Grief and Trauma Support Package

Electronic direct mail (EDM) content – short and long

**[Short content] Title: Grief and trauma support and advice for the aged care sector**

COVID-19 has impacted many people living and working in aged care, including aged care residents, home care recipients, their families, families of choice, friends, loved ones, community visitors and aged care staff.

Many people living, working, or caring for those in aged care may be suffering grief from the death of a loved one due to COVID-19 or from missing their visitors, their routines, and loss of important life events. People in and around aged care may also be experiencing trauma as a response to traumatic events, isolation, physical distancing, COVID-19 hotspot lockdowns, ongoing uncertainty, and visitor restrictions.

It’s ok to seek help. The Australian Government has funded mental health, grief, trauma, and education experts to produce online resources and training and support you either in-person or on the phone.

Please encourage people in your community who might need help to engage with the services and resources provided:

**Support for grief, loss, and bereavement**

The Australian Centre for Grief and Bereavement provides support, advice, and counselling in a one-to-one or group setting through video calls and in person.

Call 1800 222 200, 9am-5pm, Monday to Friday or visit [www.aged.grief.org.au](http://www.aged.grief.org.au)

**Resources about the impacts of trauma**

Phoenix Australia offers information and resources for older people impacted by trauma and their families, loved ones and aged care staff. Visit [www.phoenixaustralia.org/aged-care](http://www.phoenixaustralia.org/aged-care)

**Help for people living with dementia where behaviours are impacting their care**

Dementia Support Australia has a free national service providing 24-hour help, 365 days a year. Their dementia consultants provide support to people who care for someone living with dementia. Call 1800 699 799, 24-hours, 7 days a week. Visit www.dementia.com.au

**Advocacy and support**

The Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN) is a free, confidential, and independent service supporting people receiving or applying for Government-subsidised aged care. OPAN helps you resolve any aged care issues and understand your aged care rights. Call 1800 700 600, 6am-10pm, 7 days a week. Visit www.opan.org.au

**Free, confidential, and accessible**

All services and resources are free, confidential and respect your culture, religion, identity, and lifestyles. Translated brochures in 64 languages and an Indigenous design, and posters are available for download and to order in print on the program [resources](https://www.health.gov.au/resources/collections/covid-19-aged-care-grief-and-trauma-support-resources) page. Trauma fact sheets are available on the Phoenix website, and Grief fact sheets are available on the Australian Centre for Grief and Bereavement website.

Interpreting is also available, call 131 450 for Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS), ask for your language to connect. Or call 1300 010 877 for Auslan Connections, email interpreter.bookings@deafservices.org.au, fax 07 3892 8511 or SMS 0407 647 591.

For more information, visit the [Australian Government Department of Health website](https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/aged-care/advice-on-aged-care-during-covid-19/grief-and-trauma-support-and-advice-for-the-aged-care-sector) or contact: ageing.and.diversity@health.gov.au

**Long content**

**Title: Grief and trauma support and advice for the aged care sector**

COVID-19 has impacted many people living, working, and caring in the aged care sector. This includes aged care residents, home care recipients, their families, families of choice, friends, loved ones, community visitors and aged care staff.

Some people may be experiencing grief and bereavement because they have lost a loved one or someone they care for due to COVID-19. Others in aged care may be experiencing grief or loss due to the COVID-19 hotspot lockdowns and restrictions experienced in aged care:

* missing their visitors and routines,
* absent regular staff; or
* unable to celebrate important events.

The lockdowns, social isolation and ongoing uncertainty may have caused emotional trauma. COVID-19 and the associated restrictions may have raised past trauma, for example from their home country, childhood, or past pandemic occurrences. While some people can work through these feelings and recover, others may need help.

It’s ok to seek help. The Australian Government has funded mental health, grief, trauma, and education experts to produce online resources and training modules and support you either in-person or on the phone.

**Support for grief, loss, and bereavement**

Many older people using aged care, their loved ones, and the staff that care for them may be experiencing grief, loss, or bereavement because of COVID-19. The Australian Centre for Grief and Bereavement provides support, advice, and counselling in a one-to-one or group setting through phone calls, video calls and in person.

You can free call 1800 22 22 00 for phone counselling, advice on how to help your organisation or people you care for. Visit [www.aged.grief.org.au](http://www.aged.grief.org.au) for resources. Download the ‘My Grief’ app for tips on how to help yourself, and how to support a loved one.

**Resources about the impacts of trauma**

COVID-19 may have exposed old or new emotional trauma. While some people recover, others may develop mental health problems and need help.

Phoenix Australia are trauma and education experts, and have developed information, tools, guidance, videos, and self-care strategies. The resources are free and available to people living and working in aged care, their friends, family and loved ones.

Go to [www.phoenixaustralia.org/aged-care](http://www.phoenixaustralia.org/aged-care) to download fact sheets, view webinars and use training.

**Help for people living with dementia where behaviours are impacting their care**

Aged care residents living with dementia may have changed behaviors because of COVID-19 restrictions.

Dementia Support Australia has a free national service providing 24-hour help, 7 days a week. Specialised engagement consultants, clinical support, plans and strategies, advice and information services are available to people who care for someone living with dementia.

Need help managing changed behaviours? Call 1800 699 799 or visit [www.dementia.com.au](http://www.dementia.com.au).

**Advocacy and support**

The Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN) is independent of Government and aged care providers. OPAN supports people receiving or applying for Government-subsidised aged care. The network offers free and confidential advocacy, COVID-19 advisory support and referral services for senior Australians accessing aged care, and their families and friends.

Call OPAN on 1800 700 600, 6am-10pm, 7 days a week, or visit [www.opan.com.au](http://www.opan.com.au).

**Free, confidential, and accessible**

All services and resources are free, confidential and respect your culture, religion, identity, and lifestyles. Translated brochures in 64 languages and an Indigenous design, and posters are available for download and to order in print on the program [resources](https://www.health.gov.au/resources/collections/covid-19-aged-care-grief-and-trauma-support-resources) page. Trauma fact sheets are available on the Phoenix website, and Grief fact sheets are available on the Australian Centre for Grief and Bereavement website.

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**Complementing existing mental health supports**

The Grief and Trauma Support Program complements existing Australian Government-supported mental health services. Crisis support is available from [Lifeline](http://www.lifeline.org.au) and [Beyond Blue](http://www.beyondblue.org.au), see [Health to Health](http://www.headtohealth.gov.au) for more services or see your GP.

**For more information**

Visit the [Australian Government Department of Health website](https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/aged-care/advice-on-aged-care-during-covid-19/grief-and-trauma-support-and-advice-for-the-aged-care-sector) or contact: ageing.and.diversity@health.gov.au