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Blind Citizens Australia

## How to Prepare for your My Aged Care Assessment

When you complete your initial screening with the My Aged Care Contact Centre, you will be referred for one of two types of assessments:

* A Commonwealth Home Support Programme (Entry Level) assessment with the Regional Assessment Service OR
* A Comprehensive Assessment with the Aged Care Assessment Team.

You will be contacted by the service that is completing the assessment. They will arrange a time to meet with you in your home. You are able to have this assessment at a time that suits you. You can also have a support person attend with you if you would like.

When you speak to the service that will be conducting your assessment, you should inform them about your needs in relation to access to information. If you cannot read standard print and require information in another format such as large print, Braille, audio or accessible electronic text, it is important for the assessor to be aware of this ahead of time so they can provide the information in your preferred format. Remember that it is your right to be provided with information in a format that you can access independently. You should also inform the service if you will need assistance with communication, e.g., a translator or an Auslan interpreter.

## Support Person or Advocate

It may be helpful to have a friend, family member or advocate at the assessment with you. They may be able to take notes on your behalf, provide an additional perspective and support you as you discuss your needs.

If you would like to have someone with you, it may be good to spend some time with them beforehand and discuss what you would like to achieve from the assessment to ensure they can effectively support you towards the outcomes you need.

## Before your Assessment

In the days leading up to your assessment, it would be helpful to think about some of the following points and write down any relevant information.

* What services and support do you currently receive? – this can include things like support to maintain your home, assistance with grocery shopping, community transport services and the provision of meals. Even if you pay for a service privately, such as lawn mowing, it is important to mention this as it may be something that can be provided through My Aged Care.
* Are there any areas of your life where you are having difficulties? - this could include things like getting around safely in your local community, shopping for and preparing meals, cleaning your home, identifying bottles of medication and supplements, or checking whether your clothing is clean and not stained or marked.
* Is there any equipment you use or require? - this could include white canes, magnifiers, talking microwaves, desktop magnifiers and software programmes for computer use.
* Are there any areas of your home you have difficulty accessing safely? – This could include your kitchen, bathroom or outdoor areas.
* What informal supports do you have in place? If there are things that a friend or family member helps you with now, think about what might happen if that person was not able to assist you for a period of time. If you would not be able to do these tasks without their assistance, make a note of these also.
* What questions do you have about My Aged Care? If there are things you are not sure about, it may be a good idea to note these down so that you can ask during your assessment.

In addition to preparing for your assessment by asking these questions, you will also need:

* A Medicare card and one other form of ID proof e.g., DVA card, healthcare card or passport.
* Any referrals made by your doctor.

## During the Assessment

During your assessment, you will be asked a variety of questions about how you manage certain tasks, for example, showering and dressing.

It is a good idea to not just think about the tasks themselves, but also the other tasks that may be associated with them. Consider the following examples:

**Example 1:**

You may be able to shower yourself, but do you have difficulty buying shampoo and conditioner? Are you able to identify new personal care products when you purchase them?

**Example 2:**

You may be able to dress yourself, but do you have difficulty knowing whether your clothes match or whether they are marked or damaged?

**Example 3:**

You may be able to buy groceries and prepare meals, but do you have difficulty seeing the price of items or knowing whether fresh produce is of good quality? Are you able to read labels to determine if products are out of date?

It may also be helpful to talk these things through with a friend or family member, someone who knows you well and may be able to provide some insight on things you may not have considered.