

This leaflet is part of a series written by nurses, doctors and experts with experience in aged care. There are also leaflets available for people seeking residential aged care. This leaflet, and the others can be downloaded at: www.10questions.org.au

You may find this leaflet useful when:

- Searching for a high quality home care provider
- Reviewing the quality of your current home care provider
- Deciding between two home care providers that appear similar

Home care is nursing, personal and domestic care in your home provided by a range of workers. The qualification, experience and type of worker should be matched to your needs and could include registered nurses, allied health professionals and personal care workers. Alternatively you may only need help with gardening shopping or cleaning.

Some workers travel to multiple homes per day and provide short visits, while others may stay with one person for a certain amount of time per day.

Platform care providers can offer flexible home-care services but operate an 'Uber' style service so the responsibility for ensuring your ongoing care is safe, and staff are suitable relies on you to determine. Unlike approved providers, these services are not regulated against Aged Care Quality Standards. Examples include Mable or Care.com.



IT'S YOUR RIGHT TO ASK

The best way to find a home care provider that suits you is to contact a few.

If you have concerns about your home care provider or services contact:

My Aged Care	myagedcare.gov.au
	☎ 1800 200 422
Seniors Rights Service	☎ 1800 424 079
Carer Gateway	☎ 1800 422 737

This leaflet has been developed and endorsed by:



For a full list of supporting organisations please visit www.10questions.org.au

If you have concerns about a Home Care Provider contact:



Australian Government
Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission

☎ 1800 951 822

www.agedcarequality.gov.au



10 Questions to Ask

ABOUT COMMONWEALTH FUNDED HOME CARE




www.10questions.org.au

Acknowledgement is given to the PICAC Alliance who contributed to the development of this leaflet

There may be long delays in acquiring a home care package as only a limited amount are available. If you think you need care or support, act quickly to secure your services.

1 What care and support can I receive at home?

If you fit the government's criteria, you may be entitled to a range of services like shopping, personal care, home maintenance, nursing care, including end of life support in your own home. Details about the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (entry-level support), and Home Care Packages Program (when you need a bit more help) can be found at My Aged Care (MAC)*.

2 How do I start the process?

Firstly, register with MAC by phone or online. An independent person will then visit your home to assess your care needs. After the assessment, you will receive a letter from MAC outlining the services you are eligible for and giving you a MAC 'referral code' that is unique to you. Once you have been approved for home care, it's a good idea to compare a few service providers, checking things like staff availability, fees and charges, language/cultural support. There may be a waitlist for some services. If you need help, use the numbers on the back of this leaflet for free advice.

3 What will it cost?

You may have to contribute towards your care, and the amount is means-tested. All service providers should have their charges on their website. Compare the fees providers charge in your area.

4 Can I change my service provider?

You have the right to change but may need to interview a few providers before agreeing on a new contract. Check any exit fees that apply from your old service before swapping to the new one, how much it will cost, and if they can provide what you need. You may find it helpful to get someone to speak on your behalf before you sign a new contract.

5 What measures are in place to ensure it's safe to let people I haven't met enter my home?

All aged care workers have police checks and need to comply with national Aged Care Quality Standards[^]. All workers entering your home should follow the rules about maintaining confidentiality and be respectful. Most importantly, you have the right to safe and high-quality care and services. More detail about the Charter of Aged Care Rights can be found on the MAC website.

6 Will my specific needs be met (cultural, religious, LGBTIQI)?

Your service provider must develop a care plan with you that describes all the aspects of your care needs, including support for your culture or religion or the community group you belong to. This may include a paid care worker from your language group (if available), access to interpreters, community liaison or transport to cultural events. Make sure you check the services you need can be provided before you sign any contract.

* Details on the back of this leaflet.

[^] National aged care standards are regulated by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission and only apply to services that are paid for using commonwealth funding.

You can call the Carer Gateway on 1800 422 737 to get more information.

7 What if I am unhappy with my services?

If you are unhappy with your services or worker, firstly raise this with your service provider and allow them to fix the problems. If you are still unhappy, use the numbers on the back of this leaflet to seek support or raise a concern.

8 Will there be support for my carer/family?

Your care plan may include services or supports such as domestic assistance, personal care or respite, which aim to give your carer or family a break from providing care. In-person or phone counselling, peer support, coaching, and respite may also be available to your carer through the Carer Gateway[#].

9 Will my other services stop when my home care package commences?

You will still be entitled to primary healthcare services from your GP, medical specialists and community/outreach nursing and allied health services including palliative care. You may wish to include a nurse, physiotherapist or a podiatrist in your care plan. If so, talk to your service provider.

10 What training will my care workers have received?

Your care workers should have received basic training on how to provide safe, quality care to meet your individual needs when they are first employed and receive regular updates. Staff turnover can be high so check before signing your contract what training your care workers have already received. You have the right to ask for a different care worker, remembering there may be delays if you live in country areas or have specific needs.