

Respite care for people above 65 years of age

Accessing much-needed respite can be daunting for someone caring for a loved one. Here's how to make the process of finding the right respite care a lot easier.

What is Respite?

Respite is a temporary break that gives carers necessary time and space to do things independently while their loved receives ongoing care and support.

Respite can be arranged for a few hours (often in home or at an adult day care centre) or for several days and weeks, often in a residential care facility.

Respite delivered within a residential care facility (residential respite care) is where recipients receive the same care and support as permanent residents. It can be either planned or on an emergency basis.

Why seek Respite Care?

No one wants to think about it but what happens when a carer becomes unwell, wants to go on holiday or simply needs a break?

Being a carer for a loved one is a privilege that can bring with it strengthened relationships and unexpected joys from cherished time spent together.

It can also be a challenge that brings sacrifices, frustrations and worry as the relationship you once shared shifts from one of equal partnership to one of dependency.

It's a combination of highs and lows, good days and bad days, keeping routines and having to change them, and cherishing the little things that will one day become the big things.

Despite best intentions, it is not possible (or healthy) to be a care giver *all the time*. Carers need to look after their own health and wellbeing and take breaks – for their own sake and the sake of their loved one.

Respite care types - Care outside your home

There are three types of respite care available outside your home.

Centre-based respite

Centre-based respite is available during the day. It gives you the opportunity to talk and interact with other people, and usually takes place at a day centre, club, or residential setting. Day respite often runs from 10am to 3pm and may include transport to and from the centre.

Cottage respite

Cottage respite is available overnight or over a weekend. It takes place in aged care accommodation or community setting other than in the home of the carer or host family. It can be taken for two to three days at a time.

Residential respite

Residential respite care takes place in an aged care home. It is best suited to people who need carer support for most tasks and can be for a few days through to a few weeks at a time.

How much residential respite can I access?

Residential respite is available for up to 63 days of subsidised care in a financial year. This includes both planned and emergency residential respite care.

It is possible to extend this by 21 days at a time, with further approval from your aged care assessor.

How does residential respite care work?

To be eligible for residential respite care, recipients must be assessed and approved by an Aged Care Assessment TEAM (ACAT).

A person who is approved for respite care can have up to 63 days of government subsidised respite care in a financial year. This can be extended by up to 21 days at a time if approved by an Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT).

Providers are responsible for checking the care recipient's remaining respite care allowance as subsidies are not paid if the care recipient has used up their annual allowance of respite care days.

Respite temporarily relieves carers from their duties and should be an important part in caregiver's roles so they can continue to take the best care of their loved ones and themselves.

Where do you begin looking for residential respite?

For many carers, finding local and available respite can be an arduous and time-consuming process that is made especially difficult if respite is needed on short notice.

Carers may prefer to visit the facility in person before booking and while this may be ideal, it isn't always possible.

A new platform – [myRespiteAccom](#) – is set to change all this by listing all My Aged Care Government approved Aged Care Service Providers in Australia and real-time respite availability.

myRespiteAccom enables carers to search and book residential respite care from the comfort of their home – saving time and effort from having to contact providers individually. Once a carer has found available residential respite care that matches their needs (often location and time based), the carer can simply book respite online or contact the provider and book directly.

To find out more about myRespiteAccom or to book respite, visit [myRespiteAccom.com.au](#)