

# Requirements for bringing loved ones home during COVID-19

Moving a loved one from a residential aged care facility to a home setting is a big decision and requires preparation ahead of time. We encourage you to work with the residential aged care facility and a home care provider to ensure your loved one is getting the best care. This fact sheet provides guidance on what to consider.

## Potential dilemmas

The first, most important, question to ask your loved one (the resident) is do they want to come home with you?

Are all household members, including the people bringing your loved one home prepared to quarantine for 14 days if your loved one has come from a COVID-19 positive facility?

Is anyone in the household ill?

## First requirement for eligibility: the resident must test negative

Before any home transfer, your loved one **must** be tested and return a negative COVID-19 test result. We highly recommend that all household members are also tested and cleared of COVID-19.

## If facility has a COVID-19 outbreak: mandatory 14-day quarantine

If any member of the residential aged care facility staff or another resident has tested positive, your loved one and your entire household must quarantine for 14 days to reduce the risk of community transmission. Quarantine applies even if you all returned negative COVID-19 results.

During quarantine, everyone in your household must use personal protective equipment (PPE), including gowns, face masks, eye protection and gloves.

Before quarantine arrangements can be lifted, every member of the household will be required to test negative.

Important questions	Tick	
	Yes	No
<b>Your home's suitability</b>		
Will the resident have their own bedroom, ideally with their own bathroom or ensuite? Is the bed suitable?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the physical environment safe? i.e. limited or no stairs, suitable seating, uncluttered passage ways.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are there railings in the shower and toilet? Is there a step in the shower or other amenities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Level of care</b>		
Have you reviewed the care plan provided by the facility to make sure you're able to provide the level of care and treatment required?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can you provide care 24 hours a day? Ideally, one or two household members should be designated caregivers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is your loved one mobile? Will they need mobility aids? Ask the facility for loan equipment. If it is not available, you may need to hire equipment at your own cost.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you able to provide PPE for times when the home care providers are not providing services?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will home meals meet the dietary needs specified in the care plan? For example, you may need to provide pureed or mashed food.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you made arrangements with the pharmacy and residential aged care facility to access your loved one's medications?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you considered how you will provide intimate care, including changing and disposing of incontinence pads, showering and toileting?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



**Remember, if your loved one's care needs are high and complex, they may have to remain in the residential aged care facility or be transferred to another suitable facility or hospital. The residential aged care provider will arrange this.**

## What must be in place ahead of time

You need to prepare so that you and your family know what to do before and after the resident comes home.

Under the emergency leave arrangements in the Aged Care Act, residents can return home temporarily without losing their place in the aged care home or being financially penalised. However, residents are still expected to pay their regular fees while on leave.

Home transfer emergency leave program is available until June 30, 2021. Home services for residents are available for eight weeks. After which time, residents can use their social leave entitlements (53 days).

Make sure you have:

- ★ Discussed care requirements with the residential aged care facility and received the care plan from the aged care facility.
- ★ Spoken to the home care provider and are aware of services and clinical support you're entitled to.
- ★ Discussed payment options with the residential aged care facility.

## How your aged care provider can help

All residential aged care facilities have a responsibility to make the transfer as smooth as possible and provide support to family and carers if they can.

- ★ They should prepare a written care plan for you, and discuss a care start and end date with the home care provider.
- ★ They are encouraged to support you with access to PPE.
- ★ They may lend you goods, equipment and assistive technology (including mobility aids and toileting aids). However, this is not mandatory.
- ★ They will regularly engage with home care providers while the resident is in home care, including providing regular updates on how the facility is going.
- ★ They will work with the home care provider to ensure a smooth transition back to the residential aged care facility.

## Talk to an aged care advocate if you need support through this process

Aged care advocates walk alongside older people and their families. They provide older people with a voice and work at their direction.

Most importantly, they are independent of aged care providers and the government, and the support they offer is free.

For support, information or advocacy services, free call the Advocacy Line on **1800 700 600** to be connected to ARAS. We're available 6am–10pm AEST, 7 days.



If you need an interpreter, call **131 450**.



For the National Relay Service (NRS), call **133 677**.

If you prefer, email [covid@opan.com.au](mailto:covid@opan.com.au) – please put 'ARAS' in the subject line and include your contact number in the text.



In South Australia, your provider is Aged Rights Advocacy Service (ARAS). ARAS is a member of OPAN, the Older Persons Advocacy Network, which is a national aged care advocacy organisation. ARAS provides free, confidential, independent aged care advocacy and information to older people, their families and representatives.