

Newsletter

HOME CARE HQ



LIFE STORIES GIFT MAKER



WHAT'S INSIDE

- HOME LIBRARY SERVICES
- FREE COMPANION CARDS
- PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT
- HALF PRICE TAXI FARES
- SUPPORT FOR CARERS

Create life stories with Memwah's video gift maker

Memwah is a video gift maker that uses the power of storytelling to turn a loved one's advice, memories and life lessons into a meaningful video memoir.

If you've ever thought about preserving your Life Story (or gifting one to someone special), it can get overwhelming when you start to think about all the tools and software you might need to get started.

Luckily, all you need is a computer with a webcam, and Memwah does all the hard work for you - without the need to learn complicated video skills.

Whether it's celebrating important events, or turning those boxes of unsorted photos into a story to remember, you can start creating your video in just 3 easy steps:

- 1 Memwah guides you to select the questions you and/or your family would like to answer to set up your story
- 2 Choose your first question and hit record. Then once you've finished recording you can review and retake as many times as you like
- 3 After answering and recording the questions you've chosen, you simply click a button and within a minute Memwah will compile all the answers into a final video

Your video story is now ready to download as your personal keepsake or to share with family and friends.

Creating your first short video is free. Visit their website to find out more:

<https://memwah.com.au/life-stories>

Email: support@memwah.com.au



Have you heard about home library services?

Attention bookworms! Struggling to get to the library these days?

Home library services offer a FREE delivery service that brings the library to the comfort of your own home!

In a world where constant distractions are shortening our attention spans, reading can help improve your ability to concentrate and focus. Not to mention other fantastic benefits such as:

- Providing a source of inspiration and guidance
- Challenging the brain
- Assisting with unwinding and relaxing
- Enhancing knowledge

Plus, home library services can often include other goodies too:

- Magazines
- CD audio books
- DVDs
- Large print books
- Music CDs
- Materials in languages other than English

Simply call your local library to find out if this service is available in your area, or ask a family member or your care manager to do a Google search for "home library service" and include the name of your suburb/town or city.

We've listed some examples of the larger home library services in each state below:

[NSW](#) ~ [VIC](#) ~ [QLD](#) ~ [WA](#) ~ [SA](#) ~ [TAS](#) ~ [ACT](#) ~ [NT](#)



The benefits of a home medicines review

Did you know you can have your medications reviewed by a qualified pharmacist, right in the comfort of your own home?

The home medicines review program is designed to help people get the best from their medicines and help you reduce your chance of any mishaps. For example, some medicines can have serious interactions with other medicines.

During the review, the pharmacist will look at everything you're taking, including your prescription medicines, over the counter medicines such as pain relief tablets, and also any vitamins or supplements.

As well as advising which medicines are OK to take together, they can also give you advice on what to do if you miss a dose.

A home medicines review can also be helpful if:

- You have concerns about your medicines
- You're being cared for by more than one doctor
- You'd like to know how to correctly store your medicines
- You're concerned about side effects
- You're taking multiple medicines
- You've recently been in hospital and started taking new medicines



To book a home medicines review, you'll need a referral from your GP to arrange a visit from your local pharmacist. After reviewing your medicines and answering any questions you have, your pharmacist will then send a report back to your GP, who will provide you with a Medication Management Plan, which can be shared with your entire healthcare team.

Home Medicines Reviews are fully funded by the Australian Government and are available in all states and territories.

Source: <https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/home-medicines-review>

My Aged Care: Nominating a representative

Everyone who receives aged care services from the Commonwealth Government must be registered with My Aged Care. When it comes to communicating with the My Aged Care contact centre, there are some strict rules in place to protect your privacy and autonomy, so they can only discuss your situation with you personally, or with a person who has authority to speak on your behalf.

What can a representative do?

- Give information to My Aged Care, including talking to Assessors and service providers on your behalf,
- Get information about your progress in My Aged Care,
- Be the first point of contact (Primary Contact) for My Aged Care,
- Make decisions about aged care assessment and referrals for services,
- Receive email notifications and correspondence from My Aged Care.

There are two types of Representatives for My Aged Care:

1) Regular Representative

You can consent to allowing someone to speak and act for you, and you can nominate them as a primary contact so My Aged Care will call them directly when required. You need to speak directly with My Aged Care to set this up, and you can change or cancel your representative at any time.

2) Authorised Representative

When a person cannot consent to appointing their own representative, there needs to be documented evidence that someone else is legally appointed to speak to My Aged Care on their behalf. There will need to be proof that someone else can legally represent you, such as Guardianship, though the types of documents vary from State to State.

For information about nominating a representative, you can call My Aged Care on 1800 200 422 or visit:

<https://www.myagedcare.gov.au/my-aged-care-representatives>



**Nominating
Representatives**

Aquapaint art and reminiscence therapy for people with dementia

While painting is a proven activity to bring comfort and joy to people of all ages, as people progress through dementia, dexterity challenges can make it difficult to continue.

This is where the award winning Aquapaint range can help.

Aquapaint is a delightful painting activity that empowers independence and meaningful engagement.

This unique and creative dementia product helps to promote a sense of achievement and pride, as well as helping to stimulate conversation, stories and memories.

Simply brush water onto the canvas to reveal a vibrant image, without needing to worry about painting outside the lines. No matter where the brush lands on the canvas, the end result is a beautiful piece of art.

Then once the painting is finished and the water dries the image will magically disappear, ready to be used again and again for endless fun!

Designed for people in the later stages of their dementia journey, each set of Aquapaint comes with five different images.

Watch the video below to see a demonstration of how it works:

<https://vimeo.com/591518376>

Available in Australia from:

<https://activitiesforcare.com.au/product-category/arts-crafts/>

Office: 1300 001 357

Mobile: 0413 153 277



Aged Care Assessments explained

Assessment of care needs is the foundation of our home care system. Assessment occurs at many different points along a person's care journey and sets the scene for how the service system responds.

The outcomes of assessments directly influence the amount of funding that is allocated to an individual, and directly influences the type and frequency of supports and services that they receive.

Despite its importance, it is also something that can cause stress, frustration and sometimes even conflict between providers and consumers.

In this article, we will go through some of the key aspects of assessment, to help explain why it occurs, when it needs to occur, and how it can help you to receive the supports and services that will most help you to live independently at home.

Comprehensive Assessment from Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT)

How does this occur: A referral to be assessed to receive aged care services must be made via My Aged Care. There is usually a waiting time of between 6-8 weeks. The older person may be referred for several different service types, so contact with My Aged Care might need to occur on several occasions.

Who are they: ACAT assessors are experienced clinicians, usually with a background in nursing, allied health, or social work.

What do they do: ACAT clinicians complete a very comprehensive document called the National Screening & Assessment Form (NSAF). It contains questions that identify the older person's physical capability, medical conditions, psychosocial factors, cognitive and behavioural factors, physical environmental factors and restorative needs.



**Aged Care
Assessments**

Aged Care Assessments explained

ACAT clinicians often use other assessments known as Supplementary Assessment Tools, that are designed to focus on particular issues, for example, continence, carer stress, memory and cognition, falls risks, pain, and depression.

Where: This is usually done in the consumer's home. The consumer is encouraged to invite a family member, carer, or other person who can support them with answering the questions. Occasionally the assessment is conducted in hospital, but the preference is in the consumer's home.

When: The assessment typically occurs when there has been a noticeable change in the day-to-day functioning of an older person. This might be small and subtle, or it might be sudden and drastic.

Either way, the same assessment will take place – the only things that are different will be how quickly it occurs and the outcome of the assessment in terms of approved services and supports. The greater the need, the more funding and supports are recommended by ACAT.

What happens next: Based on the assessment and current situation for the consumer, the ACAT clinician will develop a My Aged Care Support Plan with recommendations about how the aged care system can begin to best meet the person's assessed care needs.

The My Aged Care Support Plan reflects the person's strengths and abilities, areas of difficulty, and the supports and services that will best meet their needs and goals. This will include the consideration of formal and informal services as well as reablement and/or restorative pathways to help the person regain some of their previous capability and function.

When you are assigned your home care package, we use your My Aged Care Support Plan to start the conversation with you about how to use your package funds to meet your needs.



**Aged Care
Assessments**

Are you eligible for a discounted taxi card? 🚗

Did you know most States and Territories offer a discounted taxi program for eligible residents?

These taxi programs offer up to 50% discount on your fare for people who need extra help to get around in their community due to issues with mobility. The State Government pays for half your fare through the system, and you pay the remaining half to the driver.

Although eligibility varies from State to State, most require you to obtain a medical certificate as proof that you have a severe or permanent disability, such as:

- Mobility or functional disability
- Epilepsy
- Visual impairment
- Cognitive impairment
- Speech or hearing impairment



Can my home care package pay for my portion of the taxi fare?

You can access taxi vouchers through your package funding OR through a state-based government program. However, both services are unable to be used for the same trip. Your care plan will need to specify the reason for the trip, such as visiting your doctor, or attending social activities. It's best to chat with your care manager to see what applies for you.

If you're not eligible for a half-price taxi card, then your package may be able to pay for taxi fares on your behalf, if it meets your assessed care needs.

For more information on applying for your taxi card, please visit the following links or ask your care manager or others for assistance:

[NSW](#) ~ [VIC](#) ~ [QLD](#) ~ [WA](#) ~ [SA](#) ~ [TAS](#) ~ [ACT](#) ~ [NT](#)

Prepare yourself for our Quality Standards Review

The Aged Care Quality & Safety Commission carries the responsibility of checking and auditing every home care provider to make sure they are meeting all of the requirements of the Aged Care Quality Standards.

Part of their role is to speak directly to consumers and their representatives to hear about your experiences of receiving care at home. When we're contacted to participate in an audit, we will notify you in writing, and give you a chance to provide your feedback to the Quality Auditors via phone or by completing an online survey.

It can be helpful to think about and prepare some of your answers in advance, so here is a sample of the questions they might ask you:

- What type of home services do you receive?
- Do staff treat you with respect?
- How often do the staff come on time?
- Do you participate in making decisions about what services are provided?
- Is the information that you are given about services easy to understand?
- Do staff follow up when you raise things with them?
- Do you trust the service provider to do the right thing by you?
- Do the services help you to live life the best you can?
- What would you say was the best thing about the service(s) you get?
- How could the services be improved?

The responses are completely confidential and will not be shared with us. Every piece of feedback helps to build improvements for us, and across the whole aged care sector, so we warmly invite you to participate in this valuable feedback opportunity.

Source: Australian Government, Aged Care Quality & Safety Commission



Introducing Carer Gateway

Anyone who is looking after someone with disability, a medical condition, mental illness, or an older person with care needs can access the Australian Government's Carer Gateway services.

Using Carer Gateway services will not affect services delivered through My Aged Care, or any State or Territory carer services or Carer Payments you may receive.

Each region in Australia has a Carer Gateway service provider funded by the Australian Government, to make it easier to find help.

When you call Carer Gateway, a trained worker will be available to talk with you and help you to find services and support available in your area to meet your needs.

Carers can get a wide range of help:

- Counselling – you can talk to a counsellor if you are feeling stressed, anxious, sad or frustrated;
- Peer support – you can meet other people who care for someone and share stories, knowledge, and experience;
- Respite care – if you get sick or hurt and you cannot look after someone, emergency respite services can look after the person you care for while you get better;
- Carer Directed Support packages – you may be eligible for a range of practical supports to help you in your caring role;
- Coaching – you can talk to a professional coach to identify personal goals and create a plan to reach these goals;
- Skills courses – you can learn new skills in caring for someone and yourself.

You can contact Carer Gateway for assistance and support via the details below:

Ph: 1800 422 737

<https://www.carergateway.gov.au/>



**Carer
Gateway**

Are you eligible for a Companion Card?

If you have a significant and permanent disability and need a carer to help you attend events, you may be eligible for the Companion Card.

The Companion Card program is designed to support social inclusion for people with disabilities (including older people living with disability) and their carers. It allows you to attend a venue or event with a companion, who then receives a complimentary ticket. Just like a 2-for-1 deal!

Venues and events can include things like:

Tours, arts centres, parks, sporting venues, swimming pools, cinemas, museums, public transport, theatres and cultural events. Think of all the health, social and wellbeing benefits of getting out and about and enjoying activities in your local community!

To be eligible for a companion card, you'll need to demonstrate you have a significant and permanent disability, and a lifelong need for high-level attendant care support to attend events and venues.

Examples of eligibility requirements:

- Significant and severe conditions that cannot be controlled by medication or other treatment/intervention
- Cognitive issues where impairment is significant
e.g. advanced dementia
- Parkinson's disease – with mobility problems
- Mobility, communication, decision making

For more information on applying for your companion card, please visit the following links or ask your care manager for assistance:

[NSW](#) ~ [VIC](#) ~ [QLD](#) ~ [WA](#) ~ [SA](#) ~ [TAS](#) ~ [ACT](#) ~ [NT](#)



Introducing Arthur Bear for dementia reminiscence therapy

It's well known that personalised music can have a positive impact on the quality of life of people living with dementia. With many [research studies](#) showing music therapy to be effective in improving depression, agitation and cognitive functioning, it's now one of the most widely adopted, non-pharmacological interventions.

And one product that's making music therapy more delightful than ever, is [Arthur the musical bear](#).

Comforting and engaging, Arthur harnesses the power of reminiscence therapy to bring joy to people living with dementia.

Designed to be as simple as possible, the bear has only one external control to start or stop the music playing. Simply squeeze his paw and your playlist begins.

Other benefits include:

- Made from incredibly soft terry cloth, for sensory stimulation
- Eyes are embroidered for enhanced safety, instead of using buttons
- Plays music in sequential order or shuffle mode
- Built-in MP3 player to upload your own songs
- 4GB capacity - over 1000 songs!
- Rechargeable

Arthur is now available in Australia via the website below:

Ph: 0490 344 606

<https://dementiashop.com.au/products/arthur-bear>

If you've ever wanted to create a playlist but aren't sure how to get started, Playlist for Life can help:

<https://www.playlistforlife.org.uk/>



What is Person Centred Care?

Everyone receiving home care supports has the right to be safe, treated with dignity and respect, and receive high quality care and services. Person-centred care supports you to be an active partner in your care and to shape the services and supports around you as an individual.

You can help us to ensure your care is tailored and personalised by telling us about your goals and which relationships and activities are important to you – so you can live the life you choose.

To provide person-centred care, home care providers are expected to:

Talk with you about your preferences

Person-centred care involves lots of conversations about you and your preferences. We will assist you to be as independent as possible, support your wishes and keep your connections to people and community.

Support you to take risks

Dignity of risk is a big part of person-centred care. This means you have choices and should be supported to take risks. If something you want to do involves risks, we will help you to understand the risk and work with you to manage the risk.

Work with you and your representatives or family

You may like to have others, such as a family member, friend, or representative involved in discussions and assessments which inform your care plan and services. Understanding and respecting each person's individuality, diversity, culture and preferences is paramount to creating a care plan that truly meets your care needs.

The Quality & Safety Commission have created this short video to help explain Person Centred Care in more detail:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9icUIM-vM3k&t=1s>



Image source: CDCS - Culturally Directed Care Solutions

The benefits of home visiting geriatricians

Did you know that some geriatricians now do home visits that can be bulked billed via Medicare?

Geriatrician vs GP

A geriatrician is a specialist doctor who has completed at least 3 years of training in geriatric medicine after becoming a doctor. They specialise in medical care for older adults over the age of 65, who may have complex health needs.

So if the idea of lengthy wait times at a medical clinic or hospital sounds daunting, a home visiting geriatrician might be a convenient alternative. This is especially so for people living with dementia, where a sudden change in environment such as a noisy or busy waiting area can quickly cause agitation and distress.

Benefits of home visiting geriatricians include:

- Receiving the care you need in the privacy and comfort of your own home
- Reduced chance of agitation and wandering in people with dementia
- Not needing to travel to and from your destination
- Less stress for people with mobility issues
- Reduced exposure to viruses
- No sitting in waiting rooms!

To find a home visiting geriatrician nearby, you can search Google for: "home visiting bulk billing geriatrician" including the name of your local area. Or ask your care manager for assistance.



Aged Care Quality Standards: Taking risks and living the life you choose

In a previous newsletter, we introduced Standard 1. This Standard ensures that you are supported to make decisions about how you live your life, even if there might be some risks involved.

As your home care provider, we are expected to deliver services that help keep you safe from foreseeable harm, but importantly, we must also safeguard your right to exercise choice and independence.

The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission expect us to use ongoing assessments to identify where risks might be present, and then make sure you fully understand potential consequences of those risks. From there, you have a choice about whether you accept the risks and what you want to do about them.

You may be asked to complete a Dignity of Risk form which involves discussing and documenting the issues, benefits and consequences of the risk. If the risk just impacts on you, then you may be supported to make that choice for yourself. However, if the risk impacts others and creates an unsafe working environment, then we may not be able to send workers for that particular task or service.

Whatever the risk or the potential outcome, your care manager is expected to help to find alternatives and to communicate with you, and others involved in your care, about the process.

It's important to work in partnership with your care manager to reach a mutually satisfactory outcome.

You can ask for assistance from a family member or an advocate if you need any support.

