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LIVING INDEPENDENTLY



Everyone expects to live independently at home and take part in the things they love. For seniors, this is a time in life to enjoy family, socialise and spend time in the garden.

For many seniors though this expectation can fall short if they need support to undertake daily household activities.

Whilst seniors have received support from their respective government agencies with these tasks, the Federal Government's new **Consumer Directed Care (CDC) Home Care Packages**, formally launched across the nation on 1 July, will see seniors more empowered to choose the type of care and support they are looking for and the way they want their services delivered.

To help navigate this transition, the government has created the **My Aged Care** website and contact centre (1800 200 422, Monday-Saturday). Together they offer valuable information on aged care for seniors, their families, friends and carers. Read the website or contact the call centre for information concerning the types of care services available, eligibility, costs and more.

Seniors are also encouraged to visit **Home Care Today**, a comprehensive guide to 'new choices in home care'. The site, an initiative of COTA Australia (the peak national organisation representing the rights and interests of older Australians), is governed by a Steering Committee, and offers a comprehensive guide to:

- What is home care?
- Planning your care
- Finding home care
- Your rights and responsibilities
- Asking the right questions.

Care Connect, Chief Executive Officer, Paul Ostrowski "The types of services a senior can now access will depend on their individual needs. Home Care Packages put each person in the 'driver's seat' providing greater choice, flexibility and control over what services they think will meet their goals and needs.

"Seniors now get to co-design their services and supports with their service provider. We believe with greater control will come better outcomes and for many, greater independence for longer.

"We welcome these changes to government policy as it aligns perfectly with our central purpose - that of supporting people to live their life, *their way*.

"Unlike most organisations in the sector, we don't provide direct care services. Rather, we work with each person *at the start of their journey* to support them in articulating their goals and aspirations. From there we work in partnership with the person (and/or their family/carers) to develop a Support Plan. With a plan in place, we can then help each person select the right services and providers to meet their needs. And as we work with hundreds of quality-approved service providers we can also negotiate the best price for the people we serve, providing them also with peace of mind about quality and safety.

"We believe that a consumer-directed care approach is the *only way* forward and we are fully committed to it. We know that overall this shift will provide a far better result for each person and their families/support networks. It has been a rewarding journey and one that we are very proud of."

Care Connect is a leading in-home care provider in New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria, supporting people to live independent lives at home and in the community. Care Connect provides information, advice and guidance to assist people navigate and access support services they need to live the life they want. Staff specialise in coordinating services with people of all ages and abilities including children, young people, adults, older adults and carers.