

2. Accessing aged care services

This fact sheet is about the rights family and friend carers have when they are accessing aged care services with or for the person they care for. Aged care services are generally used by people over 65 years of age (over 50 years of age if Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander) and can include services provided in a residential facility or in the home or community.

Knowing your rights is important, because it helps you understand what you can and can't expect when you access services with or on behalf of the person you care for. When you know your rights, you are in a better position to stand up for yourself or the person you care for when a problem arises. This fact sheet focuses on rights that can be upheld through formal complaints processes.

The Charter of Aged Care Rights ensures that where the person you care for identifies you as their support person, you have a right to support them or speak on their behalf. You also have the right to raise concerns about the information, assessments and services that the person that you care for receives.



Information about aged care services

People aged 65 years and over (50 years and over if Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) and their carers can find out about government funded aged care services from [My Aged Care](#) (1800 200 422). You can call My Aged Care on behalf of the person you care for, as their representative, with the permission of the person you care for. If you are not happy with the information or customer service provided, you can make a complaint to My Aged Care [online](#) or by calling 1800 200 422.

Aged care assessments

Which government funded aged care services a person can access, and how much these services will cost, is determined by an individual assessment. If you have concerns about the outcome of an assessment, including the amount of respite you are able to access, you should talk to the assessor or the organisation they work for. You can also ask for a decision to be reviewed. If you are not able to resolve the issue, you can make a complaint to My Aged Care [online](#) or by calling 1800 200 422.

When the issue is not resolved

If you have made a complaint about My Aged Care but are unhappy with the outcome, you can email information about the complaint to myagedcaresupport@healthdirect.org.au.

If you are still not happy with the outcome, or are dissatisfied with the handling of your complaint, you can contact the [Commonwealth Ombudsman](#) on 1300 362 072.

You can get more information about making a complaint by calling My Aged Care on 1800 200 422 or online by visiting <https://www.myagedcare.gov.au/contact-us/complaints>.

Please note: the above information is about problems with information and assessments. If you have a concern about the quality of aged care services, or about fees and contracts, please turn the page.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Information for family and friend carers



Quality and safety of government funded aged care services

You have the right to expect that government funded aged care services will be safe and of a high quality. If you have concerns about the quality or safety of the services the person you care for is accessing, or about fees and contracts, first discuss this with the staff or managers of the service if you feel comfortable. All service providers have a complaints process and in most cases this will resolve your issue. If the issue is not resolved, or you don't feel comfortable approaching the service provider directly, you can **contact the [Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission](#) on 1800 951 822**. You can get more information about making a complaint by visiting <https://www.agedcarequality.gov.au/making-complaint>.

Jane's mother Eleanor moved into a nursing home 18 months ago because the family was no longer able to care for her at home. Often when Jane was visiting Eleanor, she noticed that Eleanor's meal has been sitting next to her untouched for more than an hour. Eleanor was losing weight and Jane was concerned about her health and felt that she was not getting the assistance she needed to eat her meals. She raised the issue with the manager of the nursing home, but nothing changed. Jane then called the Seniors Rights Service for advice. They provided her with the information she needed to make a complaint to the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission.

Getting what you pay for when purchasing aged care services

If you are paying for equipment, care in a nursing home, accommodation or fees in a retirement village, or private home care services, you have the right to be treated fairly and be given accurate information about what you are paying for. If this is not your experience, or if you would like more information about your rights, you can **contact [NSW Fair Trading](#) on 13 32 20**.

Concerns about abuse in the community

If you are concerned that an older person is at risk of being abused, neglected or exploited in their home or in the community, you can **contact the [NSW Ageing and Disability Commissioner](#) on 1800 628 221**.

Getting help with making a complaint

If at any stage you need information, support or advice about your rights and making a complaint, you can **contact the [Seniors Rights Service](#) on 1800 424 079** for free and confidential support.

All of the agencies listed on this fact sheet also provide support through the Translation and Interpreting Service and National Relay Service.



This fact sheet was developed by the Carer Rights & Complaints Network (CRCN), a joint initiative of Carers NSW and the NSW Government. For more information, please contact the Carers NSW Policy Team on 02 9280 4744 or policy@carersnsw.org.au.