



Australian Government
Department of Health

Actions to support older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

A guide for consumers

*All older people experience a high quality aged care system
that ensures equitable access and outcomes and embraces
their diverse characteristics and life experiences.*



Aged Care Sector Committee Diversity Sub-group
February 2019

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Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
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What are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consumers looking for from their aged care providers?

Everyone in Australia has the right to access quality, inclusive and culturally safe aged care services that cater to their individual needs and respect their background and life experiences.

The Australian Government has published the Aged Care Diversity Framework and a series of action plans to help the aged care sector to better cater for the diverse characteristics and life experiences of older Australians. The Framework and action plans were developed following extensive community consultations.

This document captures the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people expressed through those consultations. It is intended both to help Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people express their needs when speaking with aged care providers and as a resource to support people working in aged care to understand the perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Outcome for Consumers 1: Making informed choices

We should have easily accessible information about the aged care system, services that we understand and find the information helpful to exercise choice and control over the care we receive.

- We should be able to talk to authoritative people face to face to get the information we need to make informed choices.
- We each want to get the information about our aged care assessments and our options from people we trust – which could mean our designated representative from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisation.
- We can get support with future planning.
- We want communications to be presented to us in a way that respects our culture and our experiences – especially for those of us who are from the Stolen Generations.
- We each want members of our families – who we have individually chosen – to be present whenever we are being given authoritative information about our aged care options or when we are being asked to make a decision.
- We want information provided in 'plain language' in a variety of media (written, video, pictorial), that focus on telling us:
 - How the aged care system has been designed, especially the reforms, and what this means to us as consumers
 - Our rights and entitlements in relation to aged care services, the resources allocated to them, and how to use them
 - Our sources of support, whether called 'system navigators', advocates, or trusted intermediaries
- We want an aged care system which makes it easy for us to use a trusted Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander organisation/person to assist each of us – and represent us if we so decide – to navigate/work our way through MyAgedCare.
- We all expect to receive a detailed care plan that reflects (is aligned with) our aged care assessment.
- We would all like to receive a care plan that is itemised against the budget for our home care package level.
- We must all receive easy to understand monthly statements showing expenditure against our home care package budget.
- We all expect to receive an easy to understand but comprehensive Consumer Agreement with our service providers and to have someone we trust explain it to us.

Outcome for Consumers 2: Adopting systemic approaches to planning and implementation

We should be an active partner in the planning and implementation of the aged care system to meet our needs.

- We have control over our health and wellbeing decisions.
- We would each like to have a review of our care plan every 6 months at a minimum and when our needs change to ensure that our plan and the resources of our home care package meet our needs.

Outcome for Consumers 3: Accessible care and support

Wherever we live - in rural, remote, regional and metropolitan Australian - ***we should have*** access to aged care services and supports appropriate to our diverse characteristics and life experiences.

- We all want to access culturally safe aged care services, whether we live in a rural, regional or metropolitan area.
- We are able to live on Country and receive quality aged care services.
- For those of us who live in a remote area, our providers involve members of our communities in the design and delivery of some of the services in our care plan.

Outcome for Consumers 4: A proactive and flexible aged care system

We should experience a proactive and flexible aged care system that responds to the needs of all Australians including new and emerging communities, including an increasingly diverse aged care workforce.

- As 100% of the Stolen Generation will be aged 50 by 2023, we require:
 - a. an aged care system that is aware of the harmful impact of colonisation and the trauma caused by removing children from families
 - b. aged care services provided by organisations that do not have historical association with removing children from families
 - c. aged care workers who understand the risks of re-traumatising us survivors and the meaning of 'healing'
- We expect an aged care system where we are confident that quality standards are always complied with.
- We expect an aged care system that looks after us in residential and home settings.
- We expect the system will accommodate visits and involvement from our families and communities.

Outcome for Consumers 5: Respectful and inclusive services

We should experience services that effectively meet our specific needs, characteristics and life experiences, and those of our family and carers, in a respectful and inclusive way.

- We expect greater service accountability to ensure ALL needs are being met in a culturally respectful way.
- We expect that providers and their staff have an understanding of Elders in Aboriginal cultures and our role as Elders will be respected and supported.
- We expect providers and their staff to understand the importance of our role as informal care givers in our communities.
- We are assisted to participate in cultural events and activities.
- We continue participating in hobbies that we enjoy.
- Our spiritual, cultural and religious beliefs are supported by providers' staff.
- We are given opportunities to re-visit our own Country for spiritual and emotional well being.
- We are protected from abuse/harassment.

Outcome for Consumers 6: Meeting the needs of the most vulnerable

We should experience high quality and culturally safe aged care services and supports that meet our needs irrespective of our personal, social or economic vulnerabilities.

- Our service providers will have in place referral and reporting procedures in the event of elder abuse or family violence.
- Our service providers partner with reputable Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander organisations (e.g. Aboriginal Medical Service), to help meet our needs.
- Care staff who provide our support will be appropriately trained to provide trauma informed care.