

How to talk about aged care

Having a discussion about aged care can be a sensitive topic. People can often put off giving it any thought because they don't want think about losing their independence.

Tips on talking to you a loved one about aged care and the future

- Take the time to understand the preferences of your loved one as early as possible. This will be particularly important if there is a sudden, life-changing event which will require decisions about care and future living arrangements.
- Respectfully approach a discussion with them as a family (or friends), and speak to them as partners to understand how they see their future.
- Offer options rather than advice on how they see themselves living in their own home independently for as long as possible.
- You may want to discuss who will make financial and medical decisions on their behalf should the need arise.
- A good way into the conversation can be to discuss the experience of a relative or a friend.
- Offer to help them find out more information or suggest they seek the views of someone they trust such as their doctor or financial adviser.
- Choose a time and place that is appropriate for the conversation. For example, pick somewhere that they feel comfortable and is quiet rather than a noisy or crowded café.
- Remember, it is only the beginning of a conversation, one that will continue over time as you and your loved one gather information and establish what may be the next best step.

Conversation starters

- **Home** - When I get older I will want to stay in my own house for as long as possible. Have you ever thought about what you would like to do? I can get some information or perhaps you would like to talk to the GP about what options are available so that you can plan for the future?
- **A parent living on their own** - I'm worried about you being on your own and managing the house all by yourself. Did you know that you can get some help with lots of things at home such as taking out the rubbish bins, hanging up the washing or looking after the garden? Would you like me to get some information and we can talk about it?
- **Changes to aged care** - Did you know that there have been a lot of changes in the way the government funds and organises aged care assistance at home? I've heard that there is a lot of choice and options these days. Would you like me to get some information for you?
- **Gardening and maintenance help** - There are some things that need doing around the house; have you thought about getting some help to do maintenance? That way you won't have to think about moving or worrying that you need to clean the gutters or fix the fence.
- **Help inside the home** - I am worried if you are eating well and taking your medication properly. You can get help to organise those things. I think it may be worthwhile speaking to My Aged Care about what services you may be eligible for.