

Considerations When Choosing a Home Care Provider

There are many organisations providing home care services. These include a mix of not for profit organisations (charitable, religious or community-based providers), and for profit providers. Organisations must be an approved provider by the Australian Government in order to deliver subsidised home care packages.

1. Think about what you need

Before you look for a provider, think about what is important to you living in your own home, how you want to live your life, the sorts of things that you would like help with, and how often. The [Live Well Longer Planning Guide](#) can help with this.

2. Finding a provider

The [find a service](#) tool on the government's My Aged Care website can help you locate approved providers in your local area (or ring 1800 200 422). The [Aged Care Guide](#) also provides a directory of home care providers, including private agencies if you are looking for unsubsidised care.

3. Questions to ask a potential provider

- What services do they provide? Can they provide the services you want?
- Can you customise your own support, or do they provide a set list of services?
- What choice and control will you have over the services you receive, who provides them, and when they are delivered?
- Will they broker services on your behalf from other providers of your choice?
- Are they flexible if you need to change or cancel your support at short notice?
- Will support be provided by the same person each time?
- What happens when your support worker is on leave, or doesn't turn up?
- What's their reputation – speak with friends, seek word of mouth.
- What experience have they had with people with needs similar to yours – eg people with dementia or cognitive difficulties? People from the same cultural or language background?
- What training/skills/experience do staff have? How are they selected? Do they have police checks?
- How do they ensure services are of a good quality?
- What if you are not happy with the service – what is the complaints process?
- How long have they been a home care provider?
- Is there after hours or 24-hour contact in case of an emergency?
- What will it cost – what are the hourly rates during the week/ afterhours/on weekends/public holidays? How much will they charge for coordination or case management? How much for administration?

- (if you have a subsidised Home Care Package) – will they negotiate the basic daily fee? Can you privately purchase additional services – how much will this cost? If you want to move to another provider, are there any exit fees?
- Do they employ their own staff, or do they work through another agency?
- How is your care plan developed – who is involved, what say will you have, how will you or your family be involved?