

Struggling with your feelings about residential care

What will this mean for you?

Carers and families often struggle with their feelings when their family member needs residential care. This is only natural as it's one of the biggest decisions you are likely to face.

You may be wondering whether you have made the right decision. You may also have started to think about what this might mean for you. Financial and legal concerns may be on your mind, along with the worry about what your role will be in a residential care facility. The future may seem very uncertain.

Carers facing this transition experience mixed emotions. Loss and grief can be intense, as can guilt. There may also be a general feeling of bewilderment as to how you will manage this change.

"I was relieved, but devastated with guilt."

It is important to give yourself time to work through your thoughts and feelings, as there is no quick way of resolving these concerns.

Carers who have been through this, offer the following advice:

- ▣ Trust you have made the right decision about residential care.
- ▣ Have someone close to you who will listen.
- ▣ Let others help you recognise and sort out your feelings.
- ▣ Use carer counselling to help you through this phase.

How to get the support you need

Receiving help and support from others is not a sign of failure. It can help you to deal with what you are facing.

Family and friends are often the first people we turn to. At this time though they might not be the best people to offer objective support, as they too will be working through their thoughts and feelings about residential care.

Often there can be comfort in talking to someone outside of the family. Consider contacting the [Commonwealth Carer Resource Centre](#) (ph: 1800 242 636*) to speak confidentially to someone who understands:

- ▣ carers, the caring role and what you may be feeling;
- ▣ carer concerns regarding your ability to continue caring; and
- ▣ options that might be available.

The Commonwealth Carer Resource Centre can also:

- ▣ provide information about carer support groups; and
- ▣ arrange telephone or face-to-face counselling through the National Carer Counselling Program.

Most importantly, don't underestimate how difficult this time can be. Relieve some of the tension and anxiety by taking 'time out' when you need it. Give yourself the chance to switch off from all the thinking, planning and worrying you may have been doing. You may then feel refreshed and more able to confront the next task ahead.

Contact the [Commonwealth Carer Respite Centre](#) on 1800 059 059* for information and support in arranging respite care to suit your needs.



Further information:

☒ [National Carer Counselling Program](#) - call 1800 242 636.

Contact the [Commonwealth Carer Resource Centre](#) on 1800 242 636* to request the above information sheets be sent to you - or to find out about other information sheets in this series.

*Free call except from mobile phones. Mobile calls at mobile rates.

We do our best to keep these links up to date, but the internet changes all the time. If you can no longer access any of the above resources, please go to our [Internet Troubleshooting Guide](#), or email us at website@carersvic.org.au