to your new home. It is up to you how you would like to be cared for, the activities that you want to participate in, and how you choose to spend your days.

Every person receiving Australian Government funded aged care services has the right to be properly looked after, treated well and to be given high quality care and services. Your rights when moving into an aged care home are protected by the 'Charter of Aged Care Rights' which supports your right to make choices about the types of care and services you receive – this is outlined below:

Charter of Aged Care Rights

I have the right to:

1. safe and high-quality care and services;
2. be treated with dignity and respect;

3. have my identity, culture and diversity valued and supported;
4. live without abuse and neglect;
5. be informed about my care and services in a way I understand;
6. access all information about myself, including information about my rights, care and services;
7. have control over and make choices about my care, and personal and social life, including where the choices involve personal risk;
8. have control over, and make decisions about, the personal aspects of my daily life, financial affairs and possessions;
9. my independence;
10. be listened to and understood;
11. have a person of my choice, including an aged care advocate, support me or speak on my behalf;
12. complain free from reprisal, and to have my complaints dealt with fairly and promptly;
13. personal privacy and to have my personal information protected;
14. exercise my rights without it adversely affecting the way I am treated.

A copy of the Charter of Aged Care Rights will be included in your residential aged care agreement. You will be asked to sign this page of your agreement to acknowledge you have been given a copy of the Charter of Aged Care Rights, and that you have read and understood your rights.

Freedom of Choice

Each resident receives support in adjusting to a new lifestyle and environment and the staff at your home will endeavour to maintain your current lifestyle. A balance between freedom of choice and safety for all should be the primary goal. You or representatives should be consulted regarding all areas of daily activities, choices and preferences.



Resident and Relative Meetings

Residents have regular meetings with management to discuss matters of interest, general issues, and to air their views – it's also a great time to make suggestions. After all, it's your home and your views should be actively sought in regards to menu preparation, activity programs, living environment, care, and services. Your relatives should also be invited to attend these meetings wherever possible.

Appropriate action should be taken where any concerns or issues are raised. All homes encourage interaction between residents, staff and management so that there are able to create and maintain a productive relationship in which services may be continually improved and new ones introduced.



Anti-Discrimination

All aged care homes should strive to provide an environment that is free from discrimination, bullying and harassment. No one in an aged care home, including residents and every person who works there, should be discriminated against because of their: gender, marital status, physical or mental disability, sexual preference, homosexuality, transgender status, race, colour, political or religious beliefs, age, pregnancy, entitlement to unpaid parental leave, family or carer's responsibility, breast feeding, national extraction or social origin, the filing of a complaint against an employer due to an alleged violation of laws/regulations, or any other violation specified under anti-discrimination or human rights legislation. All employees, volunteers, residents, and stakeholders should be treated with dignity, courtesy and respect.

Cultural and Religious Observances

Everyone is an individual and has different religious and cultural affiliations. Every effort should be made by your chosen aged care home to fulfil your cultural, religious and spiritual needs.

Ministers of Religion visit most homes regularly and conduct services; details of these services or visits are usually included in the lifestyle activity program. If you have any special requirements you should discuss these with the Lifestyle Coordinator or Manager.

Continuous Improvement, Compliments and Complaints

Your aged care home should continuously strive to provide quality care and services. The home should always be monitoring and measuring their performance, and identifying opportunities to improve the care and services they provide to you and other residents. They should welcome feedback from you and your loved ones in a variety of ways such as written, verbal, and at their resident and representative meetings.

Making a complaint is not “being difficult” – it is important. Most aged care providers do their best, however issues can still arise that need to be addressed in a safe and constructive way. Complaints and concerns are important because they can help aged care homes to improve the quality of care and services they provide to you. Your complaint may help other residents too.

If you have a concern or complaint about the care and services you or someone else is receiving, it is important that you talk about it. You or your representative can provide feedback by speaking to any of the staff or management of your home. You should also be given the opportunity to provide feedback confidentially. Confidential suggestion boxes are usually located at the reception of your home. Each home can provide confidential envelopes for your convenience. All aged care homes are required to have a complaints system in place. In most cases, you will be able to resolve your concern with them.

If this doesn't work or you don't feel comfortable, you always have the right to make a complaint to the Aged Care Complaints Commissioner. They can support you with your complaint and help you to resolve your concern with your home. External Complaints Handling Brochures should also be available in your aged care home.



The Aged Care Complaints Commissioner

Phone: 1800 951 822

Lodge a complaint online: <https://www.agedcarequality.gov.au>

Please ask a staff member if interpreter services are required.

Remember, the choice is always yours when it comes to the care you receive and the social activities you participate in. If you require any further information on your right to choose in an aged care home, please don't hesitate to contact us at Find Aged Care on 1300 509 992 or email us at info@findagedcare.com.au

find aged care