



Support At Home

Your guide to understanding the changes



Helping Hand

Welcome



We're excited to share some important updates about the future of home care. From **1 November 2025**, the Australian Government's new **Support at Home program** will begin. This program is designed to make home care services more accessible, flexible, and focused on helping you stay independent and connected in your own home for longer.

While there will be some changes to how services are delivered, one thing remains the same: **our commitment to you**. You will continue to receive the care and support you need, and we'll be here to guide you through every step of this transition.

At Helping Hand, we've already introduced some positive initiatives to enhance your experience, including:

- Our **Care Partner model** – giving you more personalised support and guidance.
- New **Wellbeing Centres** in Parafield Gardens and Golden Grove – welcoming spaces for health, connection, and community. We are also looking to open more wellbeing centres in future in new areas including regional South Australia.

And there's more to come:

- A new **Client App** – making it easier to manage your services online.
- Expanded **social connection programs** – because staying connected is essential to ageing well.
- New service options are also being developed – watch this space!

This booklet explains what the Support at Home program means for you and highlights the improvements we're making to help you live well, stay independent and make choices that are most important to you. If you have any questions, our team is always here to help.

Kind regards,

James Bardsley

Executive Manager Home Care and Retirement Living

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Understanding Your Rights and Protections

Your rights under the New Aged Care Act

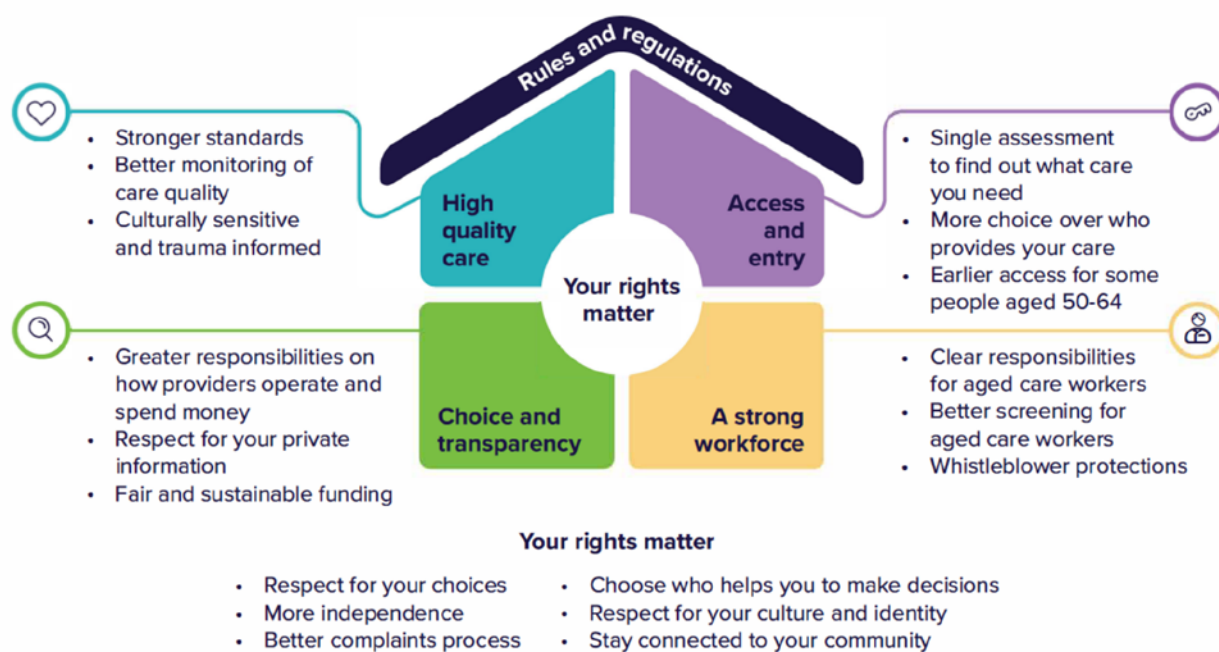
From 1 November 2025, a new Aged Care Act and strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards will come into effect across Australia. These changes are designed to strengthen the care and support older people receive.

At Helping Hand, we welcome these changes because they reflect what matters most—your **independence, dignity, and choice**. Guided by our values of *Community, Compassion, Excellence and Respect*, we are committed to delivering person-centred care and supporting you to live your best life.

The new Aged Care Act puts you at the centre of your aged care

It will make aged care safer, fairer and more respectful.

This infographic outlines the main parts of the new Act and how they work together.



The new Aged Care Act also includes a Statement of Rights which clearly sets out what you can expect when receiving aged care services. Under the new Act, providers are legally required to deliver care in line with these rights. You will find a copy of this statement on the next pages.

New Strengthened Standards

From 1 November 2025, strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards will come into effect to ensure you receive safe, respectful, and high-quality care. These new standards focus on what matters most to you – your dignity, independence, and wellbeing. They promote person-centred care, meaning your preferences, values, and cultural background are respected and reflected in every part of your care.

The standards also encourage open communication, stronger partnerships with care providers, and greater involvement of your family or trusted representatives. With clearer expectations and improved accountability, these changes are designed to give you more confidence in your care and support a better quality of life.

Aged Care Code of Conduct and Your Feedback

The Code of Conduct for Aged Care is already in place and will continue under the new Act. It outlines the behaviour expected of aged care workers, volunteers, and providers. The Code helps build trust and ensures everyone receiving aged care feels safe, respected, and supported.

At Helping Hand, we are committed to upholding the Code every day.

When you give feedback, you can expect respect, confidentiality, and a timely response.

Your feedback matters.

We value your suggestions, compliments and complaints, as they help us to improve.

You can:

1. Speak directly with a **Helping Hand staff member**.
2. If needed, **speak to a manager**.
3. Provide feedback through our **Tell Touch system**.
4. Complete a contact us form **via the website** at helpinghand.org.au
5. **Write to us** at Helping Hand
PO Box 66, North Adelaide 5006
or **send us an email** at homecare@helpinghand.org.au

Privacy and Speaking Up

The new Act strengthens your right to privacy. This means your personal information is respected and protected, and you have the right to:

- Access and understand your care information.
- Correct or update your information.
- Choose whether your information is shared with others.

The Act also protects whistleblowers, people who speak up about concerns in aged care. Reports can be made anonymously, and protections are in place, so you won't face negative consequences for raising concerns.

You can make a whistleblowing disclosure to the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (ACQSC), the Department of Health and Aged Care, a registered provider such as Helping Hand, a responsible person of registered provider, an aged care worker of registered provider, a police officer or an independent aged care advocate such as OPAN.

Statement of Rights

The Statement of Rights clearly identifies your rights when seeking or receiving aged care services. Under the new Aged Care Act, which comes into effect on 1 November 2025, your provider is legally obliged to deliver services in line with these rights.

 **To find out more about the New Statement of Rights including how your rights are upheld please visit:**
health.gov.au/resources/publications/a-new-aged-care-act-for-the-rights-of-older-people

Independence, autonomy, empowerment and freedom of choice

- (1) An individual has a right to:
 - (a) exercise choice and make decisions that affect the individual's life, including in relation to the following:
 - (i) the funded aged care services the individual has been approved to access;
 - (ii) how, when and by whom those services are delivered to the individual;
 - (iii) the individual's financial affairs and personal possessions; and
 - (b) be supported (if necessary) to make those decisions, and have those decisions respected; and
 - (c) take personal risks, including in pursuit of the individual's quality of life, social participation and intimate and sexual relationships.

Equitable access

- (2) An individual has a right to equitable access to:
 - (a) have the individual's need for funded aged care services assessed, or reassessed, in a manner which is:
 - (i) culturally safe, culturally appropriate, trauma-aware and healing-informed; and
 - (ii) accessible and suitable for individuals living with dementia or other cognitive impairment; and
 - (b) palliative care and end-of-life care when required.

Quality and safe funded aged care services

- (3) An individual has a right to:
 - (a) be treated with dignity and respect; and
 - (b) safe, fair, equitable and non-discriminatory treatment; and
 - (c) have the individual's identity, culture, spirituality and diversity valued and supported; and
 - (d) funded aged care services being delivered to the individual:
 - (i) in a way that is culturally safe, culturally appropriate, trauma-aware and healing-informed; and
 - (ii) in an accessible manner; and
 - (iii) by aged care workers of registered providers who have appropriate qualifications, skills and experience.
- (4) An individual has a right to:
 - (a) be free from all forms of violence, degrading or inhumane treatment, exploitation, neglect, coercion, abuse or sexual misconduct; and
 - (b) have quality and safe funded aged care services delivered consistently with the requirements imposed on registered providers under this Act.

Note: Division 1 of Part 4 of Chapter 3 deals with conditions on registered providers, including requirements in relation to the use of restrictive practices and management of incidents.

Respect for privacy and information

- (5) An individual has a right to have the individual's:
 - (a) personal privacy respected; and
 - (b) personal information protected.
- (6) An individual has a right to seek, and be provided with, records and information about the individual's rights under this section and the funded aged care services the individual accesses, including the costs of those services.

Person-centred communication and ability to raise issues without reprisal

- (7) An individual has a right to:
 - (a) be informed, in a way the individual understands, about the funded aged care services the individual accesses; and
 - (b) express opinions about the funded aged care services the individual accesses and be heard.
- (8) An individual has a right to communicate in the individual's preferred language or method of communication, with access to interpreters and communication aids as required.
- (9) An individual has a right to:
 - (a) open communication and support from registered providers when issues arise in the delivery of funded aged care services; and
 - (b) make complaints using an accessible mechanism, without fear of reprisal, about the delivery of funded aged care services to the individual; and
 - (c) have the individual's complaints dealt with fairly and promptly.

Advocates, significant persons and social connections

- (10) An individual has a right to be supported by an advocate or other person of the individual's choice, including when exercising or seeking to understand the individual's rights in this section, voicing the individual's opinions, making decisions that affect the individual's life and making complaints or giving feedback.
- (11) An individual has a right to have the role of persons who are significant to the individual, including carers, visitors and volunteers, be acknowledged and respected.
- (12) An individual has a right to opportunities, and assistance, to stay connected (if the individual so chooses) with:
 - (a) significant persons in the individual's life and pets, including through safe visitation by family members, friends, volunteers or other visitors where the individual lives and visits to family members or friends; and
 - (b) the individual's community, including by participating in public life and leisure, cultural, spiritual and lifestyle activities; and
 - (c) if the individual is an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person—community, Country and Island Home.
- (13) An individual has a right to access, at any time the individual chooses, a person designated by the individual, or a person designated by an appropriate authority.

Disclaimer: Information sourced from Division 1 of the new Aged Care Act 2024. Information current as of December 2024.

Support Services and Care Options

Associated Providers

Sometimes Helping Hand works with other organisations to deliver services. This could be because you have specifically requested them to deliver your care and services or because we are engaging them to provide support while we grow our team. These organisations are called **Associated Providers**.

- Your care will not change, we remain responsible for the quality and safety of your services.
- Associated Providers must meet the same standards as Helping Hand staff.

In simple terms: **if someone provides care on our behalf, they are considered part of our team under the Act.**

However, to make sure you receive safe and high-quality care, we need to check that all the Associated Providers we work with meet the requirements of the Aged Care Act, Standards and Guidelines. If a provider is unable to meet these requirements, we will not be able to continue working with them. If this happens, we will talk with you first, explain the reasons why and work together to find another provider or solution that suits your needs so there is no disruption to your care.

New Restorative Care Pathway

The Restorative Care Pathway is a short-term support option designed to help you stay independent after a health setback, illness, or change in your situation. From 1 November 2025, it will replace the Short-Term Restorative Care Programme and offer flexible services tailored to your goals.

You'll work with a team who listens to what matters most to you and supports you in getting back on track. This may include help at home, personal care, and allied health services like physiotherapy or occupational therapy. The aim is to support your recovery, improve your wellbeing, and help you continue living safely and comfortably at home.



Assistive Technology and Home Modifications (AT-HM)

From 1 November 2025, the Support at Home program will include the Assistive Technology and Home Modifications (AT-HM) scheme. This scheme gives you access to equipment and home changes that help you live safely and independently – without needing to save up from your quarterly budget. Funding is provided separately based on your assessed needs.

You may be approved for assistive technology, home modifications, or both. Assistive technology includes helpful items such as walking frames, shower chairs, or toileting supports.

Home modifications can range from simple additions such as grab rails and non-slip flooring to larger changes such as ramps or bathroom redesigns.

Funding is grouped into three levels: low (under \$500), medium (up to \$2,000), and high (up to \$15,000). In some cases, advice or a prescription from a qualified health professional may be required to ensure the item is safe and suitable for you.

➤ **For more detailed information, please visit:**
health.gov.au/resources/publications/support-at-home-program-assistive-technology-and-home-modifications-at-hm-scheme

End-of-Life Pathway: helping you stay at home

From 1 November 2025, the Support at Home program will include access to the End-of-Life pathway. If you are nearing the end of life and wish to stay in the comfort of your own home, this pathway can provide extra care and support. This may include personal care, help around the house, and nursing services for people expected to live three months or less. The aim is help you feel safe, supported and cared for during this time.

➤ **For more information, please visit:**
health.gov.au/resources/publications/support-at-home-program-end-of-life-pathway



Getting Started with Support At Home



Transitioning to Support at Home

Under the new Support at Home program, you'll be matched to one of eight funding levels based on your care needs. This ensures you receive the right amount of support to live safely and comfortably at home. Each level comes with a set budget that covers services like help around the house, personal care, nursing, and allied health.

Your care team will work with you to plan services that reflect your goals and preferences. The funding is managed on your behalf, so you can focus on your wellbeing while staying in control of your care.

➤ **For more detailed information, please visit:**
health.gov.au/resources/publications/support-at-home-program-classifications-and-budgets

If you currently receive a Home Care Package, you will automatically transition to Support at Home. You'll keep your current level of funding, and any unspent funds will carry over. You'll also have access to a wider range of services, including help at home, personal care, nursing, allied health, and short-term supports such as assistive technology and home modifications.

You'll be supported by a care partner, who will help you understand your new care plan, budget, and any contributions you may need to make. If your needs change, you can be reassessed and matched to a new funding level to ensure you continue receiving the right support.

Understanding Costs and Budgets

From 1 November 2025, the Support at Home program will introduce co-contributions.

This means some people may pay part of the cost of certain services, depending on their financial situation.

What Stays the Same

- If you were assessed for a Home Care Package before 12 September 2024, you won't pay more under the new program.

You only pay for the services you receive. How much you pay depends on:

- The type of service.
- Your financial situation (pensioner, part-pensioner, or self-funded retiree).

How Co-Contributions Work

Clinical care (like nursing or physiotherapy) is fully funded by the Government – there is no cost to you.

Independence supports (like personal care or home modifications) have a moderate contribution, recognising these services help people stay independent and out of hospital or entering residential care prematurely.

Everyday living services (like cleaning, gardening or meals) have the highest contribution, as these are everyday costs that most people pay for themselves at other stages of life.

Service Categories and Contribution Rates

Client Type	Clinical Care (nursing, physio, allied health)	Independence Supports (personal care, home modifications)	Everyday Living (cleaning, gardening, meals)
Full Pensioner	0%	5%	17.5%
Part Pensioner / CSHC	0%	5–50% (depends on income and assets)	17.5–80% (depends on income and assets)
Self-Funded (No CSHC)	0%	50%	80%

CSHC = Commonwealth Seniors Health Card

- Services Australia will use your Age Pension means test (which considers your income and assets) to calculate your co-contribution.
- If you are a part-pensioner, you don't need to do anything – Services Australia already has your information.
- If you hold a Commonwealth Seniors Health Card, you will need to let Services Australia know about your income and assets and keep them updated if anything changes.

Note: Your contribution is means tested by the Australian Government, not by Helping Hand.



How We Price Services

Currently, some costs like travel and package management are charged separately. From 1 November 2025, the Government requires these costs to be built into the price of each service. This means that the price you see on your statement will now include:

- Wages for care staff
- Travel and transport costs
- Package management and administration

The way care management is charged will also change. From 1 November 2025, 10% of your budget will be taken by Services Australia and will remain in a pooled fund that Helping Hand will draw from when we provide your care management services like care planning, service coordination, reviewing your care plan, and providing ongoing advice and support. The amounts that we charge for care management will be clearly shown on your statements.

New Service Agreements

All home care clients will need to enter into a new service agreement. This may be a brand-new agreement or an add-on (variation) to an existing Home Care Package (HCP) agreement. These agreements must follow the Aged Care Act 2024 and the updated Aged Care Rules.

Before starting, the agreement must be reviewed and agreed to by you. It should clearly outline the services you'll receive and how much they will cost. Agreements are designed to be fair, transparent, and evidence based.

- Please be assured you can continue to receive your services while you review and discuss the agreement with us. Services will only be affected in rare situations such as safety concerns or unpaid fees.

You have the right to ask questions and take the time you need to understand the agreement before signing.

Quarterly Budgets

Your funding will be split into quarterly budgets rather than annual amounts and under the new Support at Home program you will only be able to roll over up to \$1,000 or 10% (whichever is higher) of your quarterly budget to the next quarter.

This ensures that rather than having unspent funds you are maximising your budget on services that have been identified as vital to support you to remain living independently at home.

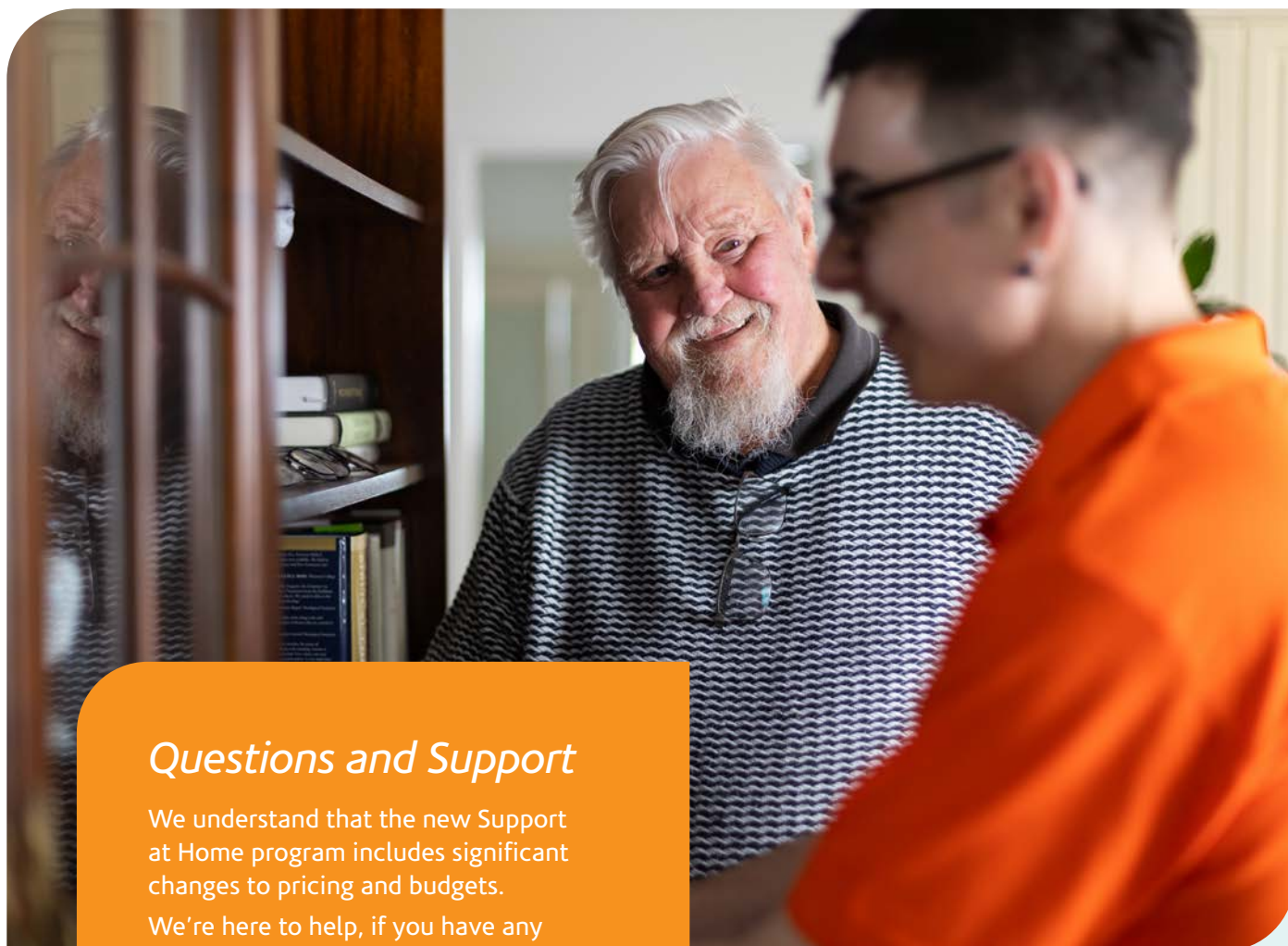
Monthly Statements

From November, your monthly statements will be easier to read and clearer to follow.

- Only two charges will appear as separate line items: service costs and care management.
- Making statements much simpler and easier for you to see where your budget is going.

With the introduction of our new client app, you will be able to access your statements along with other information on your personalised app.

(Please see client app on page 18 for more).



Questions and Support

We understand that the new Support at Home program includes significant changes to pricing and budgets.

We're here to help, if you have any questions or concerns, please call our friendly home care team on **1300 444 663**.

Living well with the Right Support

Your Care, Your Team

At Helping Hand, we believe care should fit around your life – not the other way around. Our Care Partnering model puts you at the centre of everything we do. Each Care Partner focuses on a specific area such as nursing, social activities, gardening, or cleaning, while working together as a team to support your overall wellbeing.

We value respectful communication, teamwork, and being there for each other, so your care is smooth, reliable, and tailored to your needs. Whether it's helping you settle in, keeping your home comfortable, or supporting your health and social life, our team is here to make sure you feel safe, valued, and in control.

Your choices matter. Your voice matters. And we'll be with you every step of the way.

Wellness and Reablement

A key part of our approach is wellness and reablement, which focuses on helping you stay independent, active, and in control of your life. Rather than doing things for you when you're able to do them with support, we build on your strengths and support your goals. Our team works alongside you to restore confidence and help you manage everyday tasks. Services are designed to be short-term and goal-focused, helping you improve your wellbeing and continue living safely and comfortably at home.

How your Care Partners Support You:

- **Personalised care:** We value your life experience and treat you with respect, kindness, and inclusion. Our team takes the time to understand what matters to you and supports your choices. Our services are designed around your needs, helping you live with comfort, safety, and joy. We respect your culture, story, and past experiences, and provide care that feels safe, gentle, and personal. Everything we do is guided by person-centred care, putting you at the heart of every decision.
- **Specialist expertise:** Our team brings together a wide range of skills, from help at home and clinical care to allied health and social connection to support your wellbeing in a way that suits you.
- **Flexibility:** We understand that your needs, preferences, and circumstances may change over time. That's why our team, together with you, regularly reviews and adjusts your services if needed, ensuring they continue to support your health, comfort, and lifestyle.

- **Clear guidance:** Our team takes the time to explain your options in simple, easy-to-understand language, and we're always available to answer your questions.
- **Connection and communication:** We believe that care works best when everyone is informed and involved. With your consent, we make sure you, your family, and your carers are kept up to date and included in decisions about your care and support. We take the time to share information clearly, listen to your views, and encourage open communication.

The benefits for you:

- A trusted team who knows your story, your preferences and what matters most to you.
- More specialised support across health, wellbeing and daily living.
- Regular check-ins to ensure your care continues to feel right for you.
- Greater independence through a focus on wellness and what you can do, not just what you need help with.
- Respect for your privacy, dignity and choices—because your voice is central in every decision.

Dignity of Risk – Your Right to Choose

You have the right to make your own choices, even if those choices involve some risk. This principle, called Dignity of Risk, is now formally recognised in the new Act.

We will work with you to:

- Help you understand potential risks and make informed decisions.
- Respect your preferences, independence, and lifestyle choices.
- Find safe and balanced solutions that support your goals.

Examples might include:

- Managing finances, even though mistakes have been made in the past.
- Start cooking again, even though health and memory challenges make it difficult.
- Declining a treatment due to its side effects, even though it may help a chronic condition.

Our goal is simple: to help you live the life you choose, with the right support to make informed decisions.

Supported Decision Making and Registered Supporters

Everyone has the right to make decisions about their life, including the support and services they receive from aged care. Some older people may want or need support to make these decisions.

From 1 November 2025, you can seek to register people who can support you to make decisions, if you want or need this support. These people are called **Registered Supporters**. The registered supporter role is one of the changes under the Act that aims to promote older peoples' rights to be supported to make their own decisions.

If you'd like help to understand information, weigh up options, or communicate your decisions, you can choose a **Registered Supporter**, someone you trust to assist you.

- If you already have a representative listed through My Aged Care, they will automatically become a Registered Supporter.

- You can opt out or change your Registered Supporter at any time.
- You can also choose not to have a Registered Supporter if you feel well supported by your care team and others in your life.

A Registered Supporter is not a legal decision-maker. If you already have someone like a guardian or power of attorney, that's a separate role.

Registered Supporters are there to **support your decisions, not make them for you.**

➤ **For more information on Registered Supporters please visit:**
health.gov.au/resources/publications/registered-supporters-policy



Access to Advocates

Under the new Support at Home program, the role of advocates is evolving to include Registered Supporters, as detailed above. Plus, you can also access free, independent, and confidential support through a range of independent advocacy services:

The Older Person's Advocacy Network (OPAN): OPAN provides free, independent and confidential support and advocacy to older people and people who support them.

➤ Learn more at opan.org.au or call 1800 700 600.

My Aged Care Specialist Officers: These My Aged Care officers provide a face-to-face service at selected Services Australia centres.

➤ Learn more at servicesaustralia.gov.au/aged-care-specialist-officer-my-aged-care-face-to-face-services

Care finders: Care Finders provide extra, intensive support to vulnerable people who have no other support network.

➤ Learn more at myagedcare.gov.au/help-care-finder

State and Territory Tribunals: These tribunals can be contacted for matters relating to an appointed decision maker under a state or territory arrangement.

Support for Carers

If a family member, friend, or neighbour helps care for you, they can access free support through Carer Gateway, an Australian Government service for unpaid carers.

Carer Gateway provides counselling, respite care, practical advice, and ways to stay connected.

Anyone can contact Carer Gateway by calling **1800 422 737** or for more information and support please visit carergateway.gov.au

Support to help you live well

Support at Home offers a wider range of services designed to support your health, wellbeing, and independence. These services are grouped into easy categories to help you find the right support when you need it.

➤ **For a full overview, please visit:**
health.gov.au/resources/publications/support-at-home-service-list

At Helping Hand, we're committed to making your care experiences easier, more connected and truly personal. Whether it's finding the right support at home, staying active in your community or using new technologies to enhance your lifestyle we're here to help.



Local Support you can Trust

For our regional clients we've listened to your feedback and are returning calls to your local offices. This means you'll work directly with local home care teams who know your community. When you call, you'll be connected with someone familiar with the services available in your area and aware of the challenges and opportunities that matter most to you.

If our phone lines are busy, your call may be redirected to our metro Adelaide team, so you can still speak with someone who's ready to help.

New Wellbeing Centres

Our new Wellbeing Centres at Parafield Gardens and Golden Grove bring together health, social, and support services under one roof in bright and welcoming spaces designed especially for you.

These centres are dedicated solely to Helping Hand clients, providing even more support for your health and wellbeing.

At the Wellbeing Centres, you can stay:

- **Active:** with exercise and wellness programs tailored to your abilities and goals.
- **Connected:** through social groups, activities, and community events that help you build friendships and feel part of something meaningful.
- **Supported:** with access to a wider range of professionals and services, including expanded Allied Health offerings.

The new centres are easy to access, with convenient on-site parking and we're excited to continue growing, with plans to open additional Wellbeing Centres in regional areas in the future. Watch this space!

Social Connections

We know staying socially connected is just as important as physical health. That's why we're expanding our program of activities, groups and events across more locations – helping you meet new people, keep in touch with friends, and stay engaged in your community. We'll share more information about this as the program grows and develops.

Coming Soon: Client App

Later this year, we're excited to introduce a new client app, a simple, helpful tool designed to make life easier and keep you connected. With just a few taps on a phone or tablet, you'll be able to view your care plan, check your statements, view your scheduled appointments, provide feedback, read news and updates, and even enjoy puzzles like crosswords, quizzes, and sudoku.

The app is designed to be easy to use, even if you're not familiar with technology. Most importantly, it puts you in control of your day, helping you stay informed, independent, and engaged.

We'll share more details about the client app as soon as it becomes available.





Stay Connected

We're Here to Support you

We understand that change can feel overwhelming, but you're not alone. The new Support at Home program is designed to give you more choice, flexibility, and support – so you can continue living safely, comfortably, and independently in your own home.

At Helping Hand, we're committed to walking alongside you every step of the way. Whether you have questions about your care plan, need help understanding your budget, or simply want to talk through your options, our friendly team is here to help.

Contact us

Call us:
1300 444 663

Visit our website:
helpinghand.org.au

Write to us:
PO Box 66
North Adelaide SA 5006

Send feedback:
homecare@helpinghand.org.au



Helping Hand