

✠ MercyCare

Home Care Newsletter



What's Inside:

- Protecting Yourself From Scams
- Accessible Garden Beds
- Understanding Your Care Plan
- What is Transition Care?

Handy Healthcare Checklist



Choosing Wisely Australia ® has created this handy checklist for healthcare consumers. Use these 5 questions* to ask your doctor or other healthcare provider to make sure you end up with the right amount of care — not too much and not too little.

*Adapted from material developed by Consumer Reports. Under licence from the ABIM Foundation

1) Do I really need this test, treatment or procedure?

Tests may help you and your doctor or other health care provider determine the problem. Treatments, such as medicines, and procedures may help to treat it.

2) What are the risks?

Will there be side effects to the test or treatment? What are the chances of getting results that aren't accurate? Could that lead to more testing, additional treatments or another procedure?

3) Are there simpler, safer options?

Are there alternative options to treatment that could work? Lifestyle changes, such as eating healthier foods or exercising more, can be safe and effective options.

4) What happens if I don't do anything?

Ask if your condition might get worse — or better — if you don't have the test, treatment or procedure right away.

5) What are the costs?

Costs can be financial, emotional or a cost of your time. Where there is a cost to the community, is the cost reasonable or is there a cheaper alternative?

Product Spotlight



Although the benefits of pottering around in the garden are well documented, physical limitations and other medical conditions can make gardening difficult. But one Aussie invention is revolutionising the way we garden, to make it more accessible than ever.

Say hello to Vegepod - the world's most accessible and pain-free raised garden beds.

Not only is the garden maintenance minimal, these compact, waist-height garden beds reduce the need for bending and help to support older people who may be at risk of falls or other injuries.

Here are just some of the benefits of Vegepods:

- Self-watering technology - plants can last for weeks without watering
- Amazing growth rates producing nutritious home grown produce
- No chemicals needed to keep pests away
- Portable - optional stand, wheels and shade covering
- 300 - 400 varieties of veggies and herbs can be grown.

Whilst the government have unfortunately excluded raised garden beds from being purchased using home care packages funds, we want to show you this great product which you can purchase privately if you wish.



<https://vegepod.com.au>
Ph: 1800 428 431



What is the Transition Care Program?



The Transition Care Program (TCP) is designed to help older people recuperate after a hospital stay to help you regain functional independence and confidence. You can access TCP even if you have a home care package or CHSP services in place.

Lasting up to 12 weeks, the program is funded to provide a range of tailored supports and can include:

- Personal care
- Nursing support
- Allied health care: occupational therapy, physiotherapy, dietetics, podiatry, social activities and social work
- Case management

These services can take place in your home, or a residential respite facility whilst any aids and equipment are being arranged for you to safely return home. A transition care coordinator will be appointed to help you set goals to get the best possible outcome.

What happens to my Home Care Package during the program?

Although your home care package will be 'on hold', you will keep accumulating your full subsidy (including any supplements) for the first 28 days.

Is there a cost for TCP?

Yes, there are some costs to receive TCP which will be discussed with you at the time of your assessment in hospital.

During a hospital stay, if you've been assessed as eligible for the Transition Care Program, it's important to inform your case manager so they can continue to support you while you receive the necessary care. They will also ensure you continue to accumulate your HCP funding so it's available to you when the program ends.



Data Reveals 65+ Most Vulnerable to Scams

Many people have turned to online shopping because of COVID-19, but at the same time, scams have become more widespread. It's not just online shoppers who need to be alert, as many of these losses are from phone-based scams.

Scamwatch is urging people to be extra vigilant about scams, after combined losses have robbed consumers of \$2.7 billion in the last year.

Statistics show that older people are the most vulnerable, with people aged 65 years and older making the most reports and losing the most money.

Scams can be very sophisticated, as the scammer might claim to be from your bank, internet providers, telecommunications, Australian Federal Police and the Australian Tax Office.

Here's what you need to know:

- If you are contacted by someone you suspect is a scammer, end the call immediately. Do not call them back on the number they called you on.
- Banks, the ATO or Federal Police will never call, email or contact you via social media to threaten to arrest you, demand you withdraw money or ask you to confirm personal details over the phone.
- Never open a link on your mobile phone or email from someone you don't know. Wait, and ask someone you trust you check before you do anything.
- Australian Government departments will never demand payment for fines or other matters over the phone.

People who suspect they may be a victim of identity theft should contact IDCARE (a free government funded service).

Ph: 1800 595 160

<https://www.idcare.org/>

<https://www.scamwatch.gov.au/types-of-scams>

10 Tips for Understanding Your Care Plan



Care Plans are a necessary and important part of receiving a home care package. A good care plan begins with a range of comprehensive assessments that help build a picture of each consumer as an individual, followed by matching suitable services and supports to meet those assessed needs. Your assessments, goals, care plan and budget are all inter-connected, and they guide the way your package funds are allocated every month.

Here are the Top 10 things you most need to know about Care Plans:

1. Every home care package consumer must receive a copy of their initial care plan within 14 days of commencing a home care agreement.
2. As your provider, we must work in partnership with you to develop and agree on the care plan goals and actions.
3. Your ACAT assessment and our care assessments are the joint foundations for your care plan development. It doesn't matter how long ago your ACAT assessment occurred - those issues are the reason you were approved for the package you have today.
4. Your goals, needs and preferences should be reflected in your care plan – and because everyone is different, it must be individually tailored to your specific needs.
5. It must be reviewed and updated at least once every 12 months or as your needs change, for example, if you have been in hospital, experienced a deterioration in health, or if other circumstances have changed for you.
6. Your package level and budget is matched to your care needs and is meant to be fully utilised to meet those assessed needs. Unless you need to accumulate funds for something specific, there is usually no need to 'save for a rainy day'.





10 Tips for Understanding Your Care Plan (Continued)

7. Your care plan should include your goals, and the actions and services in place to help you meet those goals.

8. It should include all the informal care and supports you receive to help you meet your goals, even if the package doesn't pay directly for them, including the help your family, friends and others provide to you.

9. Relevant parts of your care plan should be shared with people who will be helping you to meet your goals, such as support workers, nurses etc.

10. It should be a flexible document that changes and updates when new supports and services are recommended for you. All package spending needs to be aligned with your care plan.

You can help to keep your care plan up-to-date by ensuring your support workers and care manager are aware of any changes, and by participating in the necessary updates when new services and supports are recommended or required.



Please contact your care manager for a chat about your care plan goals and to make sure your package budget is being fully utilised to meet your assessed care needs.

Could You Benefit from Some One-on-One Companionship?

If you haven't heard of the Aged Care Volunteer Visitors Scheme (ACVVS), it's a wonderful free program that aims to provide friendship and companionship to help older people feel less isolated.

Although we all enjoy some time alone, it turns out that too much isolation is bad for our health. In fact, research shows chronic isolation can be as harmful as poor diet, obesity and smoking.

On the flip side, as well as uplifting our spirits and increasing our happiness, social connection with others can also help:

- Strengthen our immune system
- Recover faster after an illness
- Stimulate our brain and improve memory function
- Lower rates of depression

Here's how the visitors program works:

When you join the program, you'll be matched with a volunteer visitor who shares similar interests to you. Visits to your home usually take place once per fortnight and last around one hour and include social activities that you both find mutually enjoyable. It could be as simple as enjoying a cuppa and a chat, or even getting out and about together!

Becoming socially isolated can happen to anyone, at any age, for a variety of reasons, and is absolutely nothing to be ashamed of.



So, if some quality, one-on-one time with a new friend sounds like something you would enjoy, simply let us know and we'd be delighted to make a request.

Here's how the free program has benefited others:
<https://www.health.gov.au/resources/videos/volunteer-visitor-stories-sarah-and-betty>



What is the Hospital in the Home Service?



Hospital in the Home is a rapidly growing service, that may be used to prevent admission to hospital when you have a medical condition that may be able to be managed from home.

Another type of Hospital in the Home can occur through early discharge. This allows patients who are not critically ill to be discharged to complete their recovery at home with quite an intensive level of care.

You can only be offered this service if you are clinically stable, live in a suitable environment, have support at home e.g. a carer and access to a telephone.

While receiving Hospital in the Home, you will still be regarded as an inpatient and remain under the care of your hospital doctor. Your care team can include doctors, nurses and allied health professionals, such as physiotherapists or occupational therapists.

What are the benefits of Hospital in the Home?

- Recovery in the comfort of your own home
- Less noise, allowing for a better quality of sleep
- No need to share a room with strangers
- Reduced chance of hospital-acquired infection
- Fewer complications, such as delirium
- Easier access to family and friends

If you are a public patient, costs are usually the same as if you were an inpatient, but always check with your medical team to find out about costs.

Let your care manager know in advance if this something you'd like to consider, in case you have a hospital admission at some stage in the future.

News from Carers Australia!

Carers Australia is the national peak body representing Australia's unpaid family and friend carers.

Together with carer agencies in every State and Territory, we represent over 2.65 million carers across Australia, including over 772,200 carers of older Australians. Our shared vision is an Australia that values and supports the contribution carers make both to the people they care for and to the whole community.

Our latest National Carer Wellbeing Survey found carers are two and a half times more likely to have low wellbeing, and much higher psychological distress, compared to the average Australian.

While many carers identify caring as a positive experience, this research shows caring can impact all aspects of a person's life; from the way they engage with the community to how they access support services. We also know the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in an increase in unpaid care responsibility.

Carers Australia has created a range of Caring for Carers resources for GPs and other medical professionals to identify and support carers.

To keep up to date on upcoming events, carer-related issues and related sector developments, you can subscribe to the weekly Carers Australia National News via their website:

<https://www.carersaustralia.com.au/news-media/subscribe-to-the-newsletter/>

If you don't have access to the internet, please ask a family member, friend, or your care manager to assist you to get the information you would like to receive. Or give Carers Australia a call directly on: **Ph: (02) 6122 9900**



WORD SEARCH CHALLENGE:

Famous Australian Inventions

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| X | W | C | P | A | P | R | S | X | W | L | A | L | H |

Find the 14 hidden words by searching for only the words in bold

·Powered **flight** ·Electric **drill** ·**Boomerang** ·**Notepad** ·Car **radio** ·**Speedos**
 ·**Pacemaker** ·**Wi-Fi** ·Black **box** flight recorder ·**Ultrasound** scanner ·**CPAP** mask
 ·Google **Maps** ·Bionic **ear** ·Electrical power **board**

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