

CHSP what is it?

How do I access services?

Home is special for most people. As we get into our later years we want to remain living in this familiar environment for as long as possible. The reality can be that some jobs in the house and garden can become harder. Transport for social activities, medical appointments and shopping can become more difficult to access.

The CHSP (Commonwealth Home Support Programme) can give you the support you need in your own home to maintain your independent lifestyle. Individual services are available through a variety of local service providers such as local councils, aged care organisations and private providers. Any organisation providing services must be accredited by the Federal Government.

The types of services available include assistance with gardening, cleaning, shopping, transport, social support as well nursing and allied health services and much more. The support can be regular and long term or it can be short term to assist you to maintain or regain your independence if you have a setback. The focus is on wellness and working with you rather than doing for you.

The Commonwealth Home Support Programme offers entry level support to help older people stay at home. The bulk of the service is funded by the government and a small co-payment for each individual service is charged. No financial assessment is required. People over 65 years of age (or 50 years for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders) can be assessed for services.

CHSP services are accessed through registering with My Aged Care on 1800 200 422. My Aged Care is open from 8:00am to 8:00pm Monday to Friday and 10:00am to 2:00pm on Saturdays <https://www.myagedcare.gov.au>

Peter's Story

When Peter's wife died suddenly his world fell apart. They had been married for 45 years, he felt lost without her. When his daughter visited him from Sydney she was shocked to see the change in him. He was neglecting himself, he had lost weight and had stopped seeing his friends and taking part in his favourite past times. She tried to persuade him to pack up and move to Sydney. When he refused she persuaded him to see his GP.

Peter felt a terrible sense of hopelessness. He could not see how to pick up his life again. His Doctor felt he was suffering from depression related to his grief. There was concern about his weight loss and self-isolation.

The Doctor spent time discussing some options to help him through this difficult time. Peter agreed to try some medication to help in the short term. His Doctor also strongly recommended some support at home. It transpired Peter did not know how to cook or what food shopping he needed. His Doctor referred him to My Aged Care.

Peter agreed to have a home assessment. The assessor worked with him and his daughter to work out a plan to improve his general wellbeing. The assessor offered Peter a choice of delivered meals or visits from a home support worker to teach him how to cook his favourite dishes. The worker would also help him work out a regular shopping list. Peter decided he would like to be able to cook and plan his own meals. It was agreed that initially the worker would go shopping with him too. The Service Provider also suggested he might like to attend their monthly Lunch Club. After 8 weeks Peter was managing to cook some of his favourite dishes. He was no longer needing regular help with shopping and cooking. He was going to the monthly Lunch club. He had he had resumed some of his favourite hobbies, bowling and woodwork. While he still felt the huge loss of his wife he felt more able to cope with his life and was planning to visit his daughter and family in Sydney.

Anna Sheppeard

Volunteer Peer Educator

Maximising My Independence Project