



BY COMMUNITY CARE TASMANIA

# A GUIDE TO CARING FOR ELDERLY PARENTS

The responsibilities of being an adult child of an ageing parent can be overwhelming.

Some of us are confronted suddenly with helping our parent due to a medical emergency - others begin to need help in less extreme situations.

But no matter how you've come to be involved, you are on a journey that is filled with complexities, uncertainties, worry, and love.

Assuming more responsibility over your parents' needs may be new to you. We know how difficult and confusing this phase in your relationship with your parents can be.

Our guide can help you determine the best care for your elderly parent(s).

## Where to start?

Most of us want to remain living in our own home, with its memories and familiar surroundings with friends, family, garden and animals. We suggest you have conversations with your parent(s) about things that matter to them.

Do they want to continue to live in their own home? Are they finding it harder to keep on top of the gardening or the housework or shopping?

Have they talked to their GP about any concerns they may have? GPs are a great source of information and should point people in the direction of the federal aged care system (My Aged Care) and they also often know about local options that service providers, such as Community Care TASMANIA, can provide. Information can also be found at health expos and seniors events. Before making any long-term decisions with your elderly parent(s) it is recommended to register with My Aged Care.

To get the process started go to the My Aged Care website [www.myagedcare.gov.au](http://www.myagedcare.gov.au) or call 1800 200 422. They will go through processes and procedures to determine whether a person needs to have a *Regional Assessment Service (RAS)* or an *Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT)* visit dependent upon the level of the person's needs. You can do this alongside your parent(s) if they wish.

You can support your parent(s) as they undergo their assessment, with their consent. Some people really benefit from having another trusting set of ears to help them understand the process.

## If in hospital

For older people who have been in hospital but need more help to recover you can ask the discharge team to arrange for transition care or rehabilitation support after they leave the hospital.

## In-home care

Many older Australians would prefer to stay in their home for as long as possible.

Government Home Care Packages subsidise the costs of care in the home, depending on what the person's needs are and what support is required, and also your capacity to pay is a consideration.

There can be a long waiting period to access a Home Care Package, despite emergency prioritisation, and it's sometimes many months so be prepared to find ways to support older people while they wait.

Community Care TASMANIA's 'Dial an Angel' service can fill this gap, if desired

### Types of home care:

- CHSP (Commonwealth Home Support Programme) - government subsidised
- HCP (Home Care Packages) - government subsidised
- Dial an Angel - 'user pays' service

## What is 'Dial an Angel'?

Our Dial An Angel service is a 'user pays' quality service in your home, delivered by our dedicated local team from Community Care TASMANIA.

Our "Angels" are empathetic, caring and supportive and are ready and willing to help anyone, anytime.

Services include: Post-hospital care, personal care, meals, shopping, domestic assistance, emergency care, gardening, transport and family carer support and relief, anything you or your parent(s) need.

Dial An Angel is a service for anyone. Regardless of whether your parent(s) receive government support, you can call for a one-off service (e.g. a spring clean, meal preparation) or ask for a regular service such as a monthly gardener - whatever you need.



## What help is available at home?

Personal care	Respite
Meal preparation	Transport
Shopping	Social support
Domestic assistance	Home modifications
Gardening	Case management & more

## If you are the carer of your elderly parent(s)

Family carers are incredibly important and they need to look after yourself as well as your loved one.

To help do this there are respite options available.

In-home respite care is short-term care available to a person and their care giver. Respite care provides help for carers so that they can take part in everyday activities or go on holidays, medical appointments or just a much needed visit to the hairdresser, while ensuring that the person receiving care is looked after, and given a break to recharge their battery, for just a few hours or a few days.

You will need to register yourself as a carer with a Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centre (CRCC) and no assessment is required. Respite care can be provided by organisations such as Community Care TASMANIA in the older person's own home.

It can also be included in our 'user pays' Dial an Angel' service.

There is also residential respite care is based at an aged care facility and may be used on a planned or emergency basis. A carer may use this type of care if they go on a holiday themselves, are unwell or unable to provide care for whatever reason.

Your parent needs to be assessed via My Aged Care for residential respite care.

## **Getting the best care for your elderly parent**

Ultimately, many people take on some type of caregiver role with their elderly parents, even if we don't live with them or provide daily care.

As mum or dad, they once concerned themselves and devoted their time and energy to our wellbeing. Now, as adult children, we find ourselves doing the same for them. No matter how you look at it caring for elderly parents means making sure they are safe, happy and well cared for. If our loved ones' wellbeing is ensured then we have peace of mind knowing they're being enabled to live a wonderful life.

Something to remember is that caring for elderly parents shouldn't be a burden or responsibility to bear alone. Home care support is available and Community Care TASMANIA is here to help!

Call one of our friendly Case Managers today to talk you through the process and some of the options available.



# QUICK CHECKLIST

WHERE TO GO FROM HERE

1

CALL  
MY AGED CARE



2

HAVE  
A FACE-TO-FACE  
ASSESSMENT



3

FIND OUT  
ABOUT COSTS



4

CHOOSE  
A SERVICE  
PROVIDER



**Making Your Life Wonderful**

# 1

## CALL MY AGED CARE

Call My Aged Care on 1800 200 422 or log on to [www.myagedcare.gov.au](http://www.myagedcare.gov.au)

Call My Aged Care together with your parents. The MAC team will ask questions to help work out your parents needs and care arrangements – this should only take around ten minutes.

You can also ask to get appointed as your parents representative, should they wish to do so, during this call.

# 2

## HAVE A FACE-TO-FACE ASSESSMENT

My Aged Care may arrange for a trained assessor to come to your parent's home to assess your dad or mum's eligibility for services. Your parent(s) may choose for you to be there to advocate for them.

They will then work with you and your parent(s) to assess your parent's needs, goals and preferences.

# 3

## FIND OUT ABOUT COSTS

My Aged Care and service providers like Community Care TASMANIA can give you information about costs. Or try our brand new Home Care Planning Tool that shows you what is available and what it will cost.

It's easy, quick and free. You choose what you need and the planner will provide you with an example of what your parent(s) can afford. It's easy to change and play around with options until you find the best fit for your needs with the budget the government gives you.

Visit [www.HomeCarePlanner.org.au](http://www.HomeCarePlanner.org.au) to build your own Home Care Package – obligation-free.

# 4

## CHOOSE A SERVICE PROVIDER

The service finder on the My Aged Care website can help you locate and compare service providers in your parent's local area. The assessor can also help you find a service provider.

It is important to discuss specific needs so that all aspects of care are covered as services provided can vary.

We hope you will choose us. Community Care TASMANIA is a multi-award winning, local not-for-profit Tasmanian organisation fully and solely owned by its members. We specialise in home care and we can help your parent(s) live safely at home by providing quality services with dignity and respect.

Support and care are tailored to suit their specific needs, providing person-centred care that also gives you peace of mind.

Our friendly Case Managers can talk you through the process and some of the options available.

**Call us today or drop in for a visit  
to discuss your parent(s) needs!**

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