



Respite Care Services

This information sheet covers:

- What is Respite Care?
- Who is Respite Care for?
- What type of Respite Care is available?
- What is the cost of Respite Care?
- Who can help to arrange Respite Care?
- Where to get more information?

What is Respite Care?

Respite care is short term care. It gives the carer a short break from their usual caring role. It enables the carer to rest, attend to everyday activities, or to have a holiday. It also gives the person being cared for an opportunity to meet other people and enjoy social activities.

Respite care can be provided in the home or in the community. It can be arranged for a few hours, a day, overnight or longer. It can be a regular weekly event or something that happens only once a year. It may also be used in an emergency situation.

Respite care is an important service because:

- It provides extra support to carers so they are able to continue to care for their family member in the home.
- It helps relieve the stress and exhaustion carers may feel from time to time.
- It improves the health and wellbeing of the carer.
- It provides the person being cared for with new experiences and activities.

Who is Respite Care for?

Respite care is one type of service that provides support to both the carer and the person being cared for.

A **carer** is a person who looks after a family member or a friend, in the community or in their own home. Carers may care for a few hours a week or all day every day. In most cases, the person being cared for would not be able to stay living at home without the assistance of their carer.

Respite care services help carers if they are looking after someone who:

- Is aged over 65 years and is frail.
- Is aged up to 65 years and has a disability.
- Has dementia.
- Has mental, chronic or terminal illness.

Respite care is also available to older people who live on their own and feel they are unable to look after themselves and need a break, for example when recovering from a sickness.

What type of Respite Care is available?

Respite care is provided in many different ways. Choosing one or a combination of respite care assists in meeting the needs of both the carer and the person being cared for. Some common types of respite care include:

In-home Respite

In-home respite enables the carer to have a short break by having a respite worker come to the home to look after the person being cared for. This is usually for a few hours a week and is planned ahead. In-home respite is mostly provided by Councils.

In-home respite provides:

- One on one care in the home.
- Personal care and home care if appropriate.
- A variety of recreational activities which may include outings to local parks or the movies, based on the individual's interests and hobbies.

Respite Care Services

Local Council will do an assessment to determine the care needs and priority for service.

✓ **Community Based Respite**

Community based respite is held away from the home. The carer is able to have a break while the person being cared for participates in community based activities.

Day Respite

Day respite is often provided at day care centres, community health centres and some residential aged care homes. It is usually on a regular basis, for half or a whole day.

Group activities are planned and can include:

- Gentle exercises, tai chi.
- Handicraft, woodwork.
- Board games, cards, bingo.
- Entertainment.
- Information talks.
- Meals and transport.
- Outings to visit places of interest or going shopping.



Overnight Respite



Overnight respite is provided by some day care centres and community respite houses. It allows carers short and flexible breaks by providing overnight or short stays.

Overnight respite can be planned in advance or used in an emergency situation.

Overnight respite provides:

- An environment like living at home.
- Care for people with low level care needs.
- Care for short periods of time, up to 7 nights per booking.
- Own private bedroom area and group activities.
- Trained staff who are available 24 hours for assistance.

Assessment for community based respite is conducted by the respite care provider.

✓ **Residential Based Respite**

Residential based respite is the most common known form of respite care. It gives the carer a short term break while the person being cared for stays in an aged care home for one to two weeks or longer.



Residential based respite:

- Is provided in both low-level and high-level care residential homes, known as hostel and nursing homes.
- Is often used if the carer is unwell, away on holiday or when the carer is unavailable for a short period of time.
- Can be planned or used in an emergency situation.
- Needs approval from an **Aged Care Assessment Service (ACAS)** (see page 4 for details) for both low-level and high-level care residential respite care.
- Is limited to 63 days per financial year within a Government subsidised aged care home. An additional 21 days of respite may be available if it is approved by the ACAS.
- Is also a good way of getting to know the facility before accepting permanent care.

✓ **Emergency Respite**

Emergency respite is used for unexpected or emergency situations. An emergency might be the death of a relative or a sudden illness or accident where the carer can not care for the person.

Commonwealth Carer Respite Centre can be contacted 24 hours a day to help arrange emergency respite.



It is important for carers to have a back-up plan in place in case of emergency. The emergency care plan needs to be discussed in advance with the people who have agreed to be emergency contacts. They could be family members, friends or a local service provider.

Respite Care Services

An **Emergency Care Kit** is available free of charge from the **Commonwealth Carer Resource Centre** to help plan in advance for an emergency.

Flexible Respite

Flexible respite is provided through innovative and flexible programs to help meet specific needs of carers and the person they care for. This can be respite care provided beyond normal program hours, occasional, on the weekend or holidays.



What is the cost of Respite Care?

The cost of respite care varies based on the service required and the ability to pay.

In-home respite is charged at an hourly rate. The hours of respite service and the rate may vary between Councils.

Community-based respite services charge fees according to the type of service being used. Day respite charges a sessional fee for a morning or afternoon. An additional charge may be requested when a special activity or outing is arranged. Overnight respite charges a daily fee and varies between service providers.

Residential based respite fees are set by the Government. As of the 20th September 2008 it is \$32.95 per day. This fee is reviewed twice per year in line with aged pension increases.

Special consideration is given to people who are financially disadvantaged. Nobody will be denied access to a service because they are unable to pay.

Who can help to arrange Respite Care?

Respite care services can be accessed by contacting the service providers directly or by contacting one of the following services.

A free interpreting service is available when contacting these services.

- Telephone the following services and request an interpreter, or
- Telephone the **Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS)** on **131 450**. Identify your language and ask to be connected to the service.



Council's Aged & Disability Services

Boroondara City Council	9278 4722
Knox City Council	9298 8345
Manningham City Council	9840 9700
Maroondah City Council	9298 4389
Monash City Council	9518 3553
Whitehorse City Council	9262 6100
Shire of Yarra Ranges	1300 368 333

Commonwealth Carer Respite Centre **1800 059 059**

- Provides up to date information on respite care services and availability in the local area.
- Helps individuals obtain the most appropriate respite service.
- Provides emergency or short term respite.

Direct2Care 1300 121 121

- Provides information about aged care services available in the Eastern region.
- Make initial assessment on the phone and referral for service and/or assessment.

Respite Information & Development in the East **1300 886 798**

- Provides information about services available to carers and people with a disability who are aged 6-64 years old and live in the Eastern region.

Respite Care Services

Aged Care Assessment Service (ACAS)

- Are made up of doctors, nurses, social workers and other health professionals.
- Staff will ask a series of questions to determine what type of help the person needs with daily and personal activities.
- Staff will help arrange access or referral to appropriate residential care.
- Are available in each local area.

Peter James Centre: 9881 1875
(Monash, Whitehorse & Manningham)

Angliss House: 9764 6390
(Yarra Ranges, Knox, Maroondah)

St George's Health Service: 9816 0566
(Boroondara)



Where to get more information?

Local doctors, community health services and many other organisations can provide information about respite care services.

- **Aged Care Information Line**
1800 500 853
- **Commonwealth Carelink Centre**
1800 052 222
- **Commonwealth Carer Resource Centre**
1800 242 636
- **National Dementia Helpline**
1800 100 500
- **Centrelink - Disability, Sickness and Carers**
132 717
- **Centrelink - Multilingual Call**
131 202
- **Aged Care Complaints Resolution Scheme**
1800 550 552
- **Seniors Information Victoria**
1300 135 090
- **Aged and Community Care website at**
www.health.gov.au

Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne)

Address: Suite 2, 27 Bank Street, Box Hill VIC 3128
Telephone: (03) 9285 4888
Fax: (03) 9285 4882
Website: www.miceastmelb.com.au



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