



**Live life to the full**



# About Ageing Well

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A free, seven-week masterclass program bringing together a team of clinical experts and professionals. Ageing Well covers everything you need to know from staying connected to community, diet and exercise, navigating the many choices around ageing support, financial and legal planning, and why mental health matters as we age.



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# Masterclass 1 – Social Connection & Wellbeing

## Social connection

This can be defined as the experience of belonging to a social relationship or network. **Strong social connections** can:

- Help you to live a longer, more contented life
- Boost your ability to fight ill health
- Help your body to repair and recover
- Provide a more positive outlook on life
- Improve self-esteem and empathy for others
- Help you feel more connected to society

**Ways to increase social connection** include:

- **Self-reflection** – Become aware of why you act and react in certain ways so you can develop healthier ways of interacting with others. Be curious and open about people and listen to their responses.
- **Take every opportunity to connect** – Participate in more social events or activities in your community and family networks.
- **Being proactive** – Make a list of people you care about and reach out. Don't wait for others to initiate contact.

## Mental health

Good mental health improves every aspect of your life. It means that you are able to cope with the normal stresses of life without feeling overwhelmed. Good mental health can be improved by having a sense of belonging and engaging in a community where you feel valued and loved.

**Good mental health** means:

- You feel happy and content about your life
- You are able to cope with life's stressors
- You feel in control of your emotions and reactions



Approximately 1 in 5 Australians will experience a mental health diagnosis, and while mental health challenges can lead to difficulties such as social isolation, reduced quality of life, and impact families and communities, support and care can make a significant difference.



Remember to follow the **Five Ways to Wellbeing**:

1. Connect
2. Be Active
3. Take Notice
4. Keep Learning
5. Give

## Caring for others

Caring for a loved one, whether an adult child, grandchildren or a partner can be rewarding and fulfilling. However carers can be at risk of carer fatigue or burnout if they continuously put the needs of their loved one over and above their own needs. Carers are best positioned to continue their caring role if they:

- Receive respite from their caring responsibilities
- Maintain social connection with others
- Prioritise eating and sleeping
- Receive counselling or carer support
- Exercise, even short walks
- Find joy in a hobby

# Masterclass 2 - Physical Wellbeing

## Nutrition

It's important to lead an active, healthy lifestyle and this doesn't change as you get older.

Eating well is key to ensuring you have the energy to live life to the full.

Many ageing related physical changes can impact your appetite, but you can continue to have a healthy diet by:

- Keeping hydrated, since thirst diminishes with age
- Enhance flavours to make meals more appealing
- Eat small meals frequently
- Eat with friends and family
- Monitor appetite impacts of medication with your GP
- Monitor nutrient deficiencies via blood tests
- Receive meal preparation support
- Find nutrient dense foods such as nuts, seeds and smoothies

## Brain health

Studies show that the best thing you can do to maintain brain health is to engage in physical exercise, such as walking, swimming and light strength work. Other general recommendations for maintaining good brain health are:

- Sustain healthy blood pressure, cholesterol levels, and blood glucose levels
- Hydrate, since 75% of your brain is water
- Stop smoking and avoid excess drinking
- Practice mindfulness, meditation or yoga
- Maintain an appropriate weight, eat a healthy diet



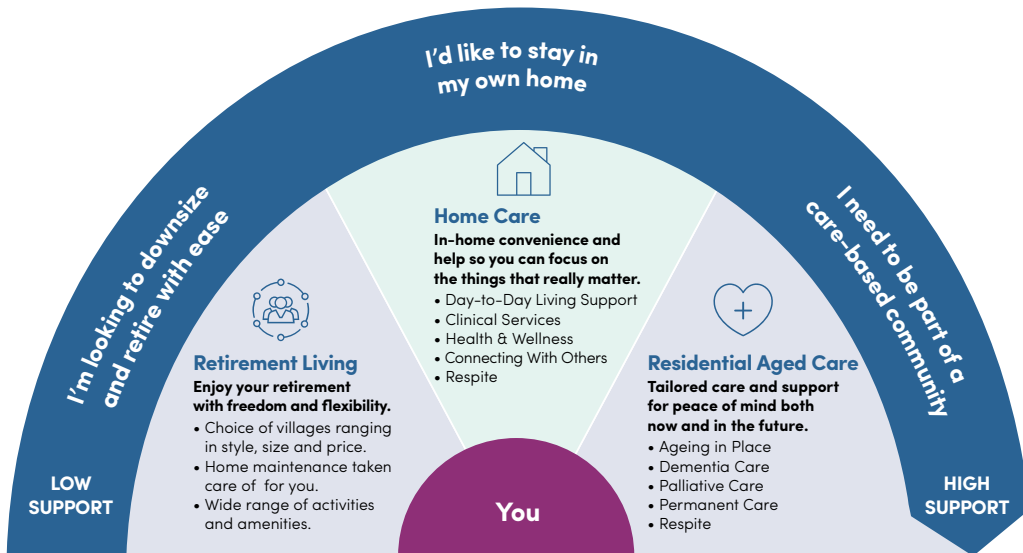
- Stay positive, find happiness, practice gratitude and stay socially active
- Get an adequate amount of sleep
- Find ways to stay mentally stimulated

## Over 75s health check

A health assessment of an older person is an in-depth assessment of a patient aged 75 years and over. It provides a structured way of identifying health issues and conditions that are potentially preventable or amendable to interventions to improve health and quality of life. The purpose of this health assessment is to help identify any risk factors exhibited by an elderly patient that may require further health management. In addition to assessing your health status, a health assessment is used to identify a broad range of factors that influence a person's physical, psychological and social functioning.

# Masterclass 3 – Navigating Aged Care

Your lifestyle and needs are unique and will change over time. That's why aged care is tailored and flexible for every stage of your life's journey.



The government website My Aged Care is the entry point for information and services about home care, retirement living and residential aged care.



You can contact **My Aged Care** on **1800 200 422** or register at **[www.myagedcare.gov.au](http://www.myagedcare.gov.au)** to organise an assessment and approval for funding.



## Home Care

### Fee For Service (Private Services)

If you require immediate support whilst waiting for funding approval or prefer not to use a government subsidy at all.

### Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP)

Entry-level program for people with lower care needs. Some specific service types are available to support you to remain living independently at home, such as:

- Help with cleaning or shopping
- Support with transport and accessing social activities
- Assistance with gardening and home maintenance
- Additional health care and support with showering and dressing

### Home Care Packages (HCP)

Enables clients to choose their provider and is ideal for people with more complex care needs as there are four levels of subsidy based on an individual's assessed needs.

## Support at Home program (2025)

From 1 July 2025, the Support at Home program will replace Home Care Packages and Short-Term Restorative Care. Those clients already on a Home Care Package or in the national queue for a Home Care Package as of 12 September 2024 will be protected by 'no worse off' provisions. This means they will not need to be financially disadvantaged by the change. Persons entering the queue after 12 September 2024 will be subject to means testing which will determine any contributions they may need to make. The Support at Home program is designed to help more than 1.4 million older Australians stay independent at home for longer.

### Popular home care services

DAY-TO-DAY LIVING	CLINICAL SERVICES	HEALTH & WELLNESS	CONNECTING WITH OTHERS	PASTORAL & SPIRITUAL CARE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Light housekeeping</li> <li>• Meal preparation</li> <li>• Personal care</li> <li>• Home/ Garden Maintenance</li> <li>• Shopping</li> <li>• Transport</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allied Health</li> <li>• Nursing Care</li> <li>• Remote Support</li> <li>• Help with medications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walking with Confidence</li> <li>• Feel Fit</li> <li>• Neck and Back Health</li> <li>• Stepping On</li> <li>• Posture Program</li> <li>• In-home respite care</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Via technology</li> <li>• Group outings</li> <li>• Day Centres</li> <li>• Volunteer home visits</li> <li>• Social support</li> <li>• In-home respite</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help finding meaning in your life's journey</li> <li>• Responding to spiritual needs</li> </ul>

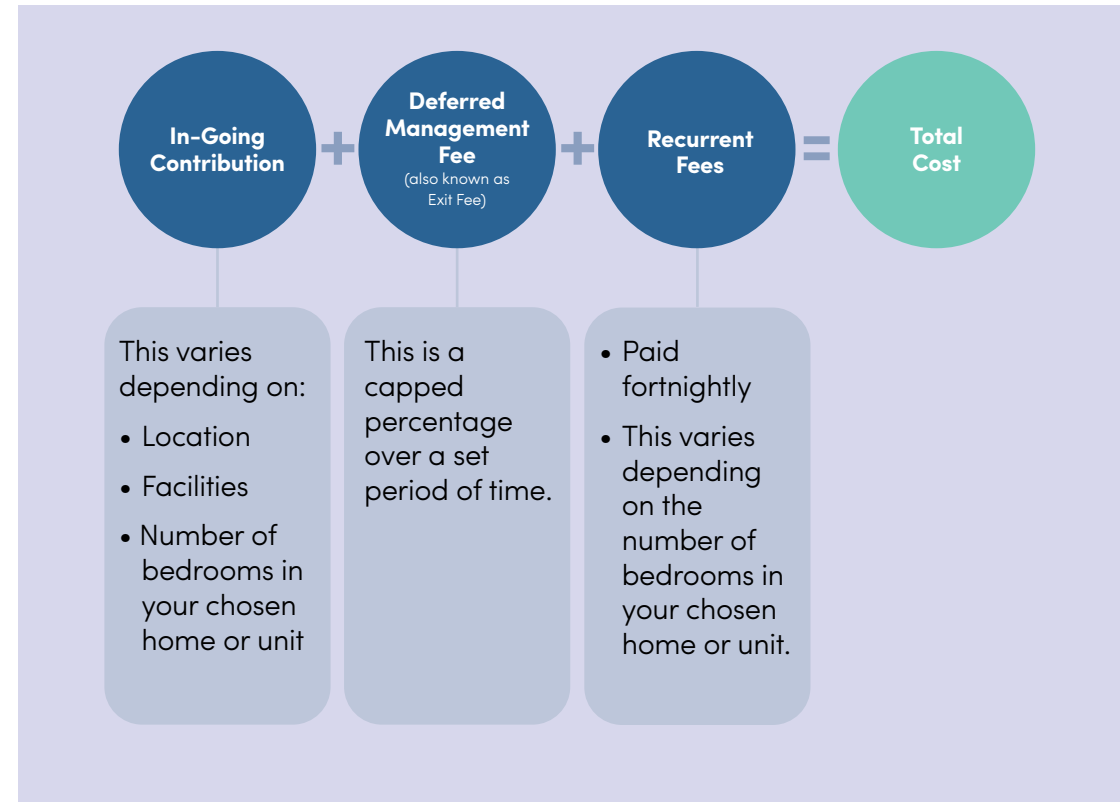


Need a home care service? Contact **CatholicCare** or **Catholic Healthcare** to learn more. See page 22.

## Retirement Living

Some of the many **benefits for choosing retirement living** include:

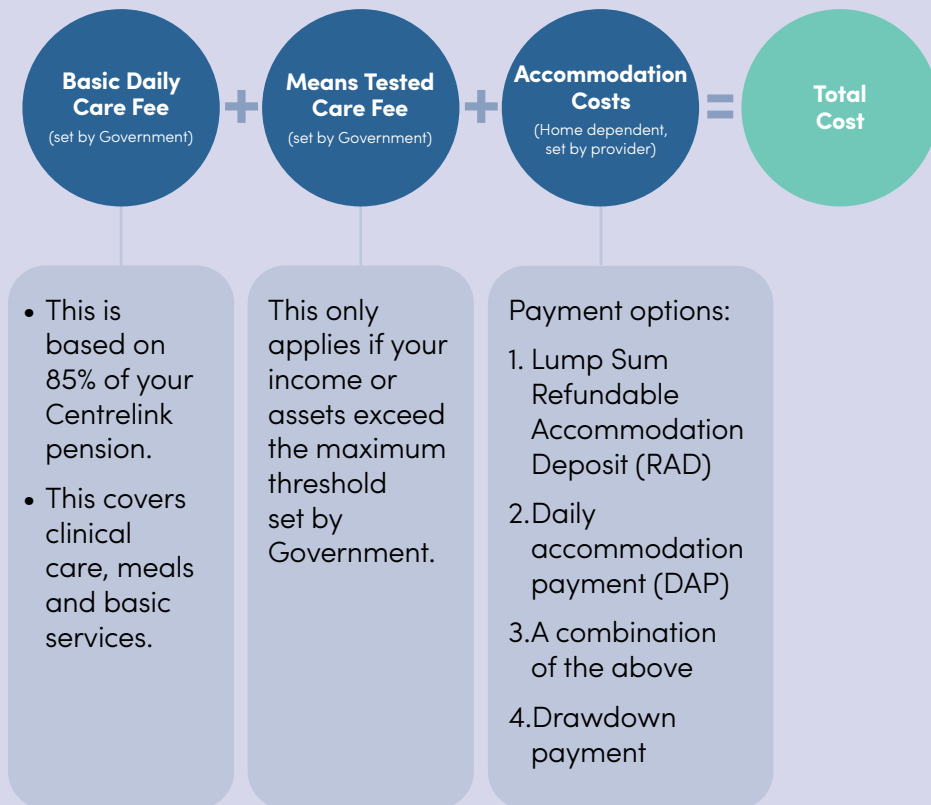
- Downsize with ease
- Community lifestyle
- Like-minded people
- Wide range of activities
- Community gardens
- Home maintenance provided



## Residential Aged Care

Some of the many **reasons people choose residential aged care** include:

- Ageing in place
- Dementia care
- Pastoral/spiritual care
- Permanent care
- Respite care
- Palliative care



## Masterclass 4 - Planning Ahead - Financial & Legal Decisions

In order to make planning ahead decisions, a person must have the capacity to do so. Generally, when a person has capacity to make a particular decision they can:

- Understand the facts and the choices involved
- Weigh up the consequences, and
- Communicate the decision.

If someone is incapable of making the decisions, various people may be involved. Depending on the situation, this is usually the individual who is directly concerned with the decision-maker when planning ahead needs to happen. They could either be a concerned family member, a carer or a friend.

## Select Power of Attorney and Enduring Guardian

Your attorney, appointed under a Power of Attorney, can manage your assets and make decisions about your finances like paying bills and managing investments. An attorney can also sign legal documents for you. It is important to choose an attorney carefully as they are in a position of trust and have a responsibility to act in your best interests. Your appointed Enduring Guardian can make health and lifestyle decisions for you. For example, choices about where you live and the services you receive such as healthcare.

It is recommended that you choose a different person to act as your Power of Attorney to the person you choose as your Enduring Guardian and appoint someone with similar values to you as your Enduring Guardian.

## Prepare a Will

A Will helps to ensure that your assets will be distributed according to your wishes when you die. To ensure that your wishes are fulfilled, it is important to create a Will and select individuals who you would like your assets to go to. If you don't have a valid Will, legislation determines which family members are entitled to your assets when you die.

## Executor of a Will

You must choose an executor who administers your estate and carries out your wishes after you die. An executor should have a basic understanding of the law and tax rules and they may need to resolve any conflict that may arise between beneficiaries. They can also be held personally liable for any mistakes that are made in the administration of a complex estate.

## Updating a Will

Wills should be updated regularly to reflect your current circumstances. Situations that may cause you to consider updating your Will include:

- Buying or selling a house
- Marriage or a new de facto relationship
- Separation or divorce
- Major travel plans



- Retirement
- Major health concerns
- Change of beneficiary or executor
- Death of a loved one
- Coming into an inheritance

## Advanced Care Directive

You can let people know your preferences about your healthcare and treatment. This document is prepared from your perspective and used as a guide for future healthcare decision making in case you are seriously ill or injured, and unable to communicate your preferred care and treatment decisions.

This document should be kept in a place that is easy for you or someone else to find, can be shared with your medical team or uploaded onto "My Health Record".

## Secure document storage

Your Will and other planning ahead documents should be stored in a secure location. Many people store their Will and other documents at home where it can be stolen, lost or damaged. If a Will cannot be located when required, it could cost the estate thousands of dollars. There is also a serious risk your assets will not be distributed as you would have intended because the court may decide that you didn't have a Will.

The lawyer who prepared your Will may be able to store it for you.



# Masterclass 5 – Digital (& Personal) Safety

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## Keep yourself and your device up to date

Regularly read senior friendly technology sites like Be Connected and Scam Watch to stay informed about current scams and emerging technologies. Think of it as digital current affairs.

## Updating your software

We can be tempted to just skip the software updates on our phones and laptops. However updating your software offers one of the easiest and best guards to fix any weaknesses in your software. It installs new “gates”, to keep cybercriminals out of your computer and fixes any bugs that the software may have. It improves your device’s performance and makes it more secure. It’s like a tune up for your car.

## Turn on “Multi-Factor Authentication” (MFA)

Multifactor Authentication requires 2 steps to access your device / info, such as a code sent to your email or phone. It takes a couple of extra steps, but MFA makes it far more difficult for scammers to get into your system and access important and personal documents. It is like having a security screen door, as well as locked front door.

## Passwords vs Passphrases

If a password puts a padlock on your account, a passphrase gives its own security system! Passphrases use four or more random words, or even short sentences as your password, such as ‘Purple Duck Potato Boat or “Yesterday I went fishing, caught nothing”.

When you create a passphrase, make it long and unpredictable – do not use well known lyrics, poems or catchphrases. Aim for at least 14 characters with random words that you will remember, and keep those hackers guessing!

## Back up your device



Performing a backup is when you make a copy of your important files and put them somewhere secure that sits separately to your computer. It’s like photocopying precious photos to keep in a safe place in case you lose the originals.

When you back up your computer, phone or tablet, copies of your files are saved online to a “cloud” which is just a way to describe an online storage warehouse. Alternatively, you can save your backups on your own external hard drive.

CatholicCare has partnered with the Australian Federal Government to host parish based digital and cyber skill workshops for older adults in parishes that caters to all levels. This is a relaxed and informal way to learn the wonders and ways technology can assist you as a senior, in your everyday life and entertainment.



If you are concerned about a cybercrime or wish to report something, call the **Cyber Security Hotline** on **1300 CYBER1 (1300 292 371)**.

## Avoiding Financial Abuse

### Let's be clear, our legal and human rights do not diminish with age

The natural order of life sees us enter the world vulnerable, needing support of family and community to survive and thrive. The same is true as we age.

With changing social and family networks, it can leave some older adults vulnerable to elder abuse in its various forms.

### Prevalence of elder abuse in Australia

The Australian National Elder Abuse Prevalence Study of 2021 estimates the prevalence of elder abuse among community dwelling people aged 65 and older in Australia is 14.8%. This roughly converts to a 1 in 6 prevalence. The most common form of abuse is emotional abuse (11.7%).

The good news is that many risk factors can be reduced with simple, proactive steps. Staying socially connected is a key protective factor—take the initiative to maintain strong relationships with family and friends rather than waiting for them to reach out. Embrace technology to stay engaged, whether through video calls, online groups, or social apps. Learning how to navigate the digital world can help you stay connected, informed, and supported, making a significant difference in overall wellbeing.

While these actions may be easier said than done for many, they are generally achievable, especially for those actively involved in their local parish.

Our local communities offer countless opportunities to attend events that not only entertain and educate but also provide secondary benefits, such as reducing social isolation and, by extension, elder abuse. Consistent communication and support from trusted individuals help build protective networks. [National Elder Abuse Prevalence Study: Final Report](#)

Come along to the Ageing Well Masterclass and discover the general risk factors plus how to fix, manage and mitigate Elder Abuse in your community.



**1800 ELDERHelp (1800 353 374)** is a free call phone number that automatically redirects callers seeking information and advice on elder abuse with the existing phone line service in their jurisdiction. The phone line has been established in collaboration with state and territory governments.

# Masterclass 6 – Ageing Gracefully, Living Fruitfully

## Ageism

- How we think feel and act towards others and ourselves based on age.
- Prejudice or discrimination on the basis of a person's age.
- How you see yourself is often different to how you believe others see you.

## Grief

- This is a natural and significant part of being human.
- The intense feelings of early grief become less intense over time, but that isn't to say a sound, smell, something you see, or a thought won't trigger an unexpected response once again.
- Everyone's grief is different, personal and unique.
- Only a small percentage of us will go on to need professional or expert help in our grief and it's important that we get it.
- For most, all that is needed is to be with someone who will listen to us and be alongside us in whatever we're experiencing.



“We grieve the loves we've lost. We grieve our abilities vanishing through illness or age. We grieve the loss of faith in our religion. We grieve our children leaving home. We grieve the paths we didn't walk. We grieve the family we never had. We grieve the suffering of the planet.

But while grief may look like an expression of pain that serves no purpose, it is actually the soul's acknowledgment of what we value.”

Excerpt from the book **Belonging: Remembering Ourselves Home** by Toko-pa Turner.

## Honouring the Soul

The ageing process is designed by God and nature to force the soul, whether it wants to or not, to delve ever deeper into the mystery of life, of community, of God, and of itself. Our soul is not meant to dim with age. We can stay young in soul, long after the body lets us down us.

Our spirituality is connected to our soul, but rather to our religion or faith. Spirituality is about our sources of meaning and hope and connected to what gives purpose to our lives.

## The five gifts of Ageing: Ignatian Spirituality

1. **The Present** – Living in the now and allowing yourself to look to the future with hope.
2. **Interior Freedom** – To be who you are, free from expectations.
3. **Letting Go** – Of the things that aren't necessary in our lives.
4. **Gratitude** – Seeing every day as a gift.
5. **Wisdom** – The wisdom that comes from living a long life.

## Fruitfulness

### *“In old age They shall bear fruit” – Psalm 92:15*

The Scriptures tell us that old age is a blessing, and the elderly are not outcasts to be shunned but living signs of the goodness of God who bestows life in abundance.

There are many ways that we can be fruitful:

- Through offering **our time**
- Through offering **presence**
- Through offering **memories**
- Through **blessing**



## Sacraments

As members of the Church, we are accompanied in Ageing Gracefully and Living Fruitfully.

- **The Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick** – A Sacrament of the Catholic Church which celebrates our faith in the healing touch of Christ in our lives. It is meant for anyone who is suffering a serious illness: physical, emotional, mental or spiritual. The Sacrament may be received at any time during a person's illness, especially before surgery or treatment. Sacraments are for the living.
- **Communion to the Sick and Housebound** – When a minister or priest brings Communion, the sick or elderly person shares in the eucharistic meal of the community. This holy Communion demonstrates the support and concern of the community for its members who are not able to be present. When the Eucharist is brought to the home, all members of the household may receive Communion with the sick person.

# Masterclass 7: Sharing Circle

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We trust that our Ageing Well Masterclasses have been valuable to you. Should you have any questions or wish to share feedback, please feel free to reach out to us—we'd love to hear from you:

## CatholicCare SYDNEY

### **CatholicCare Sydney**

P: 13 18 19  
E: [connect@catholiccare.org](mailto:connect@catholiccare.org)  
W: [catholiccare.org](http://catholiccare.org)

CatholicCare Sydney is a faith-based organisation dedicated to supporting the Sydney community through a range of services, including Home Care, Allied Health, Disability Support, Pastoral Care, and Family, Youth, and Children's Services. Our holistic approach is designed to help you thrive, and live life to the full.



### **Catholic Healthcare**

P: 1300 294 442  
E: [care@chcs.com.au](mailto:care@chcs.com.au)  
W: [catholichealthcare.com.au](http://catholichealthcare.com.au)

Catholic Healthcare is a faith-based provider of Residential Aged Care, Home Care Services and Retirement Living. Our holistic approach ensures we will respond to your physical, emotional and spiritual needs.



### **Grief Care**

P: +61 2 9646 6908  
E: [team@griefcare.com.au](mailto:team@griefcare.com.au)  
W: [griefcare.com.au](http://griefcare.com.au)

Grief Care offers empathy and compassion services to individuals, families and communities living with the impact of loss, grief, trauma and bereavement. We're a team of qualified pastoral care practitioners, counsellors, educators, and spiritual directors.



W: [ageing-well.org](http://ageing-well.org)  
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