

The care finder 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.

What is the care finder program?

The care finder program is a navigation service specifically for vulnerable older people who need intensive support to be connected with the services they need. The Australian Government-funded care finder program helps vulnerable older people find and connect with aged care services in their local area.

Information about the care finder program nationally is available on the [My Aged Care website](#).

Who is it for?

This service is available to older people who are eligible for aged care services and have one or more reasons for requiring intensive support to:

- interact with My Aged Care (either through the website, contact centre or face-to-face in Services Australia centres) and access aged care services and/or
- access other relevant supports in the community.

To be eligible for My Aged Care, a person must:

- need help with one or more everyday tasks
- be aged:
 - 65 years or older (50 years or older for Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people) or
 - 50 years or older (45 years or older for Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people), on a low income and homeless or at risk of being homeless.

Reasons for requiring intensive support may include:

- isolation or no support person (e.g. carer, family or representative) who they are comfortable to act on their behalf and/or who is willing and able to support them to access aged care services via My Aged Care
- communication barriers, including limited literacy skills
- difficulty processing information to make decisions
- resistance to engage with aged care for any reason and their safety is at immediate risk or they may end up in a crisis situation within (approximately) the next year
- past experiences that mean they are hesitant to engage with aged care, institutions or government.

Where is it available?

This program is available statewide. Care finder services may be delivered in person, by phone or online, depending on the person's preference and location.

Who delivers it?

Primary Health Tasmania has engaged four organisations to deliver the care finder program in Tasmania.

The Council on the Ageing (COTA) Tasmania provides care finder services to eligible older Tasmanians across the state.

CatholicCare Tasmania, The Salvation Army Tasmania and Wintringham have transitioned from the former Assistance with Care and Housing program are now providing care finder services in particular parts of the state.

The care finder workforce will be made up of staff who understand the aged care system, have significant experience working with vulnerable older people, and have undertaken training in safe practice.

How does it work?

Anyone can contact a care finder organisation regarding services.

Care finders will:

- support older people to navigate the system and interact with My Aged Care
- provide guidance and explain the care assessment process
- connect older people with the aged care services or other relevant community supports they need
- check in with clients to ensure they continue to have their needs met.

The support services that a care finder can connect an older person with are not limited to aged care services, but can be other appropriate support services.

Care finders also reach into the community to find older people with a high need for support who may not be aware of their support options or may not have someone who can help them find appropriate services.

How much does it cost?

This service is funded by the Australian Government. There is no cost to people using it.

What doesn't the care finder program do?

Care finders do not provide:

- counselling or psychosocial support
- advocacy support
- help with everyday tasks
- transport.

Instead, they can link an older person with services that do provide these supports.

More information

More information, including how to connect with the services, is available on Our Services Portal at services.primaryhealthtas.com.au.

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