

The Care Finders program

The aged care system is complex, and some people find it more difficult than others to navigate and access the services they need.

While My Aged Care is the single entry point for people to find out about and access aged care services, there have been long-standing calls for more localised and face-to-face support to help people navigate and access aged care. Since 2020, COTA Australia has been overseeing the 'Navigators' trial program, which is informing the development of the new Care Finders program.

What is the Care Finders program?

Care Finders is an initiative of the Australian Government in response to the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety. It aims to connect and engage older people who significant difficulty accessing aged care services and are at risk of 'falling through the cracks'.

The Care Finders program is made up of a workforce that has an extensive knowledge of the aged care system and is trained to work with older people. These Care Finder workers will use case management and assertive outreach means (when required) to find older people who are disconnected from the system. The workers will then support these people to navigate the system and connect with the services they need, then keep checking in to ensure they continue to have their needs met. Care Finder workers will be suitably qualified to work effectively with the target population in addition to having extensive knowledge of the aged care system.

Who is the target population?

Care finders work with people who are eligible for aged care services and require intensive support to either interact with My Aged Care or access other community-based supports. Reasons for requiring support can include:

- isolation or no support person
- communication barriers
- difficulty processing information to make decisions
- resistance to engage with aged care services due to risks to their safety
- hesitation to engage with aged care services due to past experiences
- homelessness, or risk of becoming homeless.

People will not need a referral to access support through the Care Finders program.

Commissioning Care Finders service providers

Primary Health Tasmania has received Australian Government funding to commission service providers to deliver the Care Finders initiative in Tasmania from January 2023. The Care Finders commissioning process will be conducted in the second half of 2022.

At its simplest, commissioning means planning and buying services to meet the health needs of local populations. It involves understanding local priority issues and buying appropriate services to address those issues in the most effective and efficient way. For more information, visit www.primaryhealthtas.com.au/commissioning.

The 'buying services' part of the commissioning process is also known as tendering. Primary Health Tasmania uses a secure website to manage its tendering processes to ensure a fair and equal opportunity for interested organisations to access up-to-date information. The eTender portal - hosted by TenderLink – is used to notify registered providers, distribute guidance documents, and collect and evaluate applications.

Organisations wanting to keep up-to-date about the tender process for the Care Finders program should register on our eTender portal. Instructions are available at primaryhealthtas.com.au/tenders.

More information

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