

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

Thursday, 11 December 2025

### **KNOW YOUR RIGHTS: HELP AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE TO OLDER PEOPLE IN AGED CARE**

Older people are being reminded of the government's Financial Hardship Assistance program, amid concerns some people are finding the new Aged Care Act changes difficult to navigate and manage.

The new Act includes a range of benefits, such as an enforceable Statement of Rights, which strengthens protections for older people.

However, implementing this in everyday practice will take time and early feedback indicates that many older people aren't aware of their rights and lack the information needed to make informed decisions.

Examples include pressures of rising participant contributions, reduced purchasing power due to pricing changes, shifts in assessment processes, and uncertainty around the Support at Home letters and interim package releases.

Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN) CEO Craig Gear said no older person should be worse off under the changes and more must be done to raise awareness of the new Act and assistance available.

"The new Act is generational reform but is far from perfect. Challenges remain which require prompt action from government," Mr Gear said.

"Any service agreement must be fair, equitable, transparent and easy to understand. Older people have the right to negotiate the terms and service plan with their aged care provider and seek guidance from an independent advocate.

"If you're cutting back on essentials, receiving reminder notices or thinking about reducing services because of out-of-pocket costs, please know there is support available.

"You have the right to apply to have your contributions reduced or waived through the government's Financial Hardship Assistance program. While there are eligibility criteria, this exists so older people aren't left without essential care simply because fees have become unaffordable – and you have every right to ask for help early.

"OPAN is here to help. Resources covering a range of topics are available and we encourage people to call the Aged Care Advocacy Line on 1800 700 600 for support and assistance."

If older people are concerned they are facing genuinely unreasonable aged care costs, they can make a complaint to the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission.



## **MEDIA CONTACT**

William Sparling – 0416 628 276 – [media@opan.org.au](mailto:media@opan.org.au)

When reporting about older people please refer to the [media reporting guidelines](#) and for more information or media enquiries visit our [Media Centre](#).

## **IMPORTANT NOTICE TO MEDIA FOR STORIES RELATING TO OLDER PEOPLE**

It is critical to provide older people with an avenue to get support when covering stories about aged care. We strongly encourage you to include the following message in your story to enable older people to seek support:

*For information or support regarding aged care, please call the Aged Care Advocacy Line on 1800 700 600 or visit [opan.org.au](http://opan.org.au)*