

I hope this message finds you well. As we move into Autumn, I wanted to take a moment to update you on some exciting news happening at our organisation.

Firstly, based on feedback from our client engagement survey last year, we have decided to increase our newsletter frequency from two to three times per year to four issues per year. This will allow us to better connect with you and keep you informed about the latest developments in our industry and the organisation.

I am thrilled to share with you that the Fair Work Commission has recently announced a 15% increase in salaries for aged care workers starting from 30th June 2023. This is fantastic news for our staff, who work tirelessly to provide exceptional care to our clients. We are committed to using every additional dollar given to us by the Federal Government to cover the cost of this increase and ensure that our aged care workers are properly compensated for their valuable contributions to our multicultural communities.

In addition, I am proud to announce that Multicultural Care has been successful in the recent tender for Care Finder program. This program delivers a national, face-to-face network of care finders who provide support for vulnerable older people to interact with My Aged Care, access aged care services and other relevant supports in the community. We have been funded to provide these services across South West Sydney only and aims to help those who have no one else to support them.



We are delighted to be able to offer this service to multicultural communities (Vietnamese and Hindi) and believe it will have a significant impact on those who need it most.

Lastly, I want to inform you that we will be relocating to new premises in June this year. Our relocation will not affect the services we provide to our clients. We are committed to delivering the same high-quality care that you have come to expect from us, and our new premises will allow us to do so in an even better way.

Thank you for your continued partnership with us. We remain committed to providing you with the best possible care and support, and we look forward to keeping you updated through our newsletter.

Stay warm this winter. Don't forget to get your flu shot to stay safe.

Tell us why you LOVE YOUR CARE WORKER!

Here at Multicultural Care, we love recognising the amazing work of our Bilingual Support Staff.

Our home care workers are the unsung heroes of our multicultural communities.

We need your help in sharing their stories. Tell us about your care worker by emailing the information below to marketing@mc.org.au.

Your name Your care worker's name What makes your care worker amazing?





Mcrews is going DIGITAL

You will be receiving future newsletters straight to your inbox!

If you want to keep receiving the print copy, please email your request via the email address below.











delicate SNAPSHOTS

Our Chinese, Italian and Greek Daycare Groups tried out the new bus service with a trip to the park, the bowling club and the RSL for morning tea and lunch. Everyone had a great day out, comfortably transported to each location.











medicare

Changes to the PBS

Information sheet for patients

Medicines cost less on the PBS

The Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) makes a wide range of medicines more affordable for Australians with a Medicare card.

Prescription medicines listed on the PBS cost less because the cost is shared between you and the Australian Government. The part you pay is called the patient co-payment. If you have a concession card, you can access the lowest PBS rate, called the concessional co-payment.

The general co-payment is now lower

The general co-payment is the maximum amount you pay for most medicines listed on the PBS. From 1 January 2023, the Australian Government reduced the general co-payment from \$42.50 to \$30 (plus any applicable premiums).

This means most PBS medicines now cost no more than \$30.

If you have a concession card, you'll pay \$7.30 for a PBS prescription.

Potential savings from the reduced general co-payment



If you take one PBS medication a month, you could save as much as \$150 a year.

If you're taking two or three medications a month, you could save between \$300 and \$450 a year.



A new discretionary discount

Since 1 January 2016, pharmacists have had the option to discount the co-payment by up to \$1.00. This means that pharmacists can reduce the co-payment cost for each script filled.

Since 1 January 2023, a new discretionary discount was introduced. Pharmacists and dispensing medical practitioners can choose to offer the new discount for PBS medicines that cost more than \$30 but less than \$45.60 (plus any applicable premiums).

Talk to your pharmacist about how to save on your PBS medicines or visit <u>health.gov.au/PBS</u>







Matthew is one of our BSS team members, looking after people with a disability and elders for in-home care. He's been with MC for over five years. Matthew used to work as an accountant, working long hours in front of the computer.

He says it's a big change with what he's doing now, interacting with people from different cultural backgrounds and initiating the conversation. "I'm talking much more than I expected," Matthew says. Read more about Matthew below.

What do you love about your job?

I like to provide help for people in need of our services and I love to see their happy faces. I like to give myself a challenge from time to time and see how I can overcome them eventually.

What do you look forward to the most on your day at work?

The appreciation and thank you for the work we did and the happiness of the client.

What do you think makes Multicultural Care different from other care service providers?

Our company values and the importance we place on diversity and cultural difference. We also value staff as great assets and treat them as family members.

FIGHTING FLU STARTS WITH YOU

2023 INFLUENZA VACCINES AVAILABLE

The INFLUENZA

vaccine is recommended
for people aged 6 months
and over and is **FREE** to those
most at risk from influenza
and its complications



Ask about the flu vaccine today

health.gov.au/flu









The AlayaCare Online Family Portal is a secure, government-compliant online portal for clients and their families to stay closely connected to home care providers and actively engaged in care planning.

WHO CAN USE IT?

The client receiving care or a loved one of the client.

WHAT DOES IT DO?

You can use the family portal to:

- view scheduled visits
- request visits or service changes
- check who your care team is
- view your latest invoices
- provides real-time updates
- view your care plan
- and more.



resources.alayacare.com.au/productupdates/introducing-family-portal

WHAT DO I NEED TO DO?

If you, your primary contact, or family member would like to participate in the trial, please contact Sandra Younes on (02) 9718 6199 or email TeamCoord_BSSRostering@mc.org.au so they can include your information. There are only 20 slots for participants in the trial.

HOW DO I ACCESS IT?

Via a computer or mobile device. As long as you or your family members have their own individual email address, then that's all you need.





It can be hard to admit we're lonely, even to ourselves. Many people are reluctant to acknowledge they're lonely, for fear it makes them seem flawed in some way.

But it's important to know that loneliness is not your fault and it's not a personal failure. Rather, it's a wider issue with society, in part due to our diminished sense of community in a society that values self reliance and autonomy.

Persistent loneliness is painful. Not only does it involve immense emotional suffering, it also has a direct impact on our life expectancy.

Although the psychological effects of loneliness are more widely known, what's often not talked about is the significant impact our social relationships have on our physical health.

Pioneering research by Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience - Julianne Holt-Lunstad combining over 148 studies, showed that people with stronger social relationships

had a 50% increased likelihood of survival over a given period of time, than those who have fewer social connections. In a nutshell, having more and better relationships predicted living longer.

What about lacking relationships, does that put us at risk?

You may have seen the news headlines that lacking social connections, carries a similar risk to smoking up to 15 cigarettes per day. This statistic comes directly from Julianne's research, which also suggests that social isolation is comparable (and in many cases exceeds) other well known risk factors such as excessive drinking, physical inactivity, obesity, air pollution and poor nutrition.

Importantly, research has linked social isolation and loneliness with a greater risk of: Heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, depression and dementia.

But here's the good news! There are things you can do!

The good news is, developmental psychologist and author of The Village Effect - Susan Pinker, elaborates on two important factors from the latest research that increase longevity:

These were close relationships (e.g. close friends you can rely on to support you), and social integration. Meaning how much you interact with people throughout your day.

Social integration includes both strong and weak bonds, such as the people you see on your daily walk, the quick chat you have at your local cafe, or the people who stop to pat your dog. It turns out the face-to-face interactions you have on a daily basis are also one of the strongest predictors of how long you'll live.

Face to face contact releases a whole cascade of neurotransmitters, one of which is the stress reducing hormone - oxytocin. Even making eye contact with someone can trigger the release of oxytocin.

Who would have thought a friendly hello could help lower your cortisol levels!

And it just so happens that your care managers are experts when it comes to keeping you connected to your community. Your wellbeing is our priority, so please get in touch to discuss your options for a wide range of meaningful activities we can organise for you.

You might even make some new friends along the way!

Watch Julianne's video on the effects of social isolation here.

https://www.youtube.com/watch? v=dMbRWNiauNE



Featured Product

Uccello Kettle

If you're one of the 3.6 million people in Australia who are living with arthritis or other similar conditions that affect your joints, simple things like using the kettle can be painful, frustrating and sometimes even dangerous.

Thankfully, there's an innovative kettle on the market, that's designed to make preparing your next hot beverage a breeze.

Say hello to Uccello. An award winning kettle that pours hot water safely and steadily every time!

Carefully designed to help people with restricted mobility and limited strength, it's great for anyone who struggles with making a hot beverage due to the weight of their kettle with boiling water.

- · Ergonomic handle for effortless tilt-to-pour action
- Auto shut-off with overheating protection
- An extra wide spout making it easy to fill
- · Removable stainless steel anti-scale filter
- Non-slip weighted base
- · Quiet boiling

If you could benefit from a Uccello kettle, speak to your care manager about how it can be directly linked to your identified care needs to improve or maintain safety at home.







Social prescribing (also known as community referral) was developed in recognition that the majority of factors affecting mental and physical ill health are social and economic, rather than medical. It's sort of like getting a prescription for a social remedy instead of being prescribed medication.

Although social prescribing is a pretty new idea in Australia, the UK's National Health Service have been using it as a way to tackle the global epidemic of loneliness for quite some time.

With one in five GP visits estimated to be for a reason likely to have a social cause rather than medical, social prescribing uses non-medical prescriptions that consider the whole person to make positive, meaningful changes to peoples health.

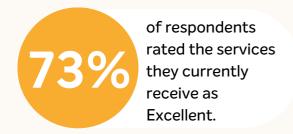
As well as needing friends, financial security and a safe home, it's also imperative to know we belong. Belonging gives us a sense of purpose and meaning, a feeling that we're part of something, and that we're connected to a group or community.

So whether you've been feeling lonely or isolated, or simply wanting to try something new, your care managers are here to help you connect with meaningful forms of social interaction, that might otherwise have seemed out of reach. Not only can they help you keep connected to your community and engaged with people, they are community connection experts!

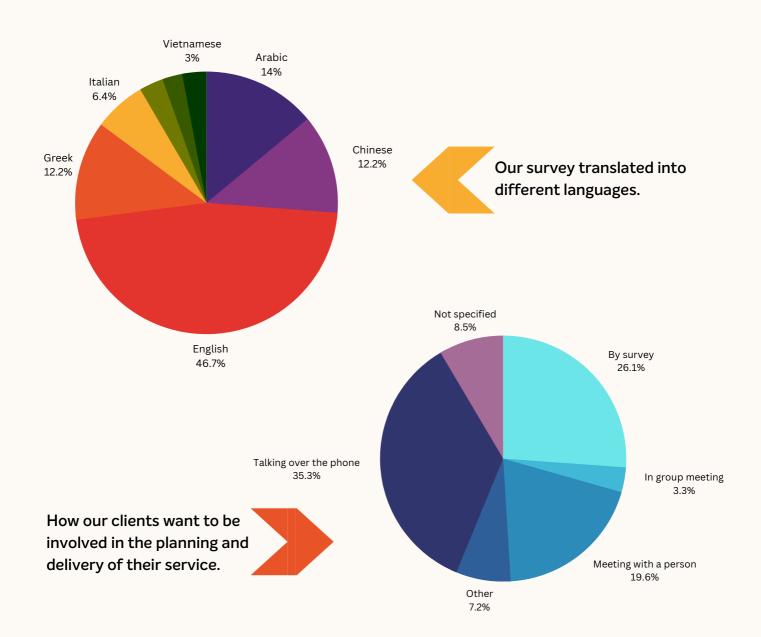
So think about the types of activities that bring you joy, to guide your conversation with us.

2022 Survey reveals SATISFACTION

In 2022, Multicultural Care conducted a consumer/participant satisfaction survey. The responses from 153 clients provided valuable feedback about our services and how clients want to be involved with the planning and delivery of their care. Here are some of the findings.



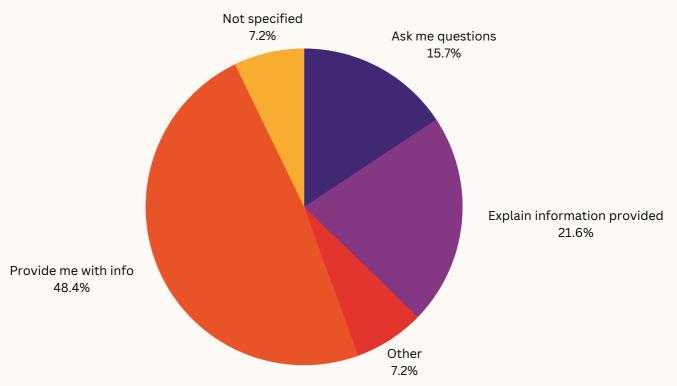




Survey results continued

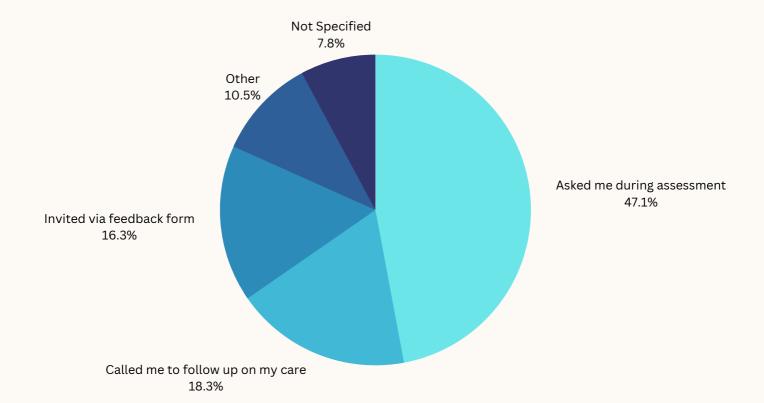


How does Multicultural Care ensure your care and services meet your needs and preferences?





How you have been involved in the planning, delivery and/or evaluation of your care and services?





If you've ever had the delightful experience of owning a pet, you know only too well the wonderful comfort and emotional support they provide. Offering an endless supply of love and snuggles, their companionship does wonders for our wellbeing.

Plus, numerous studies show they also make us feel good in ways that are backed by science.

Did you know, interaction with a dog can significantly decrease the inflammation producing stress hormone known as cortisol? And just a few minutes with a pet can lower your blood pressure.

Not only do they fill our hearts with love, they also make it stronger!

So if health problems or mobility issues have prevented you from caring for a pet, that doesn't mean you need to miss out on their calming, oxytocin inducing benefits.

Although pet therapy has been popular in hospitals and aged care facilities for some time, it's only recently that these services are now offering home visits.

So if you're looking forward to the stress busting, immune system boosting, benefits of time with a pet, speak to your care manager about booking a visit.

Although we don't endorse any particular organisation, we've listed a few offering home visiting services below.

Paws Pet Therapy **Therapy Dogs Delta Therapy Dogs**

Difficult conversations It's your choice

The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission expects Home Care providers to know quite a lot about you and they expect us to have conversations about some 'difficult' topics.

But we all know that there is never really a 'good' time to raise some of these topics, and everyone feels differently about them.

These topics might include:

- Memory & thinking problems, dementia, Alzheimer's Disease, etc
- Incontinence
- · Moods or feelings, depression, anxiety, etc
- · Powers of Attorney, Making a Will
- Respite care options
- Elder abuse
- Loneliness and feelings of isolation
- · Permanent residential care
- Advance care planning
- Palliative care
- · Funeral plans

You might prefer to avoid discussing these difficult topics if you feel uncomfortable, if you're not sure how to respond, or for cultural reasons which might prevent you from talking with people outside your family.

We will respectfully introduce these topics with you, but you can decide how you would like to manage each of them personally.

Of course, you don't have to wait for us to raise these questions!

Take some time to think things through, so you remain in control of what you want to communicate as your wishes and preferences for yourself.



Homes that are too hot or too cold are not ideal and can affect your health and wellbeing, according to researchers at the University of Adelaide. Their guide 'Thermal Comfort at Home: A guide for older South Australians' recommends making personal adjustments across the seasons, to be most effective in maintaining optimal thermal comfort for you.

As we transition from one season to another, we often experience extreme variations in the temperature. Older people tend to spend most of their time at home, so chat with your family and friends or call your care manager about preparing your home and yourself for the change in seasons ahead.

In cold weather:

- Be as active as you can to increase circulation and produce body heat
- Dress warmly. Layers are good. Keep hands, feet and head warm
- Eat warming food like soups and stews or take a warming drink
- Use knee rugs or blankets and place a mat under your feet
- Let the sunshine in during the day, and close curtains to keep the warmth in
- at night

In hot weather:

- Reduce activity
- Wear light clothing, ideally cotton and linen
- Avoid going out in the heat of the day. Arrange outdoor activities for early morning or after the sun goes down
- Drink plenty of water, and eat light and cold foods
- Refresh with cool showers or a damp flannel placed behind your neck
- Keep blinds and curtains shut to reduce the heat coming through the
- window

The guide gives lots of great tips for heating and cooling options and provides excellent information about how our personal health & wellbeing is connected to thermal comfort in our homes.

You can download the Guide from this website here.



We strive to deliver quality services and supports to all our consumers, but we know that sometimes things might go wrong. We encourage and welcome your feedback or complaints so we can do our best to improve how we do things.

We follow a process called Open Disclosure. This means that we must take action when something goes wrong and to include you (or the complainant on your behalf) in this process.

Open Disclosure means that we must:

- 1. Check that you are OK and respond quickly to provide the support you need,
- 2. Acknowledge the issue and apologise,
- 3. Find out and explain what happened,
- 4. Learn from the experience and make improvements.

We will be open and transparent, we will support you to participate in the conversation, and we will help you to make informed choices to get the best out of your care.

You have the right to include an advocate in the process if you would like to.

You can get support from the Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN) by calling 1800 700 600. You can also raise a concern or make a complaint by contacting the Aged Care Quality & Safety Commission on 1800 951 822.

The sooner we know that there is a problem, the sooner we can begin to resolve it, so please let us know if there is anything troubling you.

Source: AgedCareQuality.gov.au

Product Spotlight

The Shapes United range

If you haven't heard of adaptive clothing before, it's a range of specialised clothing that's been specifically designed for people with disabilities, including older people, that looks like stylish every day clothing.

If you've ever tried to get dressed while seated, or do up zips or buttons one handed, adaptive clothing can help with these challenges by making dressing easier and prolonging independence.

Fiddly buttons are replaced with magnetic buttons and velcro closures. Flat seams and the absence of irritating tags allow for more comfort on your skin. And the reduction of chunky metal zippers and binding waistbands, can make activities of daily living less stressful and painful.

Adaptive clothing can make life easier for anyone managing health conditions such as, dementia, arthritis, oedema, or hospital recovery.

Additional benefits include:

- Open sides or backs feature overlapping fabric panels in strategic areas that offer modesty, while still providing easy dressing as well as access to catheters and other medical devices
- Super-soft 100% cotton jersey to reduce aggravation for people with sensitive skin, eczema or sensory issues

If you could benefit from adaptive clothing, speak to your care manager about how it can be directly linked to your identified care needs to improve your ability to independently maintain activities of daily living.

Ph: 1300 893 826 https://www.theshapesunited.com/









The Aged Care Quality Standards require all providers to understand the environment you live in, and to help identify any potential risks or hazards to your safety and the safety of people working in your home.

During our first assessment with you, we'll conduct a Home Safety Review which might include us checking out some or all of these items:

- Your home location and general surroundings & neighbourhood;
- · Bushfire or flood risks:
- Security spare keys, key safe &/or medication locked-box location & codes, outdoor lighting, etc;
- Access & parking, pets, gates, pathways, steps, etc;
- Trip hazards in the house power cords, carpet/rugs, furniture placement, slippery tiles,
- Safety & functionality of your everyday appliances for you or support workers to use including vacuum cleaner, microwave, fridge, kettle, washing machine/dryer, etc;
- Lighting throughout the house and functioning smoke detectors;
- Adequate space in the bathroom, and safety of fixtures such as shower, toilet and grabrails;
- Height of chairs and bed to be suitable for safe sitting & standing;
- Specialised aids and equipment in place, or required for safety and health;
- Other risk factors such as smoking, excessive clutter, pests, secured weapons, etc.

If there are any concerns, we can work with you to find solutions that will work for you and your situation. Sometimes your home care package may assist with funding the solution, and other times, you may need to cover the costs personally. Either way, we're here to help you address safety concerns in and around your home.

Any risks or concerns will be included in your care plan so that we can work in partnership with you to improve the safety and functionality of your home and environment.



Safety and security are important to us all, and this is no different as we age.

We encourage all our consumers to regularly review their own home situation and to be mindful of health and mobility changes that might have an impact on personal safety.

We'll work with you to assess this more formally, but there's a lot you can do to be proactive and plan ahead to avoid potential problems in the future. We're here to help you work through the challenges of accepting help with your health, independence or mobility, so that you can adapt and find new ways to stay in control as much as possible.

Sometimes, these changes may also impact on others, such as family carers or paid support workers. We actively encourage people involved in your care to let you know if they've noticed something, and also advise your care manager so they can work with you to address the issue.

The Department of Health & Aged Care produce a list of items and services that are approved under a home care package. Safety for you and your care team is a priority for package funds, but it's important to note that not all items or supports automatically qualify.

The process for safety equipment and items may require some assessment from a qualified professional, such as an Occupational Therapist, Physio, Speech Therapist, GP, nurse, and so forth - depending on the nature of the issue.

If recommendations are made, we'll work with you to decide how the equipment, product or service can be paid for.

The dementia friendly home app

With 70 per cent of people with dementia living in the community, the Dementia Friendly Home app provides carers and family members with ideas to make a home more accessible for people living with dementia.

Making the home more dementia-friendly can allow the person to stay in their own home, enjoy their regular lifestyle activities and remain engaged with their community for longer.

Using interactive 3D game technology, the app places you in a 'virtual home' where you can discover how to make a home more suitable for people living with dementia.

You can then explore each room at your own pace and interact with objects, which allows you to immediately discover the impact a simple modification may have on improving the quality of the home environment.

One of the most popular features of the app is when you tap on a question mark, the pop-up tells you what you can do in that area of the home to make it dementia friendly.



Many of the app suggestions are small, inexpensive ideas that are easy to implement, such as labelling cupboard doors with pictures. As well as more significant changes, ranging from motion sensors to floor and wall coverings.

Based on the 10 Dementia Enabling **Environment Principles**, the app shows how a well-designed care environment can enable people living with dementia to make the best of everyday life.

Available for tablets and mobile phones, you can download the app via the link below:

https://www.dementia.org.au/inform resources/technology/dementiafriendly-home-app



Occupational Therapists are an important and highly regarded Allied Health professional in the lives of many of our consumers. OTs are regularly called upon to conduct in-home assessments and to make professional recommendations for aids, equipment, modifications and other solutions to issues and risks in the home.

Your home care package will pay for the cost of the Occupational Therapist Home Assessment, and may cover, or contribute to, the cost of their recommended solutions.

We will generally require the following information from the OT:

- photos, measurements and diagrams of areas of concern,
- options for hiring of some items or equipment, if applicable,
- suggestions for lower-cost and creative solutions to mitigate any risks (these may be temporary solutions while funding is being arranged, or alternative solutions to enable more efficient use of funds in general).

The OT report doesn't guarantee that your home care package can or will fund all the recommendations made by the OT. There are a number of factors that must be considered, and we'll work with you to make the most appropriate decisions for your care and support.

Any approved spending needs to relate to your assessed care needs and be documented in your care plan, so we will update your care plan if required.

If you have any concerns about your safety at home or the suitability of your environment, Multicultural Care has a designated OT. An appointment can be arranged through your Care Advisor.



If you love exploring new places and haven't heard of Heygo yet, you're in for a treat!

Recognising that for many people hopping on a plane half-way around the world is out of reach, the founders wanted to find a way for people to keep exploring, even when an injury or disability means travelling is harder.

So they created Heygo, a website where professional tour guides from over 100 countries live stream free tours, as they walk, talk and interact.

With over 1280 locations and counting, the world's wonders (and countless hidden gems) are yours to choose from. And with tours starting almost every hour, there's sure to be something no matter what time of day or night.

Here's just a few examples of some of their most popular tours:

- Millions of Flowers in the Keukenhof Gardens in Amsterdam
- An evening walk in the Canadian Rockies
- Jack the Ripper and Victorian times
- Montmartre, Paris Home of the Artists
- Wandering through Adelaide's enchanting Botanic Gardens

To get started you'll need a computer, tablet or phone connected to the internet and a free account: https://www.heygo.com/

Need help getting setup to use Heygo? Speak to your care manager about booking a free digital mentoring volunteer with Inclusee: https://inclusee.org.au/



This year, as part of their planning for the new Support At Home program in 2024, the Department of Health & Aged Care conducted an online survey. More than 1,700 people, including many older Australians, their informal carers and families, providers and professionals completed the survey asking what kinds of services should be included in the program.

Respondents asked for more clarity and clear guidance on what can be included with inhome aged care services and who can deliver the services. They also want reassurance that consumers will not receive fewer services and less funding under the new program.

The survey asked respondents to rank the most important services to them. There were some differences in priorities between consumers and their families and informal carers.

	Older Australians (consumers)	Family & informal carers
1	House cleaning – heavy	Assistance with self-care
2	House cleaning – light	House cleaning – heavy
3	Assistance with self-care	House cleaning – light
4	Allied Health	Respite
5	Home maintenance	Nursing - high care
6	Transport	Assistance with medications.

Consumers would like more help and information to understand some of the service terms described in the service list, including:

- digital monitoring education and support
- home maintenance
- digital technologies
- specialised supports
- home modifications
- GEAT (non-digital) (Goods, Equipment, Assistive Technology)

You can read the full survey report by clicking this link, or ask us for assistance if you need it.



DID YOU KNOW?

MyAgedCare has a list of organisations, services and tools that can help you plan your finances for aged care.

There are many aspects to consider when planning your finances for aged care. It can be quite confusing especially if you don't know where to start. We suggest getting independent financial advice beforehand. Visit our website to learn more.

Fee WEBINAR

HOME CARE PACKAGES: WHAT'S CHANGED?

DATE: 1pm-2pm AEST, Tuesday 18 April 2023

AUDIENCE: Older Australians, carers and families

REGISTER NOW >

OPAN.ORG.AU/EVENTS/HOME-CARE-PACKAGES-CHANGES





Contact us

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New address

16-24 Elsie Street Burwood 2136