

Actions to support older and prematurely aged people who have experienced, or been at risk of, homelessness

A guide for consumers

Draft 26/04/2019, text in blue is taken from the previously published action plans for consumers.

All older and prematurely aged people experience a high quality aged care system that ensures equitable access and outcomes and embraces their diverse characteristics and life experiences.

The Australian Government has published the Aged Care Diversity Framework and a series of action plans to help the aged care sector to better cater for the diverse characteristics and life experiences of older Australians. The Framework and action plans were developed following extensive community consultations.

This document captures the voices of people who have experienced, or been at risk of, homelessness, including those who have:

- Been without a place to stay and slept in their car or on the streets
- Lived in housing that is inadequate, like a caravan
- Lived in housing that is meant to be temporary, like a boarding house, shelter or hostel
- Lived somewhere they don't feel safe and secure, for example due to threats and violence
- Lived in a house that is overcrowded and where they have no privacy
- Been institutionalised as children or adults and experienced institutional abuse
- Lived with friends or family because they don't have a place of their own
- Rented a home that is too expensive, in poor condition, or not suitable for ageing
- Rented a home with no guarantee they can stay there as long as they like and who experience barriers to being able to secure a new rental and/or move to a new rental

It is intended both to help people who have experienced, or been at risk of, homelessness express their needs when speaking with aged care providers, and as a resource to support people working in aged care to understand the perspectives of people who have experienced, or been at risk of, homelessness.

I can access the services I need

I am supported and able to find, choose and access specialist aged care services for people experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness.

The information available on aged care services is provided to me in a way I can understand and accurately reflects the nature of the specialist services they can provide.

I can organise to meet aged care workers and discuss care and support options where I feel comfortable, safe and secure. This may not necessarily be where I am currently living and I may prefer to meet in another location, for example at another service location, in the park or in another public space such as a library or café.

People working in all parts of the aged care system understand my eligibility to access aged care services if I have experienced, or been at risk of, homelessness, including if I am under 65 or 50 for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

I am supported in identifying the full range of services I need, including housing and homelessness, financial, health, legal, mental health, police, public guardian/trustee, prison/justice/correctional, social and disability services.

I feel supported to change to another aged care provider if I want to.

I am able to access services where I am currently living

I am able to receive aged care services where I am currently living, for example, at a temporary accommodation location like a boarding house or hostel, in a caravan park, in a rental property, in public areas or outside on country.

My right to live somewhere in security, peace and with dignity is respected

Aged care services understand and promote international human rights law that recognises my right to adequate housing, interpreted broadly as the right to live somewhere in security, peace and dignity.

My specialist homelessness aged care service helps me to secure long-term, affordable, safe and appropriate housing where I can age in place.

When living in residential aged care, I have the right to privacy and to feel safe.

When living in residential aged care, I am able to continue participating in cultural events, activities and hobbies I enjoy. This includes drinking alcohol and smoking cigarettes if it can be done in a manner that doesn't put others at risk and is in line with any medical advice and/or legal requirements.

I feel respected

People working in all parts of the aged care system understand that "experiencing, or being at risk of, homelessness" describes a broad range of experiences (see introduction).

Aged care services understand that there are many reasons why people can experience, or be at risk of, homelessness, and judgements are not made of my experiences.

I am encouraged to involve my family of choice/case manager/advocate/trusted entity in my aged care journey.

The language used by aged care services and the way I am treated is respectful and recognises that not everyone has the same background and experiences or uses the same words to describe those experiences.

My aged care service asks me how they can best support me and encourages me to provide feedback on their service.

Aged care services understand that some things they do may trigger past traumatic memories for me and they will listen when I ask that things are done differently.