

How to age confidently at home

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Quick quiz:

- 1 Most of us want to age comfortably and independently at home, right?
- 2 Do you have a few concerns about your safety, mobility and health needs as you start to get a little older?
- 3 Do you sometimes think you could use a little bit more help and support around the house?

If you are over 65, the answer to a lot of these questions is likely 'YES'. People also start the planning process for home care support a bit later than they probably should. Because there is a waiting list of 6-12 months for Home Care Packages in Australia, it's important that you start planning for services and supports early. You might feel 100 per cent healthy, independent and able to take care of yourself now,

but what about in a couple of years, or when something unexpected happens? It's an uncomfortable conversation to have with your family, but we encourage everyone to be brave and start planning now, so that your wishes are clear.

The first step to receiving a Home Care Package is to register with My Aged Care. You can call 1800 200 422 (free call) or visit www.myagedcare.gov.au to start the process. Once that happens, it can take from six to 12 weeks to review your needs. If it is an emergency it can happen within a week, for example if you have just been discharged from hospital.

Planning early through My Aged Care to receive Home Care Package support means that you can stay healthier, active and social for longer living at home. Your Side has a very wide range of services available to support you once you have gone through the assessment process. Our choice of providers and options gives you flexibility to get the very best match of services to meet your goals.

We've done the hard work of finding and vetting a network of providers for you, and we also take care of the scheduling for you. You might choose meals, cleaning, or personal care, in a mix that works for you. You might prefer to make changes to your home to make moving around safer or prevent falls. We also encourage our clients to consider social support, because there is strong evidence that people who access regular social support delay entering residential care and remain independent.

What's important to us is that our clients get the right mix for them and their family and to offer as much advice and support as possible. The aged care system in Australia can be complicated, but we have trained our team to help you navigate the system. **P.**

If you live on the Peninsula, give the friendly, experienced and dedicated Home Care Package team at Your Side a call today on 1300 134 332 or email hcp@yourside.org.au.