

Your loved one and aged care

HOW TO HAVE “THAT” CONVERSATION

Talking with your mum, dad or spouse about the need for aged care can be both difficult and emotional. After a lifetime of hard work, achievements, and cherished memories, admitting they need help isn't easy.

From needing just a little extra help around the house (home care) to needing fully assisted care in a residential aged care home, fears over change, uncertainty, loss of independence, or concerns over the ability to maintain one's lifestyle and passions are all common.

Additionally, many family members in your position can feel guilt with a sense of having failed a loved one by admitting professional care is needed. Never blame yourself. The increasing need for more help is natural and will continue as time goes on. Being proactive through early recognition of signs and early intervention can help reduce health issues as well as help maintain your loved one's quality of life.

SOME HELPFUL SUGGESTIONS

1. Prepare yourself that this could be emotional for both of you.
2. Understand that it could take several conversations to reach a mutually acceptable outcome.
3. Be respectful, open, honest and non-confrontational.
4. Sit down over a cup of tea or coffee and preferably in a comfortable setting.
5. Speak with your loved one's doctor or health professional to get a complete understanding of their support needs and how these needs may evolve over time.
6. Speak with people you may know about their experiences with receiving home care services or moving into a residential aged care home.
7. Pre-empt any concerns you think they might have with research, real life examples or answers (for example, photos of the residential aged care home to show or do a tour to speak from first-hand experience. This can show how a residential home can be a lovely place to live with opportunities to engage in activities and make new friends).
8. Describe your observations regarding the early detection signs they have displayed (for more information on early detection, please see our flyer “What are the signs to look for?”).
9. Explain the benefits of getting professional care early in maintaining independence and quality of life for longer.
10. Proceed with baby steps. Suggest a trial period after which they can assess the situation (for example a two week respite stay to see if they like the residential aged care home or 6 months of receiving home care services).

We're here to help! If your loved one needs aged care support, call us today on 1800 225 474 or visit catholichealthcare.com.au