



Your guide to navigating Aged Care

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We're here to help

Let's be honest – the aged care system can be a little daunting. There are lots of options, even more industry jargon, and a government funding scheme to navigate!

We know it can seem overwhelming, which is why we've put this guide together. It's Blue Care's recommended approach to understanding Australia's aged care system, and getting access to the tailored, personalised support that can help you remain independent and live life your way.

If you have any questions, either now, or throughout your journey, please don't hesitate to call us on 1300 258 322. We're here to help.

Guide Contents

1. How does it all work?
2. What kind of help is available?
 - a. Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP)
 - b. Home Care Packages (HCP)
 - c. Aged Care Homes
4. How do I know what I need?
5. Beginning my aged care journey
6. What about urgent cases?
7. Live life your way with Blue Care

1. How does it all work?

The Australian Government's 'My Aged Care' (MAC) program works by looking at each person's individual situation, and assigning you funding for the support you need. You can then choose who you want providing those services for you.

If you meet the Australian Government's eligibility criteria you will be able to access a great variety of government funded aged care services – from basic in-home help right through to full-service aged care homes.

When you let MAC know that Blue Care is your preferred provider, they'll direct your funding to us, so we can commence your services.

It's simple to get started

Step 1: Call us at Blue Care on 1300 258 322

Step 2: We'll help you explore what type of support you might need, and connect you with MAC so you can begin accessing your aged care services

Step 3: MAC will assess your needs and assist you in accessing the services you require

Step 4: You nominate Blue Care as your preferred provider

Step 5: We commence your care

Not sure what you need?

We can help you choose the right care. Call us on **1300 258 322**.



2. What kind of support is available?

The short answer? Lots! That's why we have this guide. There's a great range of services to choose from – it's all about tailoring support to the individual so you can continue living life your way.

In a nutshell, aged care is grouped into three main areas. We'll use the same names that MAC does, so that we're all speaking the same language.

Three types of support

1 **Low Care:** Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP)

2 **Medium Care:** Home Care Packages (HCP)

3 **Higher Care:** Aged Care Homes

1

Low Care: Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP)

This program is for those who just need that little extra help to stay at home. You can access a range of different services, depending on your individual needs, all designed to help you live safely and happily in your home for longer.

Example Services: Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP)

CHSP services like those listed below, can be provided either in your home, in a clinic, or at a local community centre.

Service	Description
Social support	Social support assists customers to participate in community life and feel socially included through companionship and activities in their local communities.
Transport	Blue Care has a fleet of vehicles and drivers who can assist in getting customers to excursions and activities from their homes, our aged care residences and respite centres. Our customers enjoy the comfort and security of travelling in our comfortable air-conditioned vehicles to social outings and to group activities.
House Work	Blue Care can help by supporting a customer with housework duties around the home. This could include cleaning and laundry to provide a helping hand when it is needed the most. Housework can be included in a customer's home care package or on an as needed basis.
Hygiene and Grooming	Blue Care can work with customers to maintain daily activities personal hygiene and grooming activities to maintain confidence and independence.
Home maintenance	Home Maintenance services focus on repairs and maintenance of the home and garden to improve safety, and independence for Blue Care customers such as changing light bulbs or replacing tap washers.
Home modification	Minor installation of safety aids such as alarms, ramps and support rails in your home.
Nursing service	Our qualified Blue Care nursing team provides clinical care in your home or at one of our community care clinics/centres. Blue Care nurses focus on the treatment and monitoring of medically diagnosed clinical conditions. Our customer's individual needs are managed by qualified caring and compassionate nurses, using the latest advances in tele-health, technology and evidence based practice.
Meals	Blue Care offers a range of meal assistance and food preparation to our customers from delivered Meals on Wheels, to preparing and cooking food in the home.
Allied Health support services	Blue Care provides a number of health services such as physiotherapy, occupational and speech therapy, podiatry, dietician by experienced health professionals.

2

Medium Care:

Home Care Packages (HCP)

Think of this program as a more comprehensive version of the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP). It also helps you remain at home for longer, but provides more flexibility and choice in the services it covers.

Don't see something on the list below? Call us and ask! We can help guide you towards the appropriate aged care.

Example Services: Home Care Packages (HCP)

The following list samples some of the services we provide, but you're not constrained by it. We'll work with you to tailor a personalised service that delivers exactly what you need. You can also take a look at our guides for potential care needs based on age.

Common spending items

In no particular order, and by example only

- Personal care – showering, dressing, continence management
- Home care – house cleaning (essential areas), laundry, making beds
- Shopping assistance
- Transport to appointments, such as medical or even the hairdresser (escorted by a care worker)
- Meal preparation, special health-related foods
- Basic garden and lawn maintenance
- In-home respite care
- Medication prompts
- Social activities and programs

Individualised and flexible spending items

In no particular order, and by example only

- Podiatry, physiotherapy, counselling, speech therapy, some vision aids, companion pets
- Professional laundering, spring cleaning, therapeutic bed and mattresses
- Internet access, iPads, computer equipment, hands-free speaker phones
- Fuel vouchers or taxi vouchers to get around on your own
- Basic cooking classes, meal delivery, diabetic magazine subscriptions
- Making raised garden beds, purchase or hire of equipment and help with home modifications
- Provides carers with a much deserved break, providing carers with peace of mind that the person they care for is being well looked after while they're away from them
- Care worker can help create photo memory books, go for a stroll in the park, out for coffee, or walk the dog with you
- Exercise programs and classes, such as hydrotherapy, yoga, massage, gym, personal trainer, treadmill, to name a few

3

Higher Care: Aged Care Homes

Aged Care Homes are able to offer more comprehensive and specialised support as you get older. They're designed for people who can no longer live at home for a variety of reasons, such as illness, disability and bereavement. Or it could simply become too difficult to stay at home without help.

You can access Aged Care Homes on either a temporary or long-term basis.

At Blue Care, we manage 56 Aged Care Homes across Queensland, so call us today to arrange a tour.

3. How do I know what I need?

It's ok, we don't expect you to be an expert in aged care after just one guide! That's our job. Call us on 1300 258 322 and our experienced team can offer you personalised guidance on what's right for you.

They'll then connect you with the MAC team, so that you can begin your government funding assessment.

It's Blue Care for me

If you want to work with Blue Care (we want to work with you!) remember to tell your aged care assessor that Blue Care is your preferred provider.

4. Beginning my aged care journey

The process might seem complicated, but we're here to guide you through. Things can differ a little depending on which type of aged care you're accessing – the next three sections will take you through the steps involved in each.

If you'd prefer to talk to someone in person, simply call us on 1300 258 322 and we'll get you started.

The Process: Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP)

Step	What happens during that step
1. Call Blue Care on 1300 258 322	Blue Care will discuss your needs, guide you through the aged care process, and explain our services. While you're still on the phone, we'll link you through to My Aged Care (MAC) so you can begin accessing your aged care services.
2. MAC will organise an over-the-phone or in-home assessment	My Aged Care (MAC) will either assess you over the phone or organise a free in-home assessment. The person who comes to visit might be referred to as a RAS Assessor (Regional Assessment Service). Acronyms aside, they're basically there to learn more about your individual needs, and connect you with the help and funding you require. During your assessment, we recommend advising the assessor that Blue Care is your preferred care provider.
3. Blue Care will call you to schedule the start of your services	After your assessment is complete, MAC will contact Blue Care directly to let us know that we can begin providing you support. We'll then call you to discuss your choice of services, and schedule a time and day to come out and visit.
4. Blue Care services commence	Your care commences!

The Process: Home Care Packages (HCP)

Step	What happens during that step
1. Call Blue Care on 1300 258 322	<p>Blue Care will discuss your needs, guide you through the aged care process, and explain our services.</p> <p>While you're still on the phone, we'll link you through to My Aged Care (MAC) so you can begin accessing your aged care services.</p>
2. You'll receive a call to schedule your free in-home assessment	<p>You'll receive a call to organise your free in-home assessment. The person you speak with might be referred to as an ACAT Assessor (Aged Care Assessment Team).</p> <p>Acronyms aside, they're basically there to learn more about your individual needs, and connect you with the help and funding you require.</p>
3. Assessment takes place at your home	<p>At your assessment, your assessor will discuss what kind of help you might need, and what types of services may be best for you.</p> <p>During your assessment, we recommend advising the assessor that Blue Care is your preferred care provider.</p>
4. You'll receive a letter confirming the outcome of your assessment	<p>The assessor will write to you to tell you the outcome of your assessment and specify the type of service/s that can best support you.</p> <p>If you're eligible for home care services, you'll be approved for a specific Home Care Package level (1, 2, 3 or 4), based on your needs.</p> <p>Once you've been approved for a Home Care Package, you'll automatically be placed in the national queue. Blue Care can continue providing services through the Commonwealth Home Support Program while you wait. The national queue provides a fair and flexible way of allocating packages to people based on their individual needs and circumstances, regardless of where they live.</p> <p>Your position in the queue will take into account your relative needs and circumstances (which are captured through your comprehensive assessment), and the date of your approval for home care services.</p>
5. Once you reach the front of the queue, you'll receive a commencement letter	<p>Once you reach the front of the national queue, you'll receive another letter from your assessor confirming that you've been assigned a Home Care Package, and that your care can now commence.</p> <p>This letter will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The details of the Home Care Package you've been assigned • A unique referral code that your chosen provider will use to access your customer information in the My Aged Care (MAC) system • The date by which you need to activate your Home Care Package. You have 56 days to contact a support or service provider, like Blue Care, and activate your care. <p>Be aware: Your services may not automatically begin when you receive this letter. Call Blue Care with your referral code handy, and we can get the ball rolling.</p> <p>If you need more time, you can contact the My Aged Care Contact Centre and request a 28 day extension, giving you a total of 84 days to commence care with your chosen provider.</p>
6. Call Blue Care to plan your services	<p>A Blue Care Home Care Package Partner will work closely with you and your family to tailor your support plan, and schedule your chosen services.</p>
7. Blue Care services commence	<p>Your care commences!</p>

The Process: Aged Care Homes

Step	What happens during that step
<p>1. Call Blue Care on 1300 258 322</p>	<p>Blue Care will discuss your needs, guide you through the aged care process, and explain our services.</p> <p>While you're still on the phone, we'll link you through to My Aged Care (MAC) so you can begin accessing your aged care services.</p>
<p>2. You'll receive a call to schedule your free in-home assessment</p>	<p>You'll receive a call to organise your free in-home assessment. The person you speak with might be referred to as an ACAT Assessor (Aged Care Assessment Team).</p> <p>Acronyms aside, they're basically there to learn more about your individual needs, and connect you with the help and funding you require.</p>
<p>3. Assessment takes place at your home</p>	<p>At your assessment, your assessor will look at your individual needs in detail:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What's the best option – entering an aged care home, or staying at your home with some extra help • Provide information about homes and services in your area • Arrange short-term residential care, should you only need temporary respite <p>During your assessment, we recommend advising the assessor that Blue Care is your preferred care provider.</p>
<p>4. Call Blue Care to plan your services</p>	<p>Call Blue Care to discuss our homes, services, costs and to schedule a tour of our facilities.</p>
<p>5. You'll receive a letter confirming the outcome of your assessment</p>	<p>Once your assessment is complete, you'll receive a letter telling you what type of services you're approved to receive, as well as the reasons why.</p> <p>Keep your letter handy, because you'll need to show it to any care providers (like Blue Care) that you contact.</p> <p>Once you've been approved by ACAT, the next step is to contact your chosen provider who can assist you with a placement at one of their services.</p> <p>Your position in the queue will take into account your relative needs and circumstances (which are captured through your comprehensive assessment), and the date of your approval for your services.</p>
<p>6. A bed becomes available and your care can commence</p>	<p>Once a bed is offered by Blue Care, further information will be provided to commence the service.</p>
<p>7. Blue Care placement commences</p>	<p>Your care commences!</p>

5. What about urgent cases?

Not everyone has time to wait. If your hospital or GP identify that you need care urgently, they're able to create a direct referral to Blue Care, and get you help right away.

In these cases, the MAC funding assessment happens in parallel to receiving your care, rather than beforehand.

If you think you're in need of urgent care, speak with your hospital or GP and let them know that Blue Care is your preferred provider, or call Blue Care on **1300 258 322**. We're always here to help.

No funding? You're not on your own.

Even if MAC has not approved your funding, we can still help. Call us on **1300 258 322** to discuss our fee-for-service options.

6. Live life your way with Blue Care

At Blue Care, we know that everyone – and their family – is different, which is why we offer a **tailored, personalised service** designed around your individual needs. It's all about empowering you to live life your way.

We take an **integrated approach** to aged care, guiding you right along your journey. From basic help around the house right through to high-needs care, our dedicated team are with you every step of the way.

Blue Care is **one of Queensland's largest aged care provider**, with a loving and passionate team spanning 260 centres and 80 communities across the state. It's this scale that allows us to offer such a broad range of services, in more locations throughout Queensland.

Wherever you are, whatever you need, Blue Care is here to help.

One of **Queensland's biggest and most trusted** Home Care providers

For **more than 60 years**, Blue care has supported people to live independently in their local community

We have more than **8,000 staff and 2,000 volunteers** working across the state to improve the health and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities

- **Aged Care Homes**
 - We have 56 Aged Care facilities providing a home for more than 3,500 people
- **Community Care**
 - We support more than 54,000 Queenslanders receiving community care
 - We have 77 community centres around the state where a range of in-home and community-based personalised care services are offered
- **Respite Centres**
 - We have 54 respite centres offering respite in comfortable and well-appointed facilities. We also offer residential respite services that enable your carer to a well-earned break or the opportunity to go on a holiday.

Call Blue Care today on **1300 258 322**.