
The best gift this Christmas?
Making sure they're ok.
BlueCare
Live life your way



This festive season, take a moment to see how your older loved ones are really doing.

Getting the most out of this guide

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A festive visit can reveal more than you realise.

The presents may be wrapped and the table set, but one of the most meaningful gifts you can give this Christmas is your time and attention.

Maybe Mum isn't as keen to tackle her famous Christmas pudding these days, or perhaps Uncle Pete seems a little less steady getting around the garden.

While these changes may seem small, they can also be gentle signs that a little extra support could help your loved one stay safe, independent and doing the things they enjoy.

This guide will help you look beyond the festivities. Not just to catch up, but to check in to make sure that someone you love is doing ok.

And if they're not, here are some ways to support them so they can continue to live well, with confidence, dignity and the support they need to make the most of every day.

Spot the signs – is it time to have a conversation?

Your Christmas checklist

As you spend time together this festive season, keep an eye out for:

Around the home

+ Is it less tidy or festive than usual?
+ Are there unopened letters, unpaid bills or signs of forgotten tasks?
+ Is the kitchen well-stocked and safe to use?

Physical wellbeing

+ Are they moving comfortably and steadily?
+ Have they lost or gained weight unexpectedly?
+ Do they seem tired, stiff, or low in energy?

Mental and emotional wellbeing

+ Are they more withdrawn, forgetful, or anxious?
+ Have they stopped enjoying hobbies or traditions?
+ Are conversations repetitive or disjointed?

Personal care

+ Are they keeping up with grooming and hygiene?
+ Is clothing clean and suited to the weather?

One or two changes might just reflect a busy time. But a pattern of changes could be a sign that it's time for a conversation about support.





How you can help your loved one stay well.

Small things you can do that make a big difference.

1. Keep them moving

Regular movement helps maintain strength, balance and mobility as we age.

+ invite them for a walk while you're together
+ suggest a local exercise or balance class
+ help them connect with an exercise physiologist who can design a safe program tailored to their needs.

2. Support healthy eating

Many older people eat less as they age, particularly if cooking has become difficult or they're living alone.

+ share nutritious meals together
+ stock the fridge with healthy options
+ organise meal delivery services
+ encourage them to speak with a dietitian if they're losing weight or lacking energy.

3. Don't brush off health concerns

Poor sleep, continence issues, aches and pains, dizziness or reduced mobility are often seen as a normal part of ageing, but support is available.

If you've noticed changes, encourage your loved one to speak with their GP or connect with allied health professionals such as physiotherapists or occupational therapists who may be able to help.

4. Help them stay connected

Staying socially and mentally active is just as important as physical health.

+ encourage regular catch-ups with friends and family
+ help them rediscover hobbies they enjoy
+ teach them new technology skills to stay in touch
+ explore local community groups and activities together.

If they seem withdrawn, anxious or unusually low in mood, it may be worth encouraging them to speak with a health professional.

Start small, start now

You don't need to have all the answers. A little support today can help your loved one stay independent, connected and doing the things they love for years to come.

Tip: These services are often available through *My Aged Care*, and can be arranged via providers like BlueCare – many at no cost, depending on eligibility.



How to start the conversation.

Conversation starters that show you care.

To gently open the door

- "I know we usually talk about everyone else – but how are you really doing?"
- "Now that we're spending more time together, I just want to make sure you're feeling okay with everything at home."
- "Is there anything that's felt a bit harder lately – even just little things?"

Around the home

- "I noticed you haven't been using the garden much lately – have you been feeling steady on your feet outside?"
- "Would it help to have someone come in now and then to give you a hand? Just to take a bit off your plate."

Food and daily routine

- "Have you been eating okay lately? What's been your go-to meal?"
- "I was thinking of making a few freezer meals for you – any favourites I should know about?"
- "How are you managing with shopping and cooking? Would it help to have some meals sorted for you?"



Health and mobility

+ “You’ve always been so active – are you still managing your walks or getting out a bit?”
+ “Have you noticed any little niggles lately – sore knees, stiff back, anything like that?”
+ “I read that even small exercises can really help with balance – would you ever think about seeing a physio just to keep things ticking over?”

Memory, mood and emotions

+ “I’ve noticed you seemed a bit quieter lately – is everything feeling okay?”
+ “Are you sleeping alright these days?”
+ “Have you still been catching up with friends or popping out to your usual spots?”
+ “Have you felt a bit flat lately, or are you doing alright emotionally?”

In the Christmas context

+ “It’s so nice to all be together – how are you finding the lead-up this year?”
+ “Is there anything about Christmas that’s felt a bit too much this year?”
+ “Would it help if we looked at a few things for the new year – just to make things smoother for you at home?”

Framing support positively

+ “You’ve always looked after everyone else – maybe it’s time we found some ways to look after you too.”
+ “I know you like doing things your own way – but even a bit of help could just make life easier.”
+ “Support doesn’t mean giving things up – it can mean doing more of what you love, with less stress.”
+ “If you had a magic wand and could make a few things easier – what would you change?”

Helpful tips:

+ **Choose a quiet moment – not in the middle of the meal or chaos.**
+ **Speak side-by-side – during a walk, while doing the dishes, or while driving – it can feel less intense.**
+ **Avoid “shoulds” and “you need to” – instead, ask open-ended questions.**
+ **Let silence do some of the work – people often open up after a pause.**
+ **Be reassuring – remind them this is about keeping them well, not taking away their independence.**



Taking the next step

1. Visit My Aged Care

Learn about the *Commonwealth Home Support Program* or *Support at Home*.

2. Talk to BlueCare

We can guide you through the process – from assessments to setting up support tailored to your loved one's goals.

3. Stay involved

Keep checking in. Support needs may change, and showing up with care makes all the difference.

This Christmas, give the gift of support

Checking in on your loved one's wellbeing isn't about taking over – it's about making sure they have the tools and support to live the life they want.

Because ageing well means more than just managing – it means thriving.

BlueCare is here to help

For advice, support or to start a conversation about aged care:

Call 1300 258 322

Visit bluecare.org.au

Essential helplines and resources for supporting older loved ones

Aged care and home support services

My Aged Care
The Australian Government's central portal for aged care services, assessments, eligibility and referrals.

- www.myagedcare.gov.au
- Helpline: 1800 200 422
  (8am–8pm weekdays, 10am–2pm Saturdays)

BlueCare
Queensland-based aged care provider offering home care, nursing, wellbeing, and personal support.

- www.bluecare.org.au
- Contact: 1300 258 322

Carer support

Carer Gateway
National service for unpaid carers: free counselling, coaching, respite and support.

- www.carergateway.gov.au
- Helpline: 1800 422 737

Carers Queensland
Support, advocacy and education for carers in QLD.

- www.carersqld.com.au
- Carer Advisory Service: 1800 242 636

Senior rights and advocacy

Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN)
Free independent advice and advocacy for people receiving aged care.

- www.opan.org.au
- Helpline: 1800 700 600

Seniors Enquiry Line (Queensland)
Free information on topics like aged care, health, pensions, legal issues and social activities.

- www.seniorsenquiryline.com.au
- Call: 1300 135 500

Mental health and wellbeing

Older Persons Mental Health Line – Beyond Blue
Information and advice about depression, anxiety and other mental health issues in older Australians.

- www.beyondblue.org.au
- Support line: 1300 224 636 (24/7)

FriendLine (for older Australians feeling lonely or isolated)
A friendly, anonymous chat line to help older people stay socially connected.

- www.friendline.org.au
- Call: 1800 424 287 (10am–8pm every day)

Lifeline
24/7 crisis support and suicide prevention services for anyone in emotional distress.

- www.lifeline.org.au
- Support line: 13 11 14 (24/7)

Legal, financial and health planning

Council on the Ageing (COTA) Queensland
Resources and advocacy for older Australians, including financial literacy and rights.

- www.cotaqld.org.au

Palliative Care Queensland
Information and support for families managing end-of-life care or health planning.

- www.palliativecareqld.org.au
- Contact: 07 3842 3242

Healthy ageing and wellness

Healthdirect Australia
National health information on managing chronic conditions, mobility, medications and general health.

- www.healthdirect.gov.au
- 24/7 Nurse Helpline: 1800 022 222

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BlueCare | Lifeline | ARRCS | The Wesley Hospital | Buderim Private Hospital
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