

Frequently Asked Questions About Help at Home

UCWB is here to help you get the aged care services you need.

Talking about and planning your aged care can be daunting. The good news is that UnitingCare Wesley Bowden (UCWB) can help you prepare and make informed decisions about your aged care services. Below are some of the common questions that people often have about in-home aged care services.

Q When should I start planning my aged care?

A Sometimes, people don't think about their aged care needs until an unexpected event or health problem occurs. If this happens, it can be a confusing and emotional time. It's a good idea to start planning for your aged care once you start to have difficulties managing day to day living activities.

Q What is My Aged Care?

A My Aged Care is the government gateway for all aged care needs, including assessment and information on aged care support and programs across Australia.

Q What is a Home Care Package?

A Home Care Packages are a government subsidised, flexible plan of care designed to support you manage daily tasks and stay living independently in your own home. The services are tailored to suit your needs and delivered by a home care provider of your choice such as UCWB. There are four levels of Home Care Packages.

Q What is the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP)?

A CHSP is an entry level home help program for older people who are generally able to manage at home but need some basic extra assistance.

Q Do I need services?

A If you have noticed that there are times you are struggling with day to day activities the best thing to do is discuss it with someone who respects your situation and knows you well. This could be someone like a family member or your local doctor. You can also talk to a real person at UCWB or My Aged Care about your needs and wishes. They will be able to give you information about your options.

Q What services are available?

A You may be eligible for a range of services from UCWB to help you maintain your routine at home, including:

- Personal care such as help with showering and dressing
- Assistance with taking your medication.
- Help attending social outings and appointments
- Home help such as cleaning, shopping or cooking
- Gardening and minor home maintenance
- Plus other services based on your individual needs

Q How do I know if I am eligible for a Home Care Package?

A To find out if you are eligible for a Home Care Package or any other help at home services, call My Aged Care on 1800 200 422. The My Aged Care contact centre will ask you a series of questions to determine if you need an assessment by an Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT). UCWB's friendly team can assist you with this process.

Q What's the difference between Approved and Assigned?

A When it comes to a Home Care Package, 'Approved' and 'Assigned' mean two very different things. If you receive a letter saying you have been approved for a home care package, this means you can nominate yourself to be placed on the National Priority Queue. You will then wait to be assigned a Home Care Package. Once assigned, you will receive a letter containing a referral code to access funded services.

Q How long will I have to wait for a Home Care Package?

A You are likely to have a waiting period between the time you are approved for care and the time you are assigned a Home Care Package. The length of time you will need to wait will depend on your individual needs and circumstances. My Aged Care has indicated they expect the maximum wait to be more than 12 months for most people because of the demand for Home Care Packages. Depending on your situation you may receive a Home Care Package sooner than this.

Q Who pays for the services?

A The Australian Government subsidises home care services. If you are eligible for help at home, you may be asked to contribute to the cost of the care you receive as part of your Home Care Package. The fees are based on the financial information you give to the Department of Human Services (DHS). Any fees will be discussed between you and your provider before you start services.

Q Are there any hardship packages?

A If you can't afford to pay for your care costs, there is financial hardship assistance available from the Government to help you get the care you need. Each case is assessed on an individual basis that is based on your current situation. To apply for financial hardship assistance, you must lodge the relevant DHS application form. Contact DHS for more information about hardship packages.

Q Can I nominate a person to speak and act on my behalf?

A You can contact My Aged Care with assistance from a trusted person. This might include a family member, carers, friends or service providers. If you are capable of giving consent for someone to speak and act for you, you can put a regular representative in place. You can set up a regular representative at any time, including when you first contact My Aged Care or after your assessment.

There are three ways to put in place a regular representative:

- Call My Aged Care on 1800 200 422 with your chosen representative. My Aged Care can call your representative later if they can't be with you for this call; or
- Complete the My Aged Care 'Appointment of a Representative' form and fax it to My Aged Care (1800 728 174) or post it to My Aged Care, PO Box 210, Balwyn, Victoria, 3103; or
- If your representative is with you during your aged care assessment, you can ask the assessor to add them as your representative then.

You need an authorised representative if you are not capable to give consent for someone else to speak for you. Legal documents are needed to set up an authorised representative so that My Aged Care knows they can legally represent you.

Q What if I don't like my support staff?

A If there are any issues with your care staff, please do not hesitate to contact your provider either as written feedback or call them.

Q What if my needs change or I want different services?

A Just let your service provider know. They can discuss your needs and requirements and let you know your options for alternative services.

Q I already have a provider; can I transfer my services?

A You can change home care package providers if:

- you move to another area;
- you are no longer happy with your provider; or
- you require services that your current provider doesn't offer.

Before you make the decision to change providers you should check your Home Care Agreement for any conditions such as notice periods and exit fees. Your current service provider must help you to change providers. You should discuss with your current provider the date you want your care and services to end.

Q What are the qualifications of your support staff?

A All UCWB support staff have completed a First Aid Certificate and have appropriate police clearances. In addition, those who provide personal care have completed a Certificate III Personal Care module. Our staff have also undergone thorough reference checks so you can feel assured that you will receive the high quality support and care you require. For people who have more complex needs, we ensure that the support staff visiting you have the current relevant qualifications and skills to ensure your specific needs are met.

Q Why should I choose UCWB as my aged care service provider?

A Since 1850, UCWB has been providing support services to the community. We understand that many people want to live in their own home as independently as possible and we want to help you achieve that goal. Our customers value our services because

- We respect you as an individual and we listen
- We work with you to understand your needs and provide the supports and services to help you to achieve your goals
- Our staff are friendly, dependable and respectful

Still have questions?

The staff at UCWB are happy to answer your questions no matter how big or small. Simply call us on **8245 7196** and we can help you to get started.

You can also speak to someone at My Aged Care on 1800 200 422 for more details on your eligibility for help at home services. Remember even if you aren't eligible, there are options to privately pay for your services through providers like UCWB.