

COULD RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE BE THE RIGHT NEXT STEP?



A PRACTICAL SELF-ASSESSMENT GUIDE FOR OLDER AUSTRALIANS AND THEIR FAMILIES.

This checklist is designed for anyone beginning to think about residential aged care—whether you're planning ahead for yourself, supporting a partner, or helping a family member explore their options. This checklist isn't a diagnosis. It's designed to help you identify changes that may indicate it's time to start exploring aged care options.

If this guide has highlights areas of concern, consider:

- » Speaking with your GP or healthcare professional.
- » Arranging an aged care assessment.
- » Having an open conversation with family about future care preferences.
- » Visiting residential aged care communities to understand the care, lifestyle and support available.
- » Asking questions and gathering information so you can make informed decisions at your own pace.

DAILY LIVING

- ☐ Preparing meals has become more difficult.
- ☐ Eating well or maintaining a healthy weight is becoming challenging.
- ☐ Household tasks such as cleaning or shopping are harder to manage.
- ☐ Showering, dressing or personal grooming requires more assistance.
- ☐ Managing the home feels increasingly overwhelming.
- ☐ Everyday tasks take longer than they used to.

MOBILITY & SAFETY

- ☐ Falls or near falls have become more frequent.
- ☐ Walking around the home feels less safe or confident.
- ☐ Stairs are becoming difficult to manage.
- ☐ Getting in and out of bed or chairs requires assistance.
- ☐ There are concerns about safety at home or in an emergency.
- ☐ Leaving home independently has become more difficult.

MEMORY & THINKING

- ☐ Remembering appointments or important dates is becoming harder.
- ☐ Medications are sometimes forgotten or taken incorrectly.
- ☐ Confusion about time, place or routines is increasing.
- ☐ Managing finances or paperwork has become more difficult.
- ☐ Memory changes are affecting daily life.

PHYSICAL HEALTH

- ☐ Health conditions require increasing support.
- ☐ Medical appointments are harder to manage independently.
- ☐ Hospital visits have become more frequent.
- ☐ Pain, fatigue or reduced strength is limiting daily activities.
- ☐ More support is needed to maintain health and wellbeing.

SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL WELLBEING

- ☐ Social activities have become less frequent.
- ☐ Feelings of loneliness or isolation have increased.
- ☐ Interest in hobbies or favourite activities has declined.
- ☐ Confidence to leave the house has decreased.
- ☐ Mood or motivation has noticeably changed.

SUPPORT NETWORK

- ☐ Family or carers are providing increasing support.
- ☐ Caring responsibilities are becoming more demanding.
- ☐ There are growing concerns about being home alone.
- ☐ More support is needed than family or friends can provide.
- ☐ Planning ahead would provide greater peace of mind.

This self-assessment is designed to help you recognise patterns and start conversations—it isn't a diagnosis or a substitute for professional advice.

0–2 statements apply: You or your loved one may be managing well independently. Continue to monitor any changes and speak with your GP if you have concerns.

3–7 statements apply: It may be time to explore additional support, such as home care, respite care or residential aged care. Your GP can help you understand the options available.

8 or more statements apply: It may be time to arrange an aged care assessment and start planning for future care needs. Exploring your options early can help you make informed decisions with confidence.