



Who Can Help?

Who can help?

Department of Veterans' Affairs

DVA can:

- answer questions and provide information about DVA pensions and allowances, and about health care eligibility
- provide up-to-date information about health and support services available through DVA and in the community
- work with local service providers to ensure that veterans and war widows/widowers have access to appropriate services, and
- work with community agencies to develop programs to meet the needs of veterans and war widows/widowers and their dependants.

DVA has fact sheets available on over 300 topics of relevance to veterans and war widows/widowers, their dependants, families and carers. Visit www.dva.gov.au

To contact DVA phone 133 254 (metropolitan) or 1800 555 254 (non-metropolitan)

Alzheimer's Australia

Alzheimer's Australia provides information, counselling and support for people with all forms of dementia and their families and carers.

Alzheimer's Australia produces a large number of Help Sheets on a variety of dementia related topics. Help Sheets can be obtained by phoning the National Dementia Helpline on 1800 100 500 or by visiting Alzheimer's Australia at www.alzheimers.org.au

To contact the National Dementia Helpline phone 1800 100 500

Aged Care Assessment Teams

Aged Care Assessment Teams (ACAT) are made up of nurses, doctors, social workers and other health professionals who provide assistance to older people in determining their needs for home based support or residential care.

All people requiring residential care must be assessed by an ACAT before applying to an Australian Government funded care facility.

You can contact your closest ACAT by phoning the number listed in the 'Age Page' of your telephone directory, or the National Dementia Helpline on 1800 100 500. Your doctor or hospital can also help you to contact an ACAT.

Aged Care Complaints Resolution Scheme

The Aged Care Complaints Resolution Scheme is a Government service that seeks to resolve complaints about the health, safety and/or welfare of people receiving aged care. For further information phone 1800 550 552.

Allied health services

A range of allied health services is available to eligible veterans and war widows/widowers under DVA health care arrangements. These include services from physiotherapists, chiropractors, osteopaths, podiatrists, speech pathologists, social workers, optometrists, occupational therapists, psychologists and dieticians. Your clinical need must be assessed for you to receive any of these services and you also must obtain a referral from either your Local Medical Officer (LMO), general practitioner, medical specialist, your hospital doctor, a hospital discharge planner or a provider of the same treatment type.

For more information about these services phone DVA on 133 254 (metropolitan) or 1800 555 254 (non-metropolitan).



Carers Australia

Carers Australia works in each State and Territory to bring the needs, views and concerns of carers to the attention of the wider community including government, policy makers, health professionals and service providers. Carers can phone Carers Australia in their State or Territory on 1800 242 636 or visit www.carersaustralia.com.au

Carer Resource Centres

Carer Resource Centres are part of Carers Australia in each State and Territory and provide families and carers with information and referral to the range of community services and government assistance available to support them in their caring role. You can phone your local Carer Resource Centre on 1800 242 636 or visit www.carersaustralia.com.au

Carer Respite Centre

A Carer Respite Centre is an Australian Government funded agency that keeps updated records of all available respite beds. It also provides information and coordination on a full range of services. This includes respite programs funded by the Australian Government, State Governments, non-profit organisations, private agencies and the wider community. You can phone your local Carer Respite Centre on 1800 059 059.

Commonwealth Carelink Centres

Commonwealth Carelink Centres around Australia provide information about the range of community care programs and services available to help people stay in their own homes. Phone 1800 052 222 or visit www.commcarelink.health.gov.au

Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing

The Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing has an Aged and Community Care Information Line. For more information on any aspect of aged care you can phone 1800 500 853 or you can visit the Department's web site at www.health.gov.au

Community nursing

Community nursing services are available to eligible veterans and war widows/widowers to meet their assessed clinical nursing and/or personal care needs. A referral is required from a general practitioner, Local Medical Officer, treating doctor or specialist in hospital, hospital discharge planner or a Veterans' Home Care assessment agency. Services are provided by a contracted community-nursing organisation in the person's home. Community nursing helps restore or maintain the optimal level of health and independence of the individual.

Contracted community nursing organisations use a mix of registered, enrolled nurses and nursing support staff, as clinically appropriate, in the delivery of clinical nursing care. The community-nursing organisation bills DVA directly for its services.

For more information about these services phone DVA on 133 254 (metropolitan) or 1800 555 254 (non-metropolitan).

Continence Foundation of Australia

Practical advice and information is available for people with bowel/bladder problems and their carers from the Continence Foundation of Australia. Phone the National Continence Helpline on 1800 330 066 or visit www.contfound.org.au

The National Public Toilet Map shows the location of more than 14,000 public and private toilet facilities across Australia. It can be used to help plan both short and long trips. You can visit www.toiletmap.gov.au

General practitioners

Only a doctor can diagnose dementia. Your local doctor is often the first person you will talk to about your concerns and is available to undertake an assessment of your health needs. You may be referred to a specialist, such as a geriatrician, neuropsychologist or psychiatrist, depending on your doctor's assessment.

HomeFront

HomeFront is a falls and accident prevention program aimed at assisting veterans and war widows/widowers to continue living independently in their own homes. All DVA Gold and White Card holders are eligible for an annual free home assessment to identify hazards in and around the home. Following the assessment, some financial assistance will be provided towards recommended items or home modifications. Phone HomeFront on 1800 801 945.

Home Maintenance Helpline

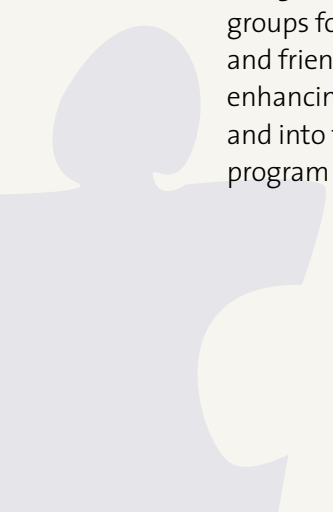
The Home Maintenance Helpline is a telephone advice and referral service to assist with property maintenance advice and referral to reliable, efficient tradespeople. This service is available to all veterans and war widows/widowers, not just those with Gold and White Cards. Where possible the Helpline will link you with Government subsidised services. Phone the Veteran's Home Maintenance Helpline on 1800 801 945.

Independent Living Centre

The Independent Living Centre in each State and Territory offers a number of services designed to promote safe living. Information is available about a number of products including smoke detectors, hot water services, temperature regulators, monitoring services and many others. Advice is also available about home modifications and home design. Phone numbers for Independent Living Centres can be obtained from the phone book, or by phoning the National Dementia Helpline on 1800 100 500.

Living with Memory Loss Program

Living with Memory Loss program consists of information and support groups for people living with early stage dementia and their family and friends. The program has a positive focus on maintaining and enhancing skills and abilities and exploring ways of managing now and into the future. For information about the *Living with Memory Loss* program phone the National Dementia Helpline on 1800 100 500.



National Dementia Behaviour Advisory Service

The National Dementia Behaviour Advisory Service (NDBAS) is a national telephone advisory service for families, carers and respite staff who are concerned about the behaviours of people with dementia. The service provides confidential, comprehensive advice 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Phone them on 1300 366 448.

Rehabilitation Appliances Program

The aim of DVA's Rehabilitation Appliances Program (RAP) is to restore or maintain an individual's independence and minimise the effect of disabilities. Providing aids for daily life, surgical appliances, and home modifications where clinically prescribed, can assist people to remain living in their own home. Phone DVA on 133 254 (metropolitan) or 1800 555 254 (non-metropolitan).

Retirement Service Centres

The Department of Veterans' Affairs, Centrelink and the Australian Taxation Office have established combined Retirement Service Centres which provide a "one-stop-shop" to members of the veteran community, the aged and pre-retirees. Sites have been established at:

- Camberwell, Victoria
- Chatswood, New South Wales, and
- Launceston, Tasmania.

Phone DVA on 133 254 (metropolitan) or 1800 555 254 (non-metropolitan).

You can also phone Centrelink on 13 27 17. Centrelink provides financial assistance for people with illness and disabilities, and their carers. You may be eligible for some payments and concessions from Centrelink.



Standards and Accreditation

The Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency is an independent body responsible for managing the accreditation and ongoing supervision of Australian Government-funded aged care facilities. The agency has offices in all state capitals. You can phone the national office on 02 9633 2099 or visit www.accreditation.aust.com

Veterans' Affairs Financial Information Service

The Veterans' Affairs Financial Information Service (VAFIS) provides a free service designed to give the veteran community information about financial and related matters. VAFIS staff can provide information about investments, superannuation, the Pensions Loans Scheme, lump sum advances, and basic taxation issues. Phone DVA on 133 254 (metropolitan) or 1800 555 254 (non-metropolitan).

Veterans' Home Care

The Veterans' Home Care (VHC) program provides a range of home care services for eligible veterans and war widows/widowers. A VHC assessment agency will assess the need for home care services and based on that assessment, services such as domestic assistance, personal care, limited home and garden maintenance and respite care may be provided. The VHC assessment agency may also provide referrals, with the person's consent, to other government programs and community agencies that are best placed to meet specific needs. Phone VHC on 1300 550 450.

• Respite care

Veterans' Home Care is the first point of contact for members of the veteran community requiring respite care.

DVA provides in-home respite and emergency respite care and approval for residential respite care through the VHC program. Approval, based on assessed need by VHC, should be obtained to access respite care. An Aged Care Assessment Team assessment and approval is also required before a person can access residential respite care in an approved facility. VHC staff will then discuss respite options and assist in determining the best balance between in-home and residential respite.

- **Eligibility for DVA respite care**

All veterans of the Australian defence forces who hold Gold and White Cards, and their war widows/widowers may receive respite care, funded through DVA, where approved by a VHC assessment agency. Commonwealth and Allied veterans who have a White Card may be eligible for respite care, but only where it relates to their war caused disabilities.

Partners and carers may benefit from in-home respite care through Veterans' Home Care if they are caring for an eligible veteran or war widow/widower.

- **Financial Assistance for DVA respite care**

In any one financial year, DVA may pay for up to 28 days (196 hours) of in-home or residential respite care, or a combination of both. Seven hours in-home respite is equivalent to one day in a residential respite facility. Any additional costs, such as pharmaceutical items, telephone calls or additional days of respite care will have to be met by the veteran or war widow/widower.

- **Respite in a residential care facility**

Any person, not just a veteran or war widow/widower, who has been assessed by an Aged Care Assessment Team as requiring respite care in a residential facility, can access up to 63 days respite care per financial year. DVA will pay the basic daily care for up to 28 of the 63 days when the person entering residential respite care is a Gold or White Card holder. After 28 days, the veteran or war widow/widower is responsible for paying the basic daily care fee.

- **Australian former prisoners of war and Victoria Cross veterans**

DVA pays the basic daily care fee for up to 63 days (or such further period as is permitted under the *Residential Care Subsidy Principles*) for former prisoners of war and Victoria Cross veterans who receive respite care in an approved residential facility.

- **In-home respite care**

In-home respite care can be arranged for a few hours on a regular basis or for several days at a time. It can be used by veterans and war widows/widowers who care for another person, as well as the carers of eligible veterans and war widows/widowers.

- **Emergency short-term home relief**

Emergency short-term home relief (ESTHR) is respite care provided to veterans and war widows/widowers. ESTHR offers episodes of up to three days (72 hours) of continuous emergency care, such as when the carer is suddenly or unexpectedly unable to continue providing care. Funding of ESTHR is separate from, and does not affect, the 28-day in-home or residential respite. A cap of nine days (216 hours) in any financial year applies to ESTHR.

If ESTHR is needed outside business hours, local Commonwealth Carer Respite Centres provide an after-hours emergency telephone service that links carers to local emergency respite services. Phone 1800 059 059.

Vietnam Veterans Counselling Services

The Vietnam Veterans Counselling Service (VVCS) provides free and confidential counselling and group program services for veterans and their families and promotes community awareness and understanding of the problems they face. Veterans of all conflicts and peacekeeping missions and their immediate families, including war widows, are eligible. VVCS centres are located in each State and Territory capital and several regional centres. After hours telephone crisis counselling is available through the Veterans' Line on 1800 011 046.

Useful contacts

To phone Department of Veterans' Affairs:

☎ 133 254 (metropolitan)

☎ 1800 555 254 (non-metropolitan)

🌐 Or visit the DVA web site at www.dva.gov.au

New South Wales

Tower B, Centennial Plaza
280 Elizabeth Street
SURRY HILLS NSW 2010

Postal Address:

GPO Box 3994, SYDNEY NSW 2001

South Australia

Blackburn House
199 Grenfell Street
ADELAIDE SA 5000

Postal Address:

GPO Box 1652, ADELAIDE SA 5001

Tasmania

Montpelier Building
21 Kirksway Place
BATTERY POINT TAS 7004

Postal Address:

GPO Box 481E, HOBART TAS 7001

Western Australia

AMP Building,
140 St Georges Terrace (Cnr. William Street)
PERTH WA 6000

Postal Address:

GPO Box F352, PERTH WA 6001

Victoria

300 Latrobe Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

Postal Address:

GPO Box 87A, MELBOURNE VIC 3001

Queensland

259 Queen Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Postal Address :

GPO Box 651, BRISBANE QLD 4001



Useful publications

There are many books, information sheets and kits available for people with dementia, their carers and families. Some of these are listed below.

Free publications from the Department of Veterans' Affairs

Phone DVA on 133 254 (metropolitan) or 1800 555 254 (non-metropolitan) or visit the DVA web site at www.dva.gov.au

DVA fact sheets

DVA has fact sheets covering over 300 topics of relevance to veterans and war widows/widowers, their dependants, families and carers.

Planning Ahead: A guide to putting your affairs in order

This is an excellent guide to preparing for, and coping with, bereavement. It can help you and your family get your affairs in order and keep all your personal papers up-to-date in a safe place. The guide includes personal information sheets and checklists, which ensure that all relevant information is available when you need it. It also includes a book that lists the services that are available to help you, your family and friends.

You and Your Pension: A guide for service pensioners and for war widows and widowers who receive the income support supplement

This guide contains information about pensions, services and benefits, health, personal finances and lifestyle issues, and your rights and obligations. The guide is also available on audiocassette for people who have difficulty reading standard print.

Back to Basics: Handy hints for carers to help prevent back injuries

This book provides practical, user-friendly advice for carers to use in their daily routines. It shows the variety of transfers that carers can

use and explains how to undertake them to minimise the risk of injury to the person or carer. Many photographs and practical hints are included to demonstrate these techniques. It also provides an excellent overview of the range of products and aids available to assist carers.

Carers Booklet: Assistance for the Veteran Community

This booklet has been developed to assist carers. It provides information about specific services available through DVA as well as general information about services available in the community.

Choose Health: Be Active

This booklet shows simple ways to fit exercise into a daily routine and is designed to help the veteran community achieve sufficient physical activity for good health as they age. It includes information about finding suitable activities, getting started, overcoming setbacks and exercising with chronic health problems, together with a handy activity planner.

Discharge Planning Resource Kit

The DVA Discharge Planning Resource Kit provides discharge planners and other health professionals in hospitals, and day procedure centres, with up-to-date information about current DVA procedures and services, and best practice principles in discharge planning.

The Right Mix - Your Health and Alcohol

The Right Mix has something for anyone interested in a healthy lifestyle. A range of resources provides simple information about standard drinks, alcohol and medication, sleep and health conditions. You can find out how to start making changes if you want to, or where to go for help if you are concerned about your drinking.

Contact DVA for these resources or visit www.therightmix.gov.au

Free publications from Alzheimer's Australia

Help Sheets

Alzheimer's Australia produces a large number of Help Sheets about a variety of dementia related topics. These include those written especially for people with dementia, as well as Help Sheets for families and carers. Many of the Help Sheets are in community languages and some are available in audiocassette format. Help Sheets are free of charge to people with dementia, their families and carers and can be obtained by phoning the National Dementia Helpline on 1800 100 500 or visiting www.alzheimers.org.au

The Caring Experience

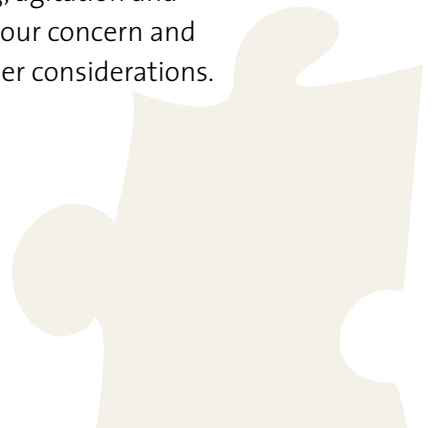
This book contains information that carers may need, and ideas they could use. The book is available from the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing by phoning your local Carer Resource Centre on 1800 242 636, or the National Dementia Helpline on 1800 100 500.

Books

Contact the National Dementia Helpline on 1800 100 500 for information about how to obtain any of the following books, videos or DVDs.

***The 36-Hour Day*, by Nancy Mace and Peter Rabins:** A family guide to caring for a person with dementia. It covers all aspects of dementia: assessment, coping strategies, legal issues, residential options, carer health, children and teenagers, and research.

***Understanding Difficult Behaviors*, by Anne Robinson:** This book offers practical suggestions for coping with Alzheimer's disease and related illnesses, including topics on resistance, wandering, agitation and incontinence. Each chapter covers a specific behaviour concern and includes possible causes, coping strategies and other considerations.



Dementia with Dignity: A Handbook for Carers, by Barbara Sherman: an Australian author who has been a carer herself. Written in a very readable style, the book explains dementia and its progressive effect. It also has suggestions for dealing with behavioural problems and for residential placement and beyond.

A number of books are available that have been written by people with dementia, or by a family member who share their experiences of the illness, including the following.

Who Will I Be When I Die? by Christine Boden (Bryden): Christine was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease at 46 and re-diagnosed with frontal lobe dementia when she was 49. This is the first book written by an Australian with dementia and offers a unique insight into her battle with dementia.

Dancing with Dementia, by Christine Bryden: Christine's latest book is a thoughtful exploration of how dementia challenges our ideas of personal identity and of the process of self-discovery it can bring about.

Elegy for Iris, by John Bayley: The author writes about his life with his wife Iris Murdoch. He attempts to uncover the real Iris, whose mysterious world took on darker shades as she descended into Alzheimer's disease.

Hazel's Journey: A Personal Experience of Alzheimer's Disease, by Sue Pieters-Hawke: Hazel Hawke's daughter tells the full story of her mother's life in the past 10 years, including her fear and anger, her decision to go public and the gentle happiness in her life now.

The Long Good Night: My Father's Journey into Alzheimer's, by Daphne Simpkins: This is a memoir about love rather than an elegy about a disease. It gives caregivers cause for honest hope and its many other readers a wonderfully nuanced story of love and laughter amid the ruins of illness - a story that both illuminates the tragedy of Alzheimer's and powerfully transcends it.

Losing my mind: An intimate look at life with Alzheimer's, by Thomas

DeBaggio: Not only does the author have the ability to chart the mechanics and musings of his failing mind, he also turns an autobiography, a medical history and a book of meditations into a testament to the splendour of memory and a triumphant celebration of the human spirit.

In Memory of Memories: Experiences of Living with Dementia, by

Robert Breckman (ed.): A collection of writings, first published in the UK Alzheimer's Society Newsletter, by people whose lives have been affected by dementia.

Living in the Labyrinth: A Personal Journey Through the Maze of

Alzheimer's, by Diana Friel McGowan: This autobiographical book tells of the author's struggle with the effects of Alzheimer's disease and offers the reader insight into the world of dementia.

Show Me The Way To Go Home, by Larry Rose:

Larry Rose records his experiences with Alzheimer's disease with humour and unquenchable spirit.

A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Nursing Home, by Jim

Connor: A true and touching account of a man caring for his wife who has dementia. The story contains pathos, humour and hope.

Useful videos/DVDs

Understanding Dementia (Video and DVD) Alzheimer's Australia 2005:

This is an introductory video/DVD in which medical professionals explain the causes and symptoms of dementia and people who are living with different stages of dementia show how it affects their lives. Strategies are given to help manage the changes that dementia brings and to ensure that those affected continue to enjoy quality of life.

Alzheimer's: My Mom, Our Journey (DVD):

Written, produced and directed by Julie Meisner Eagle [2004]. Shot over the course of eighteen months, Julie chronicles her mother's life journey with younger onset dementia.

The Forgetting: a Portrait of Alzheimer's: Stories of Love, Courage and Hope (DVD). St Paul, Minneapolis: Twin Cities Public Television (TPT) 2003: This documentary weaves together the intense real-world experiences of people with Alzheimer's disease and caregivers, the history and biology of Alzheimer's and the ongoing struggle to end the disease. Bonus features include Q & A program hosted by David Hyde Pierce and an interview with the author of "The Forgetting" David Shenk.

Living with Memory Loss: An Exploration into the World of Early Stage Dementia (Video) Alzheimer's Australia Vic. 2003: This video takes you into the world of early stage dementia and the role that sharing experiences can play in forging a meaningful direction in life after diagnosis of dementia.

