



www.carerhelp.com.au

Transitioning to an Aged Care Home

Transitioning to an aged care home (also called a residential aged care facility) can be difficult. Here are a few suggestions which may be helpful:

- Try a respite stay first to see how everyone finds it before discussing a permanent transition. Respite means a short stay of 1-2 weeks to allow the carer to rest and take a break from caring responsibilities. A respite stay is usually an option for most home care support packages. This can be an opportunity to trial an aged care home and provide reassurance to the person before making a decision about permanent care.
- Bring in things that make it feel more like home – photos, bedding, personal items or even a special piece of furniture.
- Visit the person frequently (particularly early in the transition) and sit with them during some mealtimes with the other residents. Try and facilitate relationships between the person and other residents.

- Offer the person reassurance and emotional support.
- Do something special for yourself and reconnect with social groups you may not have had time for in your caring role.

“Many homes allow you to bring pets in and the people in the homes really like that. Leaving a notebook and pen in their rooms so visitors can say they called in is helpful too.” - Carer Quote



What is my role once they are in an aged care home?

You still will play a very important role in the person's care. There are many ways that you can continue to care for the person:

1. Provide the staff with as much information about the person as you can. Let staff know the likes and dislikes of the person. Are there certain things that help calm the person if they are agitated (e.g. particular music, photos, topics of conversation)? If they have dementia it is also helpful for the staff to understand their history, job, main life events, the names of important people, and also changes to behaviour that may occur.
2. Ensure that the person's advance care directive and/or plan is provided.
3. If you notice that the person is deteriorating over time, it is important to let staff know of those changes. Staff do not know your loved one as well as you and may not pick up on these changes.
4. You can still remain involved in care planning. Let the staff know you want to be informed of changes to the care plan and be consulted if possible before any major decisions.



5. If you want to, you can remain involved in care tasks such as feeding, personal care, grooming, or emotional support.
6. Develop a relationship with key staff members such as the nurses, or particular care workers who spend time with the person. Talk openly and honestly with these staff members. This will help with communication.
7. Be an advocate for the person you are caring for. If you are concerned or worried about their care, talk to the nurse or manager of the aged care home. It can also be useful to document important discussions and any outcomes in an email to confirm what has been agreed.

Complaints process

If you are concerned about the person's care and have tried talking to staff, the nurse, and manager and are still concerned then you may want to consider:

- The Older Person's Advocacy Network (OPAN) - view the [Self-advocacy toolkit](#) or call their Aged Care Advocacy Line on 1800 700 600.
- My Aged Care have a complaints process – call 1800 200 422 or visit [Making a complaint about aged care services on the My Aged Care website](#).
- The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission – call 1800 951 822 or [Lodge a complaint on the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission website](#).