

Scope of Service – Residential Aged Care and Support at Home

Purpose

ARAS provides free, independent and confidential information and advocacy to older people who receive, or are seeking, Australian Government-funded aged care services through My Aged Care, whether in their own home or in a residential aged care home.

Our service is rights-based, person-centred and directed by the older person. Consistent with the Aged Care Act 2024 and its Statement of Rights, ARAS supports older people to understand and exercise their rights, make informed decisions, express their views and maintain choice and control over their aged care services.

ARAS can support you to:

- understand and exercise your rights described under the Aged Care Act 2024;
- access clear information about your rights, responsibilities, services and options so you can make informed decisions;
- have your voice, preferences, needs and desired outcomes acknowledged and acted upon;
- receive information and advocacy that respect your identity, culture, background, circumstances and experience, including diversity recognised under the Aged Care Act 2024;
- understand and navigate My Aged Care, the aged care system, complaints lodged with the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission and other relevant agencies;
- seek aged care services and supports that meet your needs, and facilitate communicating your views to providers;
- raise concerns or make a complaint about your aged care and seek a fair response;
- build your confidence and skills to speak up for yourself, where you choose to do so;
- address aged care issues affecting your ability to live independently, with a focus on wellness, reablement and avoiding premature entry to residential aged care where possible; and
- navigate transitions between hospital, home and residential aged care, including delays or barriers to appropriate services and supports.

Definitions

Information involves supplying information to assist a person to understand their rights, options, and available services so they can make informed decisions and take action independently. Information provision does not include advocacy representation or ongoing advocacy support.

Advocacy is the process of supporting and empowering a person to have their rights, views, wishes, and interests heard, respected, and acted upon. In the context of aged care advocacy, ARAS will assist older people or their nominated representative by:

- providing information so people can understand their rights and options;
- supporting people to speak up for themselves wherever possible;
- representing a person's views and wishes when they are unable or unwilling to advocate for themselves;
- assisting people navigate services, systems, complaints processes and decision-making;
- promoting and defending a person's rights, dignity, independence, and wellbeing; and
- working to address barriers, unfair treatment, abuse, neglect, or discrimination.

Your voice, decisions and consent

- You have the right to direct your advocacy and decide what action, if any, ARAS takes.
- ARAS will seek your informed consent before acting or sharing information, unless otherwise required by law in abuse and safeguarding matters.
- ARAS will provide information in a way that supports you to understand your options, communicate your will and preferences, and participate in decisions within your capability.
- If you need decision-making support, ARAS will work with you and, with your consent, may involve your nominated supporter or legally authorised representative. Your rights will and preferences remain central in our engagement.

What ARAS cannot do

ARAS cannot:

- advocate for a family member, representative or other person where their wishes conflict with your rights, will, preferences or interests;
- choose or recommend a particular aged care provider or service for you;
- investigate complaints or determine disputed facts;
- investigate the cause or circumstances of a person's death;
- direct a provider to dismiss an employee or take a particular employment action;
- become involved in a provider's employment matters, including wages or conditions of employment;
- decide who should make financial, legal, personal or health decisions for an older person; or
- act on matters that are not connected to an aged care provider's responsibilities under the Aged Care Act 2024 or other relevant aged care requirements.

If ARAS cannot assist with part or all of your matter as it is deemed out of scope, we will explain why and where possible will provide information about another service that may be able to assist, or with your consent, contact the relevant agency on your behalf to facilitate access.

ARAS is the South Australian member of the Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN), which is funded by the Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing to deliver the National Aged Care Advocacy Program (NACAP)