



Moving and settling in

Living in an aged care home will be different from the way that you have lived before. Not only is it a new environment but you are living with many new people all under one roof. Each aged care home will have different routines and environments.

When you know which home you're going to live in, you may arrange to visit before you move in, to familiarise yourself with the home's surroundings.

When you move into residential aged care it can also be an anxious time for your carer, your family or your friends. Even if caring for another person has been difficult, a carer may now feel a sense of loss and disorientation as his or her role changes.

For help with any aged care matters, call the Aged and Community Care Information Line on 1800 500 853.

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Moving into an aged care home can be a stressful and emotional time for you, your carer, your family and your friends. There are a number of key things to be aware of to help make your move as smooth as possible. These include knowing what to expect when you:

- are offered a place;
- prepare to move;
- move in; and
- are living in your new aged care home.

Everyone's experience of moving and settling into their new accommodation will be different. This section of the booklet provides advice on the main things you, your family, friends or carer, should be aware of at each of the stages of moving into a residential aged care home. If you have any questions that are not answered here, you may wish to call the Aged and Community Care Information Line on 1800 500 853

When you are offered a place in an Aged Care Home

When you are offered, and have accepted, a place in a residential aged care home, you should complete Part B of your application and provide it to the aged care home, if you have not already done so. The manager of the aged care home should then offer you a resident agreement.

The Resident Agreement

A resident agreement is a formal agreement between you and the aged care home and should be offered to you before you move in. If you choose to enter into an agreement, you do not have to sign it at the time it is offered to you.

However if the resident agreement includes accommodation payments, then this agreement will need to be signed within 21 days.

You may wish to take time to seek advice from friends, family, financial adviser or a legal practitioner.

What the Resident Agreement should cover

A resident agreement is a legal document which sets out the terms of your residency, your rights and responsibilities, and the rights and responsibilities of the aged care home. The agreement offered to you by an aged care provider should be an easily understood document that covers the following:



- the name of the aged care home;
- the levels of care that the aged care home can provide to you and any limitations to those levels, such as whether the home specialises in the provision of only low or high care;
- the policies and practices that are used to set your fees and charges;
- the level of daily care fee you will be asked to pay, either the pensioner or non-pensioner rate;
- if applicable, the type of extra service you may have agreed to receive and the costs you agree to pay for these services;
- the circumstances in which you may be asked to leave the aged care home;
- if you are asked to leave, how the aged care home will help you to obtain alternative and appropriate accommodation;
- how the aged care home will deal with any complaints you, your carer, friends or family may make;
- your responsibilities as a resident in the aged care home;
- the aged care home's responsibilities to you as a resident; and
- any other matters agreed between yourself and the aged care home's manager within the rules of the Aged Care Act 1997

If you agree to pay an accommodation bond or accommodation charge, you will also need to enter an accommodation bond or accommodation charge agreement with the home. This can be included as part of your Resident Agreement or it can be separate. This document should cover the following details:


- the amount of accommodation bond or charge you agree to pay;
- the agreed method of payment for a bond;
- the monthly retention amount for a lump sum bond; and
- the interest rate you will be charged if paying a bond by periodic payments, or for accommodation charge arrears.

Helping you to understand the Resident Agreement

The manager of your aged care home has a responsibility to explain and help you to understand all the terms of the agreement being offered. It is important that you do not sign the agreement if you do not understand what is being offered to you.

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You should seek assistance from family, friends or a legal practitioner to help you understand the terms of your agreement. If you have difficulty understanding the agreement because it is not written in your preferred language, you may wish to contact the Aged and Community Care Information Line on 1800 500 853 and ask to be connected to the Translating and Interpreting Service.

Changing the terms of the Resident Agreement

Any variations to the agreement must only be made with both your consent and the consent of the aged care home's manager. To terminate the agreement, you should give the aged care home's manager seven days written notice of your intention to do so.

Withdrawing from, or cancelling, the Resident Agreement

If, within 14 days of signing the agreement, you change your mind and wish to withdraw from the agreement, you should advise your aged care home in writing. If you paid any amounts under the agreement, other than your care fees and charges during those 14 days, these must be refunded to you.

If you are not able to sign the resident agreement

If you are physically unable to sign the agreement, but you understand it and you are willing to sign, you may ask someone with legal authority to sign on your behalf. This may be a person who holds Power of Attorney for you.

The various forms of legal authority enabling another person to act on your behalf are discussed on pages 5 and 5 of the Apply pdf.

The 'Charter of Residents' Rights and Responsibilities'

No matter which residential aged care home you move into, the rights and responsibilities of yourself and all other residents will be the same. To ensure the protection of your rights and responsibilities, they have been included in the legislation that all Australian Government funded residential aged care homes must abide by.

Your aged care home may provide you with a copy of the Charter of Residents' Rights and Responsibilities when you are offered your resident agreement. In any case, the Charter should be displayed prominently within all residential aged care homes.



Charter of Residents' Rights and Responsibilities

Each resident of a residential care service has the right to:

- full and effective use of his or her personal, civil, legal and consumer rights;
- quality care which is appropriate to his or her needs;
- full information about his or her own state of health and about available treatments;
- be treated with dignity and respect, and to live without exploitation, abuse or neglect;
- live without discrimination or victimisation, and without being obliged to feel grateful to those providing his or her care and accommodation;
- personal privacy;
- live in a safe, secure and homelike environment, and to move freely both within and outside the residential care service without undue restriction;
- be treated and accepted as an individual, and to have his or her individual preferences taken into account and treated with respect;
- continue his or her cultural and religious practices and to retain the language of his or her choice, without discrimination;
- select and maintain social and personal relationships with any other person without fear, criticism or restriction;
- freedom of speech;
- maintain his or her personal independence, which includes a recognition of personal responsibility for his or her own actions and choices, even though some actions may involve an element of risk which the resident has the right to accept, and that should then not be used to prevent or restrict those actions;
- maintain control over, and to continue making decisions about, the personal aspects of his or her daily life, his or her financial affairs and possessions;
- be involved in the activities, associations and friendships of his or her choice, both within and outside the residential care service;
- have access to services and activities which are available generally in the community;
- be consulted on, and to choose to have input into, decisions about the living arrangements of the residential care service;

continued overleaf

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- have access to information about his or her rights, care, accommodation, and any other information which relates to him or her personally;
- complain and to take action to resolve disputes;
- have access to advocates and other avenues of redress; and
- be free from reprisal, or a well-founded fear of reprisal, in any form for taking action to enforce his or her rights.

Each resident of a residential care service has the responsibility to:

- respect the rights and needs of other people within the residential care service, and to respect the needs of the residential care service community as a whole;
- respect the rights of staff and the proprietor to work in an environment which is free from harassment;
- care for his or her own health and wellbeing, as far as he or she is capable; and
- inform his or her medical practitioner, as far as he or she is able, about his or her relevant medical history and his or her current state of health.

If you can't move in straight away


Once you have agreed to accept a place in a residential aged care home, you are considered to be a resident of that home. You have up to seven (7) days to move in to your aged care home after you have agreed to accept the place. Aged care homes call this pre-entry leave

You may be charged for your care from the date you accept your place, even if you can't move in straight away. The Australian Government will also begin to provide payments to your aged care home from the date you accept your place.

Preparing to Move

What to take with you when you move

Your aged care home will provide most of the furnishings you need. However, you can choose to bring things with you if you want to. Ask your aged care home what you can bring with you, as each aged care home has different guidelines on what personal belongings residents can bring.



You may wish to bring some of your own furnishings, such as your favourite chair, a television/video/DVD, a radio/CD/record player, a bedside light or a small table, and other personal things such as photos and other memorabilia, books and music. You should discuss insurance of any valuables with your aged care home.

If you want staff at your aged care home to wash your clothes, make sure that each garment is labelled with your name, and that your labels are waterproof and can withstand clothes driers. The aged care home may be able to recommend appropriate labels.

Who you should notify of your move

This checklist has been prepared to help you make sure that you've informed everyone who has to know that you will be moving, and completed any other necessary tasks. There may be other people whom you will need to advise if, for instance, you are still maintaining a home.

You may need to notify the following people and organisations of your change of address:

- your family;
- your friends;
- your neighbours;
- your doctor;
- your health professional/s;
- your community nurse;
- your gardener or lawn mowing person;
- your cleaner or home help;
- Meals on Wheels and other community support services;
- Centrelink;
- Department of Veterans' Affairs;
- Australian Taxation Office;
- Medicare;
- your medical insurance company;
- your superannuation company;
- the roads and transport authority in your State or Territory (for your driver's licence);
- your local post office;
- your bank, building society or credit union;

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- your local office of the Australian Electoral Commission;
 - other aged care homes to whom you have applied (if you no longer wish to consider moving in there).

If you are a pensioner or part-pensioner and have made changes to your financial circumstances (such as by paying a bond), you should advise either the Department of Veterans' Affairs or Centrelink, who will update your income and asset details.

If your doctor can no longer visit you when you move, you should ask to have your medical history sent to your new doctor. It is also a good idea to document your current medical treatments and medication to discuss with the aged care home in the development of your care plan (see page 11).

You will need to organise financial matters, such as how fees and charges will be paid, or appoint a professional adviser or relative to take care of this. You may have included this in your resident agreement. You may wish to appoint a nominee to deal with the Department of Health and Ageing on your behalf.

Appointing a nominee to deal with the Department of Health and Ageing

The Department of Health and Ageing is the Australian Government organisation responsible for Australia's aged care system. This includes setting maximum rates for daily care fees and accommodation charges, and interest rates for accommodation bonds. If you are required to pay income-tested fees, the Department will write to you from time to time if your income-tested fees change as a result of a change in your income changes.

You can nominate someone to act on your behalf in dealings with the Department of Health and Ageing about your care fees. To appoint a nominee, you should complete an Appointment of a Nominee form, which is available from your aged care home, the Aged and Community Care Information Line on 1800 500 853 or can be downloaded from the Department's internet site at www.health.gov.au/acc.

This form is different from the one used by Centrelink and the Department of Veterans' Affairs to appoint nominees, which cover the needs of many different kinds of clients, not just those in aged care.



Personal preferences in the event of serious illness

Many people have particular preferences about their treatment during a serious illness. During this time, although difficult, it is important to ensure that your preferences are clearly communicated to those people who may need to look after your affairs.

You may wish to provide information about your personal preferences in the event of a serious illness to your aged care home when you move in. This may include arrangements you have made through a Living Will or Advance Health Directive

A Living Will or Advance Health Directive is a written statement of what health care you want should you no longer be able to take part in decisions about your medical treatment. This statement helps to communicate your wishes to those who care for you in the event that you are unable to express those wishes at the time.

Many people have preferences about their funerals and wills that are important to them and their family. It is important to have a Will so that your estate is distributed in the way you want. It is a good idea to provide your aged care home with the name of the executor of your will, so that the information will be available if it is needed, for example, to finalise accounts or repayment of any monies owing to you.

If you would like to discuss your preferences with your aged care home, please do so when you move in.

Moving In

When you move in, you should meet with the manager of your aged care home. Let the manager know if you need help to cope with the changes you are experiencing, and what sort of help you will need.

Your carer, your family or a friend should talk to the manager of your aged care home on your behalf if you experience memory loss or confusion. They may also wish to stay with you for a while as you familiarise yourself with your surroundings.

It can be helpful for you to arrange to arrive at a quiet period of the day when the staff have more time to assist you. Your aged care home manager can advise you when the best time is. Your aged care home will provide you with information about the types of support they may have available such as counselling or 'buddy systems' to help you settle in.

For help with any aged care matters, call the Aged and Community Care Information Line on 1800 500 853.



Living in your new aged care home

The following questions are frequently asked by new residents. If you have a question that is not answered here, please speak with the staff of your aged care home, or you may wish to contact the Aged and Community Care Information Line on 1800 500 853

What will happen with my money?

Your aged care home will encourage and help you to maintain control of your financial affairs. If you need help to manage your finances, you can arrange for someone you trust to do this for you. This is discussed in the Apply pdf.

Some aged care homes offer services such as direct debit, which allow you to pay your bills automatically. Alternatively, you may be able to have your pension directed to the home, so that your fees and other costs, such as chemist bills, can be deducted. All aged care homes have a staff member who looks after the financial affairs of the home. This person can help you to make the financial arrangements you need.

How long can I stay?

Your resident agreement should cover the circumstances in which you may have to leave. For example, if your care needs change significantly, and your aged care home cannot provide you with the care you require, it may be more appropriate for you to move to another aged care home. This will be discussed with you first.

How much personal privacy will I have?

Your right to privacy, dignity and confidentiality must be recognised and respected. Personal privacy is important and staff members must respect your wishes concerning your care and your belongings.

All aged care homes will have an area in which you can entertain your carer, your family and friends in privacy and with dignity. If you do not have your own room, you will be shown, or you can ask to be shown, where you will be able to meet people in this way. This may be a small sitting room, a screened off area or similar.

When you are finding an aged care home, you may wish to ask about each home's privacy policy and about private meeting spaces for residents.



Will I be able to change my room?

If you want to change rooms, ask the manager of your aged care home, who must consider such requests. The manager will have to consider factors such as whether an alternative room is available, the effect a move will have on other people in the home, and the terms of your agreement. Generally, you can only be moved at your request and with your agreement.

Will I be able to change aged care homes?

If, for example, you have accepted a vacancy in an aged care home but it wasn't necessarily your preferred choice, you can apply for other aged care homes and move in once a vacancy arises.

How will my health and personal care be managed?

Once you have moved in, the aged care home should discuss your care needs and any other needs you may have, such as your medication, with you, your carer, family member or friend. Staff will develop a care plan for you to make sure that all the staff are made aware of your needs.

You, your carer, family member or friend may be involved in developing this care plan. If you already have a care plan that has been developed by a community nurse or your doctor, bring it with you when you move in. If needed, your care plan may cover ways of caring for dementia.

You are entitled to choose your own doctor. If your current doctor does not visit your aged care home, you will be assisted in choosing a suitable alternative. The aged care home will help you to access any health care services you need, whether this is a doctor or another health care professional.

How will I get to my medical or other appointments?

Your aged care home will help you to arrange transport to your appointments, if you need it. However, the aged care home does not have to pay for your transport. If making transport arrangements is difficult, the aged care home may be able to organise for your health care practitioner to visit you instead.

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What will happen to my private health insurance?

Private health insurance does not cover fees and charges for your aged care home. However, your private health insurance will cover you for some or all of the costs of being a private patient in either a public or private hospital, and for a range of other items not covered by Medicare.

What will the food be like?

Your aged care home should offer you a varied, healthy and well-balanced diet that takes into account individual preferences and medical needs. Your aged care home should also take into account your dietary customs according to religious or cultural beliefs.

You or your carer, family member or friend should tell the manager of your aged care home what kinds of food you require, to ensure that your needs are met.

What activities will be offered?

You will be encouraged and supported to participate in as many interests and activities as possible. Aged care homes run programs of activities, both internal and community-based, catering for many interests. These are planned and carried out with input from you, your family and the community.

Many aged care homes have activity officers or therapists who will discuss your hobbies and interests with you. That staff member will then work out how your hobbies and interests can be continued in your new environment, if possible. She or he may also offer you other activities.

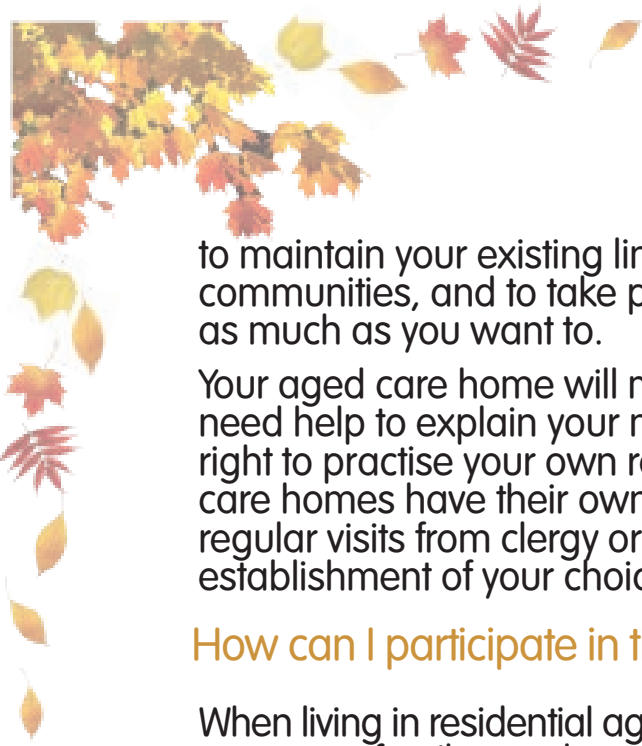
Will I still be able to vote?

Yes. Your rights as a citizen do not change when you live in an aged care home.

Will my culture, language and religion be taken into account?

Yes. All aged care homes are required to provide care that is appropriate to your cultural beliefs and customs.

Your aged care home will acknowledge and respect your cultural identity. Your aged care home will also encourage and help you



to maintain your existing links with cultural, national or social communities, and to take part in the social life of those communities as much as you want to.

Your aged care home will make arrangements for a translator if you need help to explain your needs and preferences. You have the right to practise your own religion wherever you live. Some aged care homes have their own chapel or quiet room. Others have regular visits from clergy or can arrange transport to the religious establishment of your choice.

How can I participate in the way the home is run?

When living in residential aged care you have the opportunity for you or your carer, family member or friend to participate in the decisions about the services that you receive. If you would like to be involved, ask your aged care home about the processes that have been established to ensure that you can have input into decisions about services.

This may include a process of consultation between you and the aged care home to discuss your own care and choices, or a forum that expresses the views of residents.

Can I spend time with family and friends?

You can leave your aged care home for up to 52 nights each year, whenever you want. This means that you can spend a night or nights with your carer, family or friends and you do not have to pay an additional fee. This is known as social leave. Your absence will only be counted as leave if you stay away overnight.

During this time, the Government will continue to pay the various subsidies associated with providing care to your aged care home. If you choose to take more leave than 52 nights, the Government will not pay a subsidy for that extra time, and your home may ask you to pay more.

What if I have to go to hospital?

Time in hospital isn't counted as part of your social leave, but you will be asked to pay your normal fees and charges during this time.

What if I am feeling lonely?

The Community Visitors Scheme provides a regular friendly visiting scheme for people in aged care homes who are isolated or lonely. As well as benefiting the residents, the visitors provide another

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outside presence in the home and so help create a more open environment. Staff in your aged care home can help you to contact a community visitor if you wish to.

Aged care homes also identify residents who they think would benefit from the scheme.

Your family members or others may also approach the home if they think you would benefit from companionship. The home will then contact a Community Visitors Scheme coordinator, who will match you with a suitable community visitor, taking into account such things as shared interests, hobbies, and the similarity of your backgrounds.

What support is there for residents to exercise their rights?

Advocacy services help you to exercise your rights through a process that may include information, representation, advice and support to you, your carer, your family or your friends. This is an independent, confidential service provided free of charge in each State and Territory.

Advocacy services promote your rights and can increase your involvement in decision-making processes affecting your life. These services may play a critical role in supporting you through a complaint process and advising you of your rights in negotiations with providers.

To contact an advocacy service near you, please call 1800 700 600

How do I make a complaint?

If you have a problem with your aged care home that cannot be solved with the staff and management at the home, the Aged Care Complaints Resolution Scheme will help you make a complaint and find a solution. Run by the Department of Health and Ageing, the scheme provides a free and accessible complaint system, overseen by an independent Commissioner for Complaints.

Anyone can make a complaint to the scheme about anything that may be a breach of an aged care home's responsibilities under the aged care legislation, and that affects a person who is, or was, receiving or eligible to receive Australian Government funded aged



care services. Complaints can be made face to face, by telephone or in writing, and you can request that your complaint be kept confidential or anonymous.

You can contact the scheme either by phone on 1800 550 552 (free call) or by mail at the Aged Care Complaints Resolution Scheme, GPO Box 9848 in your capital city.

What is the Aged and Community Care Information Line?

The Aged and Community Care Information Line, telephone 1800 500 853 (free call), is a single hotline number that provides you, your carer, your family or your friends with information on Australian Government funded residential aged care and community care.

The information line can also refer you to services in your region and one of 54 Commonwealth Carelink Centres around Australia.

What are Commonwealth Carelink Centres?

Commonwealth Carelink Centres offer a new way for all Australians to access information about community and other aged care services with a single phone call or a visit to a one-stop shopfront. The Centres act as a single point of contact, providing reliable information and guidance about community care services and aged care homes available in the local community.

Commonwealth Carelink Centres can provide information to older Australians, people with disabilities, their carers, family or friends, general practitioners, other health professionals and service providers or anyone else who may need this information. Anyone can use a Commonwealth Carelink Centre to access information, either by visiting a shopfront personally or by telephoning 1800 052 222 (free call).

Who can I contact for information about people with Dementia?

Alzheimers Australia is a consumer organisation that provides information, support, advocacy and education to people with dementia, family members and carers, as well as health professionals and the community.

There is an Alzheimers Association in every State and Territory which can be contacted through the Dementia Helpline 1800 639 331 (freecall) for anyone requiring support or assistance.

For help with any aged care matters, call the Aged and Community Care Information Line on 1800 500 853.



What help is there for Carers?

Carers play an invaluable role in the community, providing practical support to family, friends and the people for whom they care.

It can be a confusing and distressing time for carers when the person they care for moves into an aged care home. No matter how difficult caring for another person may have been, a carer may now feel a sense of loss and disorientation as his or her role changes. Feelings of sadness, grief, guilt, anger, relief, self-doubt, isolation and frustration are all quite common feelings for carers to have. It may be useful to suggest that your carer, friend or family member speak to a counsellor or other supportive person to share their feelings about the experience.

Your carer, friend or family member may not wish to relinquish their caring role after you move into residential aged care, and the truth is that their role will never be replaced. Carers may still continue to be involved in practical tasks and the aged care home may be able to advise them on how to continue caring.

Carers Australia is the national peak body for carers, with member associations in each State and Territory.

Commonwealth Carer Resource Centres are a part of the Carers Association in each State and Territory and provide carers with referral to services and practical written information to support them in their caring role.

The Australian Government provides the following assistance to help carers maintain their caring role:

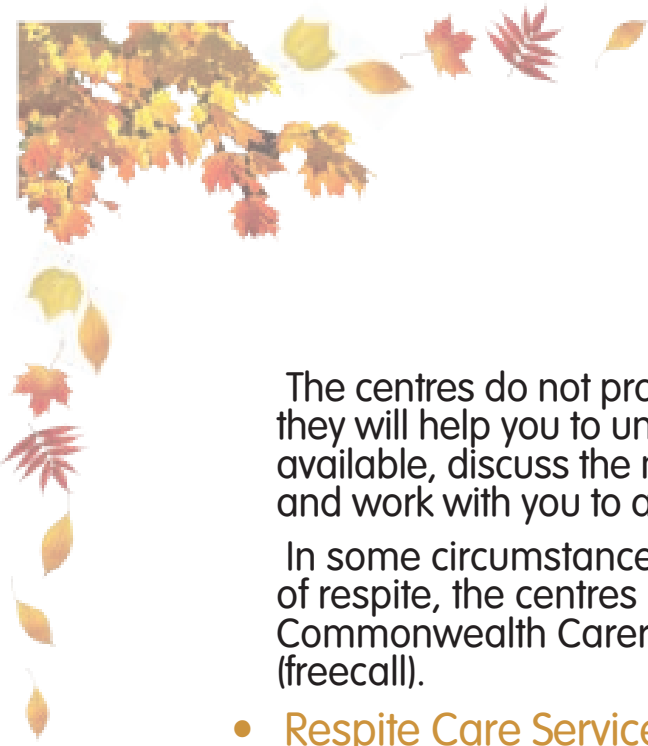
- **Commonwealth Carer Resource Centres**

There is a Commonwealth Carer Resource Centre in the capital city of each State and Territory. Each centre can provide you with information about available assistance. This information may include details about financial support, or useful names and contact numbers.

These Centres can also give you details of support groups and service providers in your local areas. They can also provide counselling, emotional support, education and advocacy services. You can telephone Commonwealth Carer Resource Centres on 1800 242 636 (free call).

- **Commonwealth Carer Respite Centres**

A network of 82 Commonwealth Carer Respite Centres across Australia focuses on helping carers with the many aspects of respite care, including the sometimes difficult decision to use respite care.



The centres do not provide direct respite care services. Instead, they will help you to understand the different types of respite care available, discuss the most appropriate form of respite for you, and work with you to arrange it.

In some circumstances, if you are unable to afford the cost of respite, the centres can help you pay. You can telephone Commonwealth Carer Respite Centres on 1800 059 059 (freecall).

- **Respite Care Services**

Respite care can be arranged in the home of the carer, at a day centre or in an aged care home, although the availability of services may vary from region to region. For further information on respite services in your area, telephone your regional Commonwealth Carer Respite Centre on 1800 059 059 (free call), Carers Australia or Alzheimers Australia.

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