

# Introduction to home care funding

**Navigating home care can be challenging, especially if you're not sure where to start.**

**This fact sheet explains the basics so you know what help is available and how to access it.**

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## What is My Aged Care?

My Aged Care (MAC) is the starting point for accessing government-funded aged care in Australia.

It's a free service run by the Australian Government that helps older Australians, their families, and carers understand what support is available and how to get it.

You can contact My Aged Care by calling 1800 200 422, visiting their website, or going to a Services Australia service centre.

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## What is a Home Care?

Home care funding is provided by the government, and helps you keep living independently at home for as long as possible.

Instead of moving into residential aged care, the funding gives you a budget to spend on services and support that suit your needs so you can stay at home.

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## Am I eligible for home care?

In most cases, you must be:

- 65 years or older, or
- 50 years or older if you are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

Your exact eligibility is decided after an in-home assessment with a qualified assessor.

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## What's the assessment like?

The assessment is completed in your home. The assessor will ask questions and assess your environment to see what support you may need to stay independent, safe and happy at home.

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## What kind of support could I get with my home care funding?

Your home care funding can be used for a wide range of support to help you live safely and comfortably at home.

This can include:

- Health and clinical care such as physiotherapy, nursing, or podiatry
- Help with daily tasks like cleaning, gardening, laundry, and meal preparation
- Social support to keep you connected with your community, attend appointments, or enjoy activities you love.

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## I'm currently getting some help now, is it home care funding?

There are several funding schemes for home care services. Your help may be provided through Support at Home or the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP). CHSP services are usually provided within local council areas and offer basic help, such as cleaning, gardening, or transport. While Support at Home funding provides a more comprehensive range of supports.

If you want to apply for home care funding, it's important to contact My Aged Care to register.

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## How do I apply?

You or a representative need to call My Aged Care on 1800 200 422, and ask to apply for Support at Home funding.

Or, you can ask a professional – such as your GP – to submit a professional referral to My Aged Care on your behalf.

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## What does this process look like?

1. Register with **My Aged Care**.
2. Receive an at-home assessment by an assessor
3. Get approved and placed on the waitlist (can take ~18 months to receive funding)
4. Choose your provider once your funding is assigned.

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## How long does it take to get home care funding?

There are over 88,000 older Australians waiting for home care funding, and the entire process can be between 6-12+ months.

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## What should I do while I'm waiting for home care funding?

There are local free and discount services in your area that can help while you're waiting for your funding to come through. Talk to our friendly home care experts for more information. We also have a Free Care Program that you may be eligible for.

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## What happens when my home care funding comes through?

Once your funding is assigned, it means that your funding is available to use, and you have 56 days to find a home care provider that's right for you.

We can help explain what questions to ask aged care providers to ensure you receive the best possible care.

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## Who can help me?

If you need help navigating the aged care system, we're here to help at any stage!

We have a team of home care experts who can answer all your questions and ensure you're getting the right support you need.

