

Advocacy and the Aged Care Volunteer Visitors Scheme

eLearning program



Who is OPAN?

The Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN) is made up of 9 state and territory member organisations that have been supporting older people to work through their issues with government-funded aged care services for more than 30 years.

What does OPAN do?

By connecting **older people** with aged care services that can meet their needs, supporting them to understand and exercise their rights, and helping them to stay connected to the people they care about.

Contact the Aged Care Advocacy Line on **1800 700 600** for free and confidential support.

About this training

OPAN wholeheartedly endorses the Aged Care Volunteer Visitors Scheme (ACVVS). We have developed this free training program in conjunction with the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing to help ACVVS volunteer coordinators and volunteer visitors link older people with advocacy services they are entitled to.

Who is this training for?

The training is aimed at all **ACVVS volunteer coordinators and volunteer visitors** and those who are considering becoming a volunteer visitor.

How long will it take to complete?

The course can be completed within **30 minutes**.

Format and assessment:

This short training is **self-paced and accessible online**. A certificate of completion is available to download upon fulfilling the course requirements.

Course outcomes:

Increased understanding of:

- advocacy services and the significant role advocates play
- the importance of the Statement of Rights
- the Serious Incident Response Scheme (SIRS) and the Aged Care Code of Conduct
- how aged care volunteer visitors can link older people with advocacy services without overstepping their role.

Register now

Visit education.opan.org.au/register

Contact education@opan.org.au with any questions.

Contact us

✉ education@opan.org.au

Aged Care Advocacy Line



1 800 700 600



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What to do if an older person is at risk



The Aged Care Volunteer Visitors Scheme (ACVVS) provides meaningful companionship to older people who might otherwise experience social isolation and loneliness. As a volunteer visitor, you are matched to an older person living independently at home or in residential aged care based on shared interests.

In building a relationship with an older person through regular chats, walks or other activities, you may see or hear something that concerns you and want to do something about it. It's important to remember that you are not a professional advocate or support worker.

The **ACVVS National Guidelines** are clear about what volunteer visitors can and cannot do to support an older person, especially when that older person is at risk of abuse or neglect. If you are concerned, you can provide information to the older person about advocacy services that are available to them, such as the Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN).

3.6.11 Advocacy

It is not the role of an ACVVS volunteer visitor to advocate for the older person. The visitor must notify their ACVVS volunteer coordinator if this situation arises. The visitor may provide information about the advocacy services available to the older person.

What the guidelines suggest

If you suspect an older person is experiencing abuse or neglect, **you must immediately report your concerns** to your ACVVS volunteer coordinator.

Elder abuse has been defined by the World Health Organisation as 'a single, or repeated act, or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust which causes harm or distress to an older person'.

There are different types of abuse:

- physical
- social
- chemical
- emotional
- sexual
- financial
- neglect

Elder abuse is a violation of human rights and a significant cause of injury, illness, lost productivity, isolation and despair.

Neglect has been defined as preventing an older person from accessing the necessities of life, or ignoring their requests for things like medication, food or clothing.

Aged Care Advocacy Line



1 800 700 600

Visit our website



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