

# Accessing the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) in SA

This fact sheet provides older people with important information as COVID-19 restrictions are being eased.

South Australia is taking a measured, staged approach to easing restrictions, which balances health, economic and social considerations.

COVID-19 remains a risk to the community, particularly for older people. Unlike some other risks present in our community, an uncontrolled COVID-19 outbreak can grow considerably if there are no measures in place.

More information on current restrictions is available on the [SA Government COVID-19 website](#).

### Key principles as of 29 June

- > **Density requirements:** There is no limit on the total number of people at a venue, however, there must be a maximum of 1 person per 2 square metres.
- > **Physical distancing:** People should practise physical distancing (keeping 1.5 metres distance from others) wherever and whenever possible.

### What does this mean for older South Australians?

The current risk of COVID-19 transmission in South Australia is low, however, older people and people with chronic health conditions are more at risk of serious infection from COVID-19 and should continue to take extra precautions. Those at risk should talk to their doctor about what is appropriate for them.

To maintain social connections and improve wellbeing, older South Australians are encouraged to resume activities, within the current level of South Australian restrictions.

South Australian CHSP providers must ensure the safe delivery of essential aged care services to protect their employees, volunteers and clients. If there is a change to service delivery, CHSP providers must contact their clients as soon as possible.

You or your family may need help discussing service delivery concerns with your provider.

Contact the Aged Rights Advocacy Service on 1800 700 600 from 9:30am to 4:00pm Monday to Friday for free, confidential advice.

Good hygiene practices like washing your hands regularly, covering your coughs and sneezes with a tissue, and maintaining physical distancing wherever possible are the best ways to protect yourself and others from COVID-19.

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### What is the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP)

The CHSP is an entry-level home support program. It assists people aged over 65 years, or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples aged over 50 years, to live safe and independent lives in their own homes and communities.

The CHSP funds a number of subsidised services, including:

- > domestic assistance (such as unaccompanied grocery shopping, house cleaning and linen services)
- > transport and meals
- > home maintenance (including gardening, lawn mowing) and home modifications
- > goods, equipment and assistive technology
- > personal care and social support (such as regular web and telephone contact)
- > nursing, allied health and therapy services.

The CHSP also supports people caring for older South Australians through planned respite services for older people, which enable carers to take a break from their usual caring role.

To find out more about the services available, contact My Aged Care on 1800 200 422.

For support for you or a loved one, you can call the Older Persons COVID-19 Support Line on 1800 171 866, Monday to Friday (except public holidays) from 8:30am to 6pm.

### Is it safe to access CHSP services in South Australia?

The CHSP promotes and supports the safety and wellbeing of older South Australians in their home. This includes helping to safeguard you from COVID-19.

South Australian aged care workers visiting your home must take all necessary measures to ensure you stay safe.

### Can I access SA CHSP services without an aged care assessment?

You do not need an assessment if you need:

- > urgent CHSP services
- > service for a limited time due to COVID-19
- > service ending by 31 July 2020.

In all other, non-urgent situations, CHSP services should not start before an assessment has taken place.

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If you need permanent care or care beyond 31 July 2020, you need to arrange an assessment through My Aged Care. Your CHSP service provider can help you with this.

For access to new or additional aged care services call My Aged Care on **1800 200 422** to discuss your needs. My Aged Care can also create or update your client record and arrange for an assessment.

### When can I go back to my social support group or other group activities?

South Australian providers are able to re-open social support services and must continue to maintain physical distancing and infection control measures. Providers must have completed and put in place a COVID Safe Plan, and must follow South Australian requirements, including density requirements.

If your social support activities stopped due to COVID-19, contact your CHSP provider for advice and information.

**Remember: Stay home if you are sick or feel unwell and talk to your GP about being tested for COVID-19 if you have symptoms.**

### What if I am worried about going to the shops for groceries or have trouble preparing meals?

The CHSP may be able to help you with grocery shopping or preparing meals. This may include Domestic Assistance (unaccompanied shopping) and meals (delivered to your home).

To find out more about these services, contact My Aged Care on **1800 200 422**. They may refer you to a local CHSP provider who can deliver these services to you.

### Can I still get my lawn mowed or my house cleaned during the pandemic?

Yes, most CHSP service types are essential aged care services. Essential services should continue during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Can I resume my usual activities and interests?

If you do go out or resume some of your usual activities or interests, you should continue to stay at least 1.5 metres away from others where possible, and keep up good hygiene and handwashing practices.

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You must **self-quarantine** if you are returning from overseas, New South Wales, Victoria or the Australian Capital Territory, or if you have been in close contact with someone who has received a positive test result for COVID-19 in the past 14 days.

### What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Symptoms include fever, chills, cough, sore throat, runny nose, shortness of breath, or loss of taste and smell (with no alternative illness that explains these symptoms).

### What can we do to protect ourselves from COVID-19?

- > Cover your coughs and sneezes with your elbow or a tissue.
- > Dispose of used tissues immediately into a rubbish bin and wash your hands.
- > Wash your hands often with soap and water, including before and after eating, after going to the toilet, and when you have been out to shops or other places.
- > Use alcohol-based hand sanitiser when hand washing is not possible.
- > Regularly clean and disinfect surfaces you have touched.
- > Stay at least 1.5 metres away from other people as much as possible. This does not include your family or those you live with.
- > Make sure any medical conditions are well managed or under control so you are as healthy as possible:
  - speak to your GP about what is best for you, including a health action plan that suits your personal circumstances, your immune system, and medications.
- > Look after your mental and physical wellbeing, and maintain or resume connections with family, friends, your community and activities or interests that are important to you.
- > Ask for help if you need support:
  - the SA COVID-19 Mental Health Support Line is available 7 days a week from 8am to 8pm on **1800 632 753** or visit [www.SACOVIDMentalHealth.org.au](http://www.SACOVIDMentalHealth.org.au)
- > Download the COVIDSafe app to your smartphone for the times you do need to go out:
  - the Older Persons COVID-19 Support Line can help you with this by calling: **1800 171 866**.
- > Stay home if you feel unwell and talk to your GP about being tested for COVID-19 if you have cold or flu like symptoms. Alternatively you can visit a dedicated COVID-19 or Respiratory Clinic to get tested.

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### Where can I go for more information?

- > **SA Government COVID-19 website:** [www.covid-19.sa.gov.au/recovery](http://www.covid-19.sa.gov.au/recovery)
- > **SA Health website:** [www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/COVID2019](http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/COVID2019)
- > **SA COVID-19 Information Line** 1800 253 787
- > **SA COVID-19 Mental Health Support Line** (8am-8pm, 7 days) 1800 632 753  
[SACOVIDMentalHealth.org.au](http://SACOVIDMentalHealth.org.au)
- > **Older Person's COVID-19 Support Line** 1800 171 866  
(advice, support, referrals and connection for Older Australians)
- > **Aged Rights Advocacy Service** 1800 700 600  
(free, confidential service to older people, or their representatives, living in a retirement village) [sa.agedrights.asn.au](http://sa.agedrights.asn.au)
- > **COTA SA** [cota.org.au/information/covid19](http://cota.org.au/information/covid19)
- > **Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) resources:**  
[www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/commonwealth-home-support-programme-chsp/commonwealth-home-support-programme-chsp-resources](http://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/commonwealth-home-support-programme-chsp/commonwealth-home-support-programme-chsp-resources)

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### For more information

Office for Ageing Well  
Department for Health and Wellbeing  
SA Health, Government of South Australia  
[www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/COVID2019](http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/COVID2019)

Information as of 29 June 2020

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