

Starting out in Aged Care

Starting out in aged care – your guide to the first 7 days

Moving into your new aged care home can be a worrying time. Moving home at any time in your life is stressful, so a change in circumstances that may not have been planned and has often been necessitated by health issues can be even more daunting. Find Aged Care have put together this guide to entering aged care and managing your first week in your new home to make the transition easier.

We hope that our guide helps explain your rights, entitlements and the services and care you can expect to be provided in your first week, to assist you in maintaining your physical, social, cultural and spiritual wellbeing and lifestyle in your new home.

On moving day

On arrival you should be greeted by your home's reception team and introduced to a staff member who is able to show you to your suite and explain how items work such as the nurse call buttons, security drawers, air conditioner, your bed and television. When you're ready, the home can also give you a tour of the communal living areas and explain how meals are prepared and when they are served.

Your Care Plan as a resident

When entering into care, the home should be focused on meeting your evolving needs. 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, and ensure they provide you with quality care, special activities, and tasty home style meals.

The home should work with you, your GP and your resident representative to develop an ongoing care plan that focuses on you. To best meet your needs, it is important to understand your life history, so you should be asked what your personal preferences are,

what your dislikes are, what time you'd like assistance with showering, where you'd prefer to eat your meals, etc. – all as part of the admission process. The home will develop an interim care plan that is based on the initial information you and your loved ones provide them.

During your initial month of entering into care permanently, aspects of your daily routine are monitored and assessed. This is completed by using the national Aged Care Funding Instrument (ACFI). The nursing staff complete this assessment to determine the level of care you require, your daily living activities, behaviour support, complex healthcare needs, nursing support, social activities, meal and other preferences, including any religious and cultural requirements you may need. In consultation with you, your GP, family, friends and representatives, your home will complete a care plan that includes your goals, care needs and the assistance you may require.



Your new home

Your suite is your new home, and it will be furnished and decorated, however, you'll be encouraged to bring some of your personal items to make it feel like yours. Most people bring some furniture, picture frames, photos, TV's, clock radio and DVD's. Each room is usually fitted with an electric bed, bedside table, wardrobe, over the bed table, sitting chair, window dressings, air conditioning and nurse call buttons. All linen and toiletries are supplied. You can find in your Residential Agreement a copy of "Schedule 1 – Care and services for residential care services" which specifies the hotel services that must be provided for all care recipients who need them.

Valuables

You are encouraged not to keep large amounts of money or valuables in your personal belongings. Aged care homes will not accept responsibility for any loss or theft of money, valuables or any other items. You should consider insuring valuables should you decide to keep them in your home or consider a personal safe for your suite.

Personal care

Qualified staff are available 24 hours a day. All staff members should do their utmost to ensure that a high standard of nursing and personal care and attention is provided to suit your individual needs, when you require it and want it.

Clothing and laundry

As a guide, you should bring comfortable, wash and wear clothing, which is suitable to be laundered in commercial washing machines. Delicate items and woollen fabrics are not advisable.

All clothing is to be clearly labelled; some homes will provide this service for you. Please speak to reception if you require assistance with this. The cost of repairs and replacement of clothes and dry cleaning is your, or your representative's responsibility. The aged care home generally does not take responsibility for the loss of or damage to personal laundry, so it's best to follow this guidance. Residents and relatives are asked to check wardrobes at change of season and remove clothing not in use. A good guide is to supply at least 7 days of clothing changes.

Appropriate footwear is very important to minimise the risk of injury through falls or slips. If you are unsure, please speak to one of the staff, we recommend the registered nurse or physiotherapist, who can advise you of appropriate footwear.

Medicare, Pensioner and Safety Net cards

It is important for your chosen home to have photocopies of these cards on file, and to ensure they are valid. Please notify Medicare, Centrelink and/or the Department of Veterans Affairs of changes to your living circumstances and postal address. Ensure that copies of your new cards with valid dates are always provided to your aged care home.

Medical Practitioners

When you're admitted into care you're required to be admitted by your chosen General Practitioner (GP) within 24 hours of your admission. Your GP will provide regular check-ups and be contactable during emergencies or out of hours. You may wish to continue to have your own GP or elect another GP who is able to visit your aged care home. If you do not have a GP, the aged care home can provide a list of attending GP's who visit the home regularly from which a choice can be made.



Medications

All medications that you bring into the home on admission should be given to the admitting staff member so that they may be checked by the Registered Nurse. Most aged care homes have their preferred medication dose administration aid. All medications are

administered by a Registered Nurse or appropriately qualified staff member. Most medication administration times are 08:00, 12:00, 17:00 and 20:00, unless specified by the attending GP.

The Registered Nurse or appropriately qualified staff will arrange for the ordering and procuring of scripts, as well as the review of medications with your chosen GP. Information or discussion about the medication may take place with nursing staff or your GP. All staff that administer medication undergo training and competency assessments, they are responsible for the administration and recording of the medication process on the resident's medical records.

If you wish, you may continue to self-medicate subject to an assessment by your GP and the Registered Nurse. In the case of self-medication, appropriate documentation will need to be completed. In addition, all medications must be appropriately stored in a locked cabinet/drawer within your room.

Pharmacy and complimentary therapies

Medications are prescribed by your doctor, dispensed by the aged care home's pharmacy, and given to you by the care staff. Staff coordinate with the pharmacy to ensure all medication changes and deliveries are met. The pharmacy usually supplies generic medications unless requested otherwise. All prescribed and ordered medications obtained on your behalf are billed directly to you and detailed on your monthly fee statement that is usually payable directly to the pharmacy.

If you would prefer to use your own pharmacy, you will need to arrange for them to pack your medication in the home's preferred dose administration aid and deliver those medications to the home weekly and during emergencies with medication signing sheets.

Physiotherapy, Podiatry, Dietitian and Speech Pathology services

Physiotherapy, dietitian and speech pathology is available for those residents who need these services. For people that require these therapies, costs are included in their Specified Care and Services. You can find what services are supplied in your Residential Agreement in section "Part 2 – Care and services – to be provided for all care recipients who need them". The table specifies the care and services that must be provided for all care recipients who need them.



Audiology, Dentistry services and other health services

If you need assistance in obtaining health practitioner services, arrangements can be made for aural, community health, dental, medical, psychiatric and other health

practitioners to visit you. Appointments can be made by yourself, your representative or the staff at the home directly with a health practitioner.

Nurse call system

Nurse call bells are located in each suite next to your bed, in the bathroom and in all communal areas for your safety. Please press this for assistance if you require.

Medical supplies and equipment

Your aged care home will have preferred providers for medical supplies and equipment. They provide a varied range of supplies for general use. Some items included are bandages, simple dressings, wheelchairs, water chairs and walking frames. If a person requires a preferred brand of equipment for personal use, this cost will be at the resident's expense.

Nutrition and wellbeing

It is your choice on where you would like to enjoy your meals, whether shared in the dining room or relaxing in the privacy of your suite, your home style meals will be fresh, seasonal and tasty. The majority of homes prepare their meals fresh onsite, however some do opt to have their meals prepared in a central location, chilled and then heated at the home.

At each mealtime you will have a choice of entrées, mains and desserts that are appealing to a wide variety of tastes. You should be encouraged to have input into the menu through the resident meetings, surveys, etc. Resident likes and dislikes are considered in the preparation of the menu and in meals served.



Alcohol

Alcohol is provided at special functions and meals as appropriate. You may have to be assessed in consultation with your medical practitioner, to identify any associated risks of drinking alcohol.

Cultural and religious observance

Everyone has different religious and cultural affiliations. Every effort should be made to assist each person to fulfil their cultural, religious and spiritual needs. If you have any special requirements, you should discuss these with the Lifestyle Co-ordinator or Care Manager.

Ministers of Religion visit regularly and conduct services; details of these services or visits are usually included in the lifestyle activity program.

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 your representatives should be consulted regarding all areas of daily activities, choices and preferences.

Photos

The home requests consent for you to be photographed for identification purposes. In addition, your photographs may also be used for medication sheets, and in the home's newsletter.



Telephones and other communication mediums

In the majority of homes, there is a telephone line available in each suite. You may need to have this connected by your chosen provider or the home may be able to allocate the phone number to you. Every home is different, the monthly charges may be included in your monthly account or it could be billed directly through your chosen phone provider. Please speak with reception at your home for further information.

For information regarding computer connections and pay TV, please speak to reception to find out about the process and procedure to have these connected.

Television and radio

Television will always be provided in the lounge areas for communal viewing. Some homes have wall mounted televisions supplied in the suites. If you choose to supply your own television or radio, it will need to be tested and electrically tagged "safe for use" by a qualified electrician, which would be at your own cost.

Electrical appliances

Prior to bringing any electrical items into the home, please speak to the Manager or Administration Officer to gain approval. The homes usually don't allow toasters, irons or microwaves for safety reasons. Any electrical appliances brought in by you must be tested and tagged "safe for use" by a qualified electrician to ensure safety before it can be used. If the item is new you should bring evidence of the purchase.

Cleaning

The entire home should be maintained in a clean and tidy state by staff or employed contractors. Your personal areas will also be cleaned unless you choose to maintain your own room. It is best to keep your room clutter-free to reduce the risk of falls.

Maintenance services

Each home will employ maintenance officers for maintenance within the home and its grounds. If you require any repairs, please ask a staff member to complete a maintenance log or notify the Reception.

Smoking

The majority of aged care homes are 'Smoke-Free' workplaces. If you are a smoker, you will possibly be assessed to identify any risks associated with smoking. You are entitled to exercise choice and control over your lifestyle, however this right must not infringe on the rights of other residents and staff.

People who choose to smoke will be provided with a safe environment in which to do so. Staff will provide assistance and/or supervision while the person is smoking. If you are a smoker you might be assessed as requiring the wearing of Personal Protective Equipment while smoking.

Smoking is not permitted within a building. Smoking is only permitted in designated areas.



External complaints handling mechanism

Whilst we hope you don't have any concerns or complaints, if you do wish to seek external assistance, you can contact the following services:

**The Aged Care
Complaints Commissioner:**
Telephone: 1800 550 552

To lodge a complaint online, visit:
<https://www.agedcarequality.gov.au>

Please ask a staff member at your home if interpreter services are required. External Complaints Handling Brochures are available at each home.

Find Aged Care wish you and your family every success in your aged care home journey. If you would like more information, please visit www.findagedcare.com.au or call us on 1300 509 992.

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