

# Planning Care

Living with Dementia:  
A Resource Kit for Caregivers



Supported by QIC

# How can this kit help you?

This kit consists of a series of 4 booklets. This booklet on Planning Care provides you essential information, practical tips, activities and resources on dementia to support you in caring for your loved one with dementia.

It is designed for caregivers like yourself to learn about family discussion and the roles each family members can play, how to do early planning for your loved one's care preferences, tips on how to prevent falls and make your home more dementia-friendly, ways to bond with your loved one and move about safely using public transport etc. This in turn enables you to better cope with your caregiving journey, ensuring your loved one receives the best possible care.

If you know of someone who might need help or would like to find out more about the support and services for dementia, contact us at [ccmh@aic.sg](mailto:ccmh@aic.sg) or Agency for Integrated Care (AIC) hotline at **1800 650 6060**.

We appreciate your feedback on this kit and hope you can take a few minutes to share your comments by scanning the QR code. Thank you!



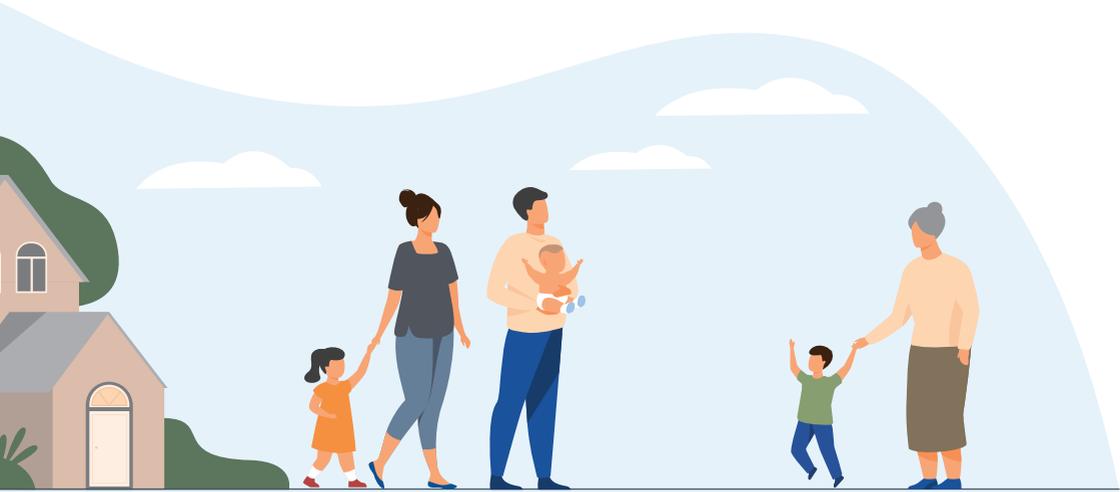
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# 1. Caregiving Arrangement

## Gathering the family for discussion

A family discussion can be very helpful when your loved one has been diagnosed with dementia and needs care. Some families may think it is taboo to discuss concerns revolving around dementia, but it is important to make clear that the family discussion is about honouring your loved one's wishes.



Different family members cope with the diagnosis differently, and communicate their thoughts and emotions in their own ways. Sometimes, this might lead to unintentional friction within the family. Examples of disagreements that may arise from caregiving:

- The type of care to be provided.
- Financial responsibilities .
- Roles of each family member in caregiving responsibilities.
- Struggles with managing work, personal responsibilities and caring for the loved one.
- Clashing emotions that come along with the caregiving journey.

It is important that these issues are identified and managed efficiently. Preparing for them can reduce the stresses and strains of caregiving, and in the process, enhance and strengthen family relationship.

## Who should attend the meeting

Involve immediate family members or close relatives whom your loved one is comfortable with, and who are part of the caregiving team. If you have a big family, there may be instances in which certain members will be unable to attend. In such a case, it is important that family members who are in a position to finalise key decisions are present. This may not necessarily mean the eldest relative or the person paying the bills. Having an external facilitator such as a social worker, who can provide a neutral, objective and less-emotional opinion when needed, can help communicate difficult topics.

Whether your loved one living with dementia should be part of the meeting depends on the following:

- **Is your loved one able to think clearly and express his or her wishes?**
- **Do you think he or she would be comfortable sitting in on the discussion?**
- **Can the family have an open and frank discussion if your loved one is present?**

Learn about the benefits of mediation and its process in applying for one from Community Mediation Centre and Singapore Mediation Centre. Scan the QR codes or visit the websites:



[www.cmc.mlaw.gov.sg](http://www.cmc.mlaw.gov.sg)



[www.mediation.com.sg/service/family-dispute/](http://www.mediation.com.sg/service/family-dispute/)

## Deciding who does what

The best way to choose the decision maker is to ask your loved one while he or she is able to make decisions on their own. If a decision maker has not been appointed, the family will need to nominate a decision maker everyone is comfortable with.

Having a win-win mindset – to respect each family member’s individuality and strength to create an environment to accept the situation or issue, and allows room for open discussion and problem-solving.

The meeting is also a good time for everyone to figure out the part they can play to help. Some of the key roles you may consider include:



### Main caregiver

This should be the person who has been living with and have regular interaction with your loved one.



### Transport

Family members who own vehicles may help to ferry your loved one for medical appointment.



### Finances

Someone in the family can bear care costs, while the rest of the family can chip in if they can.



### Support for main caregiver

When the main caregiver needs a break or is unable to care for your loved one for a period of time, other family members may volunteer to step in to provide care.



### Liaison with healthcare professionals

Someone who can communicate and relay important healthcare information, if the main caregiver is unable to.

## Useful resources

### 1. e-Care Locator for dementia support and services

You can use this to locate nearby services that can cater to your specific needs and concerns.

### 2. DementiaHub.SG

DementiaHub.SG is a one-stop resource portal on dementia information and resources.

Visit [www.dementiahub.sg](http://www.dementiahub.sg) or scan the QR code to find out more.



### 3. Mind Matters – Resource Directory on Community Mental Health

Visit [www.aic.buzz/mindmatters-directory](http://www.aic.buzz/mindmatters-directory) or scan the QR code to look for dementia-related services.



## Setting the agenda

The family discussion can be in a form of a physical or a virtual meeting where the people involved are comfortable at. In a meeting that reflects deep feelings and opinions from every individual, putting the situation in perspective helps the family focus on the main issue. This can be done by:

- Explaining the condition so that everyone understands what is happening.
- If you have been talking to the doctor or healthcare professional all this time, then you may be the best person to explain what you know.
- Laying out the possible healthcare options and costs involved with each choice.
- Making someone in the family the decision-maker on behalf of your loved one.

If your loved one already has a caregiver, or has a foreign domestic worker providing care, the family must assess if the caregiver has the ability to take care of your loved one's new needs.

## Ground rules for a fruitful discussion

- Set aside time for regular discussions regarding your loved one's care and the various caregiving responsibilities. Care needs can and will change with time.
- Have a round-table discussion so that everyone will have a turn to speak and raise their concerns.
- Respect each other's views and needs. Try to see things from all perspectives.
- Everyone has personal responsibilities that they need to consider e.g. children, work, spouse, finances, etc.
- Focus on one issue at a time before moving onto the next.
- Consider which method you can use to come to a family consensus e.g. through majority voting, seeking doctor's opinion, etc.
- Be open to discussion and adapt your point of view to the priorities at hand.

Keep your loved one's needs and wants at the centre of the discussion. To have a clearer picture of what their wishes are, you can consider Advance Care Planning (ACP) as early as possible.

Visit [www.mylegacy.gov.sg](http://www.mylegacy.gov.sg) or scan the QR code to learn more about ACP.



## Should the family meeting be held in a healthcare vicinity

Some families may prefer to hold the meeting in a hospital as they prefer to consult healthcare professionals directly when questions arise. Care professionals such as counsellors and medical social workers are also trained to help guide a family towards making decisions that benefit their loved one.

Every family has its own circumstances. You may ask a medical social worker or healthcare professional at your institution of choice to provide more advice on holding the discussion. Outside the healthcare setting, you may also approach a Family Service Centre.

Visit [www.caregiver.org/holding-family-meeting](http://www.caregiver.org/holding-family-meeting) for tips on holding a family meeting.



## Keep the family involved

After the discussion, the family should stay in touch with one another. Messaging apps like WhatsApp are very useful for families to send quick updates on the loved one's condition. This can also be a good way for family members to show their support for the main caregiver.

Giving the caregiver emotional support can be just as powerful as lending a hand with daily duties.



## Caregiver Support Network (CSN)

Caregiver Support Network (CSN) which started as an initiative under Dementia-Friendly Singapore (DFSG), aims to support and connect with caregivers caring for persons living with dementia, mental health or physical health conditions.

The goal of a CSN is to advocate the importance of self-care, empower caregivers through peer support and recognising caregivers' self-development. They are available in the following Dementia-Friendly Communities (DFCs) to enable caregivers to care for themselves and to become pillars of support for one another. Look for the CSN near you.

AMKFSC Community Services (Teck Ghee)	Tel: 6453 5364
AWWA (Yio Chu Kang)	Tel: 6511 6690
AWWA (Woodlands)	Tel: 9784 9247
Brahm Centre (Macpherson)	Tel: 6741 1131
Care Corner Seniors Service Ltd (Toa Payoh)	Tel: 6258 6601
Fei Yue Community Services (Queenstown)	Tel: 6471 2022
GoodLife! @ Bedok	Tel: 6312 3988
GoodLife! @ Yishun	Tel: 6484 8040
NTUC Health (Taman Jurong)	Tel: 8612 8302
REACH Community Services (Hong Kah North)	Tel: 6801 0878

Visit [www.aic.buzz/cg-selfcaretips](http://www.aic.buzz/cg-selfcaretips) or scan the QR code for other support groups.





## 2. Helping Your Loved One Who is Living Alone

Persons living with dementia in the early stage may choose to live alone so as to maintain their independence for as long as possible, or to stay in a familiar place. As the dementia progresses, it is likely that alternate living arrangements may have to be made.

Here are some tips for you to care for their loved ones who live alone.



### Make your loved one's daily activities easier

Your loved one may forget to shower, change their clothes and have their meals, or perform housekeeping duties, or even forget to feed pets, etc.

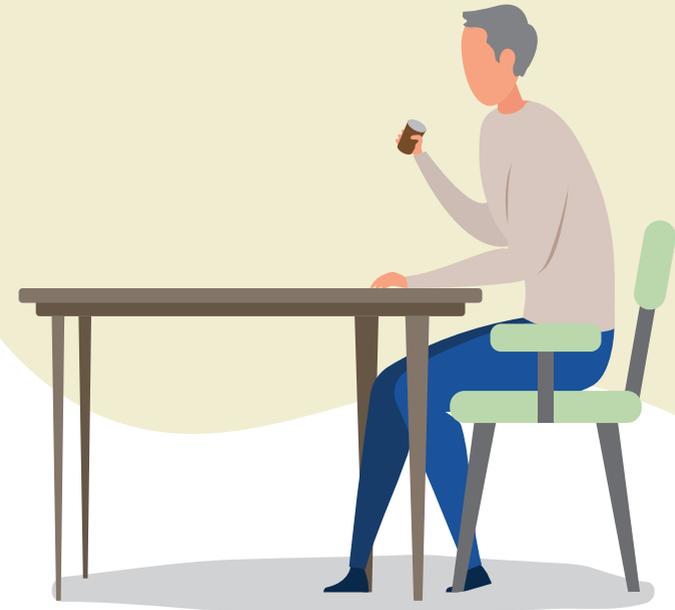
Arrange for meal delivery services and/or housekeeping services. Write reminders e.g. to feed the pets, to turn off the stove etc, and stick them on places easy for them to see (fridge, bedroom, living room etc). Large, digital clocks and calendars may help him or her to orient.



### Improve safety in your loved one's home

Your loved one may lack judgement in dangerous situations such as hazardous electrical appliances, slippery floors, etc.

Install non-slip mats and grab bars in the bathroom. Remove home hazards such as faulty kitchen appliances, clutter, fire hazards and broken furniture. Use technology such as monitoring system to track your loved one's mobility in the house or outdoors.



### Involve others in your loved one's care

A person living with dementia may exhibit behaviour that is hard to understand or accept. This may lead to unfriendliness or trouble with the neighbours, police or community.

Involve family members to take turns to visit your loved one regularly. If regular visiting is not possible, communicate via regular phone call or text regularly. Explain your loved one's situation to neighbours and local shopkeepers, so that they can help keep an eye out for your loved one in the community.



Source: Alzheimer's Society

Visit [www.aic.buzz/guide-dementia-wander](http://www.aic.buzz/guide-dementia-wander) or scan the QR code to find out more.



Visit [www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk) or scan the QR code for more information.



# 3. Understanding Care Preferences and Legal Matters

## Advance Care Planning (ACP)

ACP is the process of planning for one's future health and personal care. Having ACP conversations allows your loved one with dementia to:

- Share his/her personal values and beliefs with the family.
- Explore how his or her values and beliefs influence their healthcare preferences in difficult medical situations.
- Delegate a trusted member/relative to make healthcare decisions on their behalf when he or she is unable to do so one day.

Ideally, discussions about your loved one's care should take place as early as possible, while your loved one with dementia still has the capacity to make informed choices and decisions.



## 4 Simple steps to Advance Care Planning



1

### Think about it

- Consider what your loved one needs to live meaningfully and what would be important to him/her at the end of life
- Understand the prognosis and treatment options



2

### Talk to loved ones and caregivers

- Discuss wishes and goals for care with close family and friends to help them better understand the situation
- Your loved one living with dementia may have one or two trusted loved ones who can be his or her voice



3

### Put wishes into a plan

- Record and share decisions and wishes with appropriate person
- Share and discuss these future healthcare choices with the attending doctor



4

### Review your preferences

- Your loved one can always change his or her mind after the plans are made
- If that happens, be sure to update the ACP documents and make new copies for the trusted parties involved

For a list of the places you can make appointment for an ACP session, visit ACP Directory at [www.aic.sg/care-services/acp-directory](http://www.aic.sg/care-services/acp-directory) or scan QR code.



## Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA)

As dementia progresses, persons living with dementia will have increasing difficulty with judgement and problem solving. You may notice that they might be less able to make sound financial and healthcare decisions.

LPA is a legal document that confers one or more persons the authority to make decisions and act on the signee's behalf. The signee must be at least 21 years of age to voluntarily make this appointment, should he or she lose the capacity to make his or her own decisions.

It is necessary for a certified issuer to sign the LPA as a witness and to certify that your loved one is aware of the implications of making an LPA. A certificate issuer can be a psychiatrist, a practicing lawyer or an accredited medical practitioner.



## There are two types of LPA Forms



This is a standard version that individuals use to grant general powers with basic restrictions to their donee(s).



This is for those who have non-standard requirements and wish to grant customised powers to their donee(s). It is typically chosen by those who have larger and more complicated assets.

Visit [www.msf.gov.sg/opg/Pages/Home.aspx](http://www.msf.gov.sg/opg/Pages/Home.aspx) or scan the QR code for more information.



## Advance Medical Directive (AMD)

AMD is a legal document signed by your loved one in advance, informing their doctor that they do not want any extraordinary life-sustaining treatment to be used, in the event that your loved one becomes terminally ill and unconscious.

Making an AMD is a voluntary decision by your loved one. As medical technology advances, there are many ways of extending a person's life. This means that he or she can live longer even under a terminal illness. Extraordinary life-sustaining treatment is any medical treatment which serves only to prolong the lifespan of terminally ill patients; but does not cure the illness, e.g. a respirator connected to a patient to assist with breathing does not contribute to healing or treatment.



Your loved one may not be able to express his/her wishes to continue or stop treatment. Some people may prefer to pass away naturally in peace and not extend treatment. In the situation that your loved one is not able to communicate their wishes to the doctor in the future, the doctor will be guided by his or her AMD.

To make an AMD:

- Patients must be above the age of 21 and of sound mind.
- Three doctors (including the hospital doctor) must all certify that patients are terminally ill. \* Two of the doctors must be specialists.
- Patients need to complete and sign the AMD form in the presence of two witnesses – the doctor in-charge and someone who is above 21. Both witnesses cannot stand to gain anything from the patient's passing.

\*If there is disagreement between the doctors,

- The doctor-in-charge will review the AMD.
- If there is still no agreement, the Ministry of Health will appoint three additional specialists to review your loved one's case.
- If all the three appointed specialists are unable to certify that your loved one is terminally ill, the AMD cannot take effect.

An AMD can be cancelled at any time. Your loved one can do this by completing a form or writing a letter to the Registrar of AMDs, and having a witness who can testify to their cancellation. You may opt to be a witness.

If he or she is unable to write, they may communicate their wishes to cancel the AMD by speaking or using sign language. The witness will have to submit the notice and explain why they are unable to submit it themselves.

Source: Ministry of Health

## Making a will

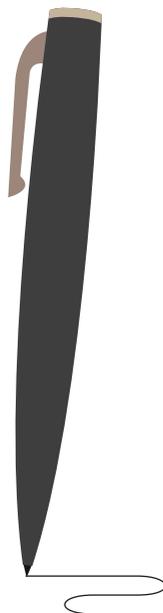
Planning a will is important to carry on the wishes of a loved one after he or she passes on. The will contains clear instructions about what one wants to do with his or her money and the assets they own. It will also ensure that your loved one's legacy and future generations are taken care of accordingly.

A will takes effect after death. It is a legal document that describes your loved one's estate, which includes their money, savings and assets. It also states how your loved one's estate will be distributed among their beneficiaries.

Wills differ from person to person. It can be a simple one-page document to a complex one, depending on your loved one's estate. It also contains instructions about the care of young children, special needs children, gifts to charity, and so on.

### A will normally includes the following:

- ✓ A list of all of your loved one's assets.
- ✓ A list of all your loved one's liabilities and debts, stating how your loved one wants to pay his or her debts off before assets are distributed to the beneficiaries.
- ✓ The beneficiaries and guardians, and how much each one is to receive.
- ✓ The executors to carry out your loved one's will. A beneficiary may also be the executor.
- ✓ The advisors (such as your loved one's lawyers and accountants).
- ✓ A revocation clause: This is to cancel out any wills your loved one planned previously.
- ✓ A residuary clause: This gives your loved one a say in how they want to distribute the rest of their estate. For example, if a beneficiary dies before your loved one, the intended assets will be a part of this remainder.

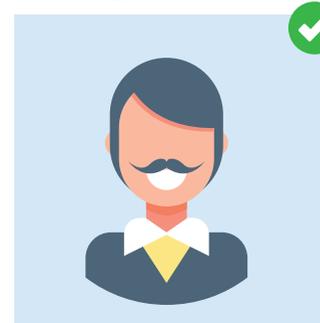


## Why make a will

If your loved one does not have a will, the Public Trustee, an office under the Ministry of Law, will decide who receives his or her property based on the law. What this means is that people to whom your loved one wants to pass on their money or belongings may not get them.

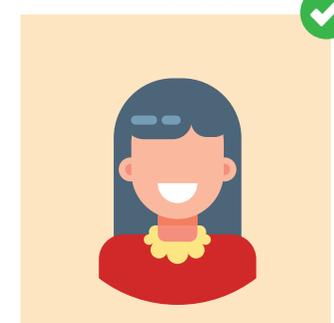
Help your loved one ensure that their money goes where they want it to go by planning a will. They may appoint:

### Executor



An executor, someone trusted to make sure their wishes are carried out; or

### Guardian



A guardian to take care of the property or money they are leaving for their children.

If you and your loved one need legal advice, you may want to consider visiting a free legal clinic. Keep in mind free legal clinics are staffed by volunteer lawyers so not all of them may be experts in this area. You should call the clinic before you visit to make sure they can give you and your loved one the necessary advice. Free legal clinics are offered at some community clubs.

# 4. Financial Assistance Schemes

Being diagnosed with a medical condition such as dementia is not only emotionally painful, but can also present itself as a financial challenge to families.

There are several financial assistance schemes that cater to persons living with dementia, as well as their caregivers and loved ones.



## Caregiver training

There may be times when you find that you do not have adequate skills to provide care for your loved one. Caregiving training can equip you with relevant skills and useful tips on providing a safe, healthy and supportive environment for your loved one.

Visit [www.aic.sg/financial-assistance](http://www.aic.sg/financial-assistance) or scan the QR code for more information on schemes and their eligibility criteria.



Visit [www.aic.sg/caregiving/caregiver-training-course](http://www.aic.sg/caregiving/caregiver-training-course) or scan the QR code to apply for caregiver courses.



## ABCs of Caregiving Course

This course covers all essential skills needed to care for your loved one's daily needs, based on their mobility condition. The home-based or classroom-based courses are tailored for informal caregivers, including Foreign Domestic Workers (FDWs).

You can choose from 3 sets of courses depending on your loved one's mobility conditions.



### My loved one is **A**mbulant (Can walk)

This covers use of walking sticks and walking frames, assisted showering and how to prevent your loved one from falling.



### My loved one is **B**ed-bound

This covers positioning and turning in bed, managing pressure injuries, assisted showering or bed bath, use of bedpans and urinals and diaper changing.



### My loved one is wheel**C**hair-enabled

This covers use of wheelchairs and commodes, assisted showering and diaper changing.

Course fees for each set ranges between \$135 and \$200. Those who qualify for Caregivers Training Grant may tap on the grant to offset up to \$200 of the course fees.

## Topics covered

	<b>My loved one is Ambulant (Can walk)</b>	<b>My loved one is Bed-bound</b>	<b>My loved one is wheelchair-enabled</b>
<b>The Fundamentals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understanding ageing and communicating with seniors</li> <li>Monitoring vital signs (temperature, blood pressure, pulse rate) and managing emergencies</li> <li>Infection control (including hand hygiene and simple wound care) and basic skincare</li> <li>Serving oral medication (including reading of medication labels)</li> <li>Simple exercises for seniors</li> <li>Nutrition and Hydration (including different types of diet, and what makes up a balanced diet for seniors)</li> </ul>		
<b>Assistance in Daily Tasks Modules</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feeding (oral or tube)</li> </ul> <p>*Note: If the senior is on tube-feeding, the module "Nutrition and Hydration" would not be covered</p>		
<b>Modules to suit your loved one's Mobility Conditions</b>			
<b>Toileting</b>	Identifying abnormalities	+ Use of bedpan, urinal and diaper changing	+ Use of commode and diaper changing
<b>Personal Hygiene</b>	Assisted showering	Assisted showering or bed bath	
<b>Mobility</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use of walking sticks, walking frame</li> <li>Fall prevention</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Positioning and turning in bed</li> <li>Managing pressure injuries</li> </ul>	Use of wheelchair

## Top-up electives (for home-based training only)

If your loved one needs more specialised care, you can “top-up” your training course with additional electives. These electives, which are 45 minutes to 1 hour each, can provide customised training to care for your loved one.

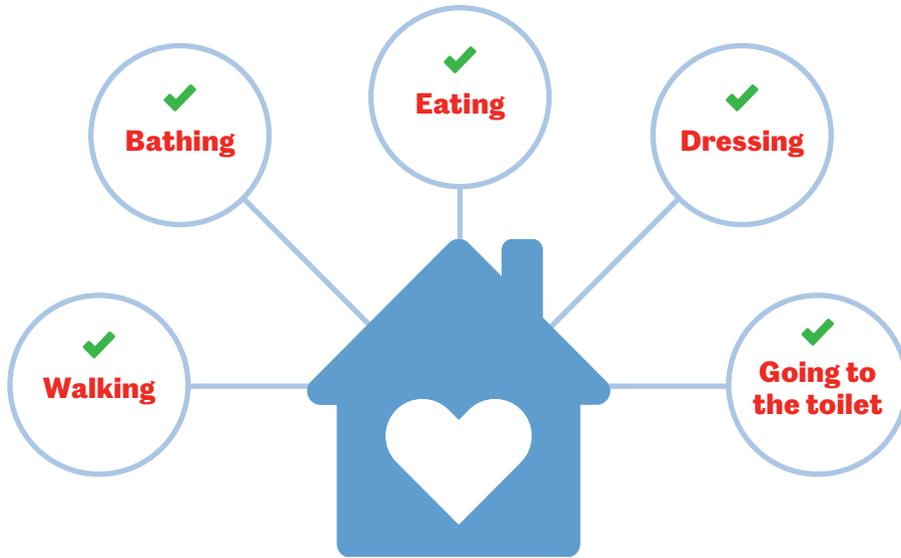
<b>Care of Urinary Catheter</b>	Covers draining, changing and cleaning of the urinary drainage bag
<b>Stoma Care</b>	Covers care of stoma and changing of stoma bag
<b>Bed Bath</b>	Covers how to perform bed bath for a senior
<b>Transferring, Positioning and Mobility (Wheelchair)</b>	Covers the use of wheelchair and transferring techniques from bed to wheelchair

Visit [www.aic.sg/caregiving/caregiver-courses-schemes](http://www.aic.sg/caregiving/caregiver-courses-schemes) or scan the QR code to learn more about ABCs of Caregiving and other available caregiver training courses and schemes.



# 5. Making Your Home Dementia-Friendly

Preparing your home to make it a safe place for your loved one is also part of early planning. Persons living with dementia may experience difficulty performing routine tasks such as:



To allow seniors to feel more confident and live independently at home, it is important to create a safe and comfortable environment.

An occupational therapist can help to assess your home, identify potential safety hazards, and recommend simple home modifications and assistive equipment to enhance your loved one's freedom of mobility.

Additionally, it is beneficial to know your loved one's preferences, habits and routines. Discuss them with other family members to plan the most appropriate changes. It is advisable to implement the changes gradually, because any sudden change may disrupt your loved one's routine and cause them stress instead.

## General fall prevention tips for homes



### Ensure the physical home space is appropriately equipped

- Adequate lighting
  - use bulbs with a minimum of 100 watts.
- The height of chairs is not too low.
- The nightlight switch is within easy reach.



### Remove clutter and potential safety hazards

- Clear and keep walkway dry.
- Keep away or remove loose wires.
- Avoid rugs and loose carpets.



### Be attentive to your loved one's attire

- Ensure he or she wears proper home footwear with non-slip soles while moving about safely at home.



### Be attentive to your loved one's movements

- Place frequently used items within reach.
- Ensure floors are not wet and slippery before they walk on it.
- Pace all activities; do not rush to do things.
- Change their positions slowly when getting them up from the bed.

## General fall prevention tips for homes



### Create a safe and comfortable space at home

- Create a safe, designated room or screened-off area in your living for your loved one.
- The space or room should provide a multi-sensory experience every time he or she steps inside.

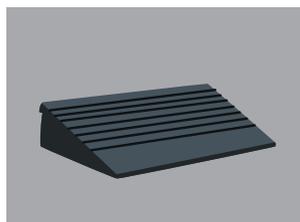
### Consider these components for this sensory experience

Lighting	Music	Scent	Suitable Furniture
Choose a quiet space with sufficient natural light and ventilation. A strong light can be glaring and uncomfortable.	Play soothing and preferred music. Music may trigger memories and improve their mood, allowing further engagement.	Scent the room with essential oils such as lavender lemon, which have been shown to reduce anxiety and agitation for persons living with dementia.	Provide a comfortable chair and a light blanket for a cosy feel.

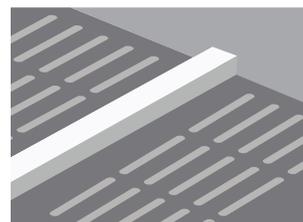
### Other simple installation:



Grab bars inside the toilet



Ramps over kerbs



Anti-slip flooring

## Other useful resources

### 360° Virtual Reality Dementia-Friendly HDB Home Design Guide

Visit [www.aic.buzz/DFhome](http://www.aic.buzz/DFhome) or scan the QR code to experience this localised virtual reality guide.



### How and What to Modify in your Home [www.aic.buzz/CG-HomeModifications](http://www.aic.buzz/CG-HomeModifications)



### View a Virtual Care Home from Your Screen [www.dementia.stir.ac.uk/design/virtual-environments/virtual-care-home](http://www.dementia.stir.ac.uk/design/virtual-environments/virtual-care-home)



Visit [www.dementiahub.sg](http://www.dementiahub.sg) or scan the QR code.



Visit [www.aic.sg/financialassistance/enhancement-active-seniors](http://www.aic.sg/financialassistance/enhancement-active-seniors) or scan the QR code for more information.



Visit [www.aic.sg/smf](http://www.aic.sg/smf) or scan the QR code for more information.





## Visiting relatives and friends

1

### Understand dementia

How dementia develops will allow you to understand some of the behaviours or feelings your loved one is experiencing. Refer to Book 1 on “Knowing Dementia and Building a Dementia-Friendly Community” to understand dementia.

2

### Always introduce yourself

Greet your loved one by introducing your name and how you are related to them. Sometimes your loved one may have forgotten, and may develop anxiety from trying to recall who you are. Reminisce family photos with your loved one may make them feel more at ease.

Visit [www.dailycaring.com/4-ways-remembrance-therapy-for-dementia-brings-joy-to-seniors/](http://www.dailycaring.com/4-ways-remembrance-therapy-for-dementia-brings-joy-to-seniors/) or scan the QR code to learn more.



3

### Make the visit fun

Make the visit fun by bringing something with you e.g. an old photo, a memento from a past trip together, or an item from olden days. Reading from a magazine or newspaper also helps to engage your loved one together.

Use music to lift your loved one's mood. Music can create an atmosphere of relaxation or fun whether it is played from a radio or on an instrument. It can help your loved one recall past memories, or simply to have a good time!



Visit [www.aic.buzz/ATE-ep4](http://www.aic.buzz/ATE-ep4) or scan the QR code to watch the “Ask the Expert” video on how to manage your loved one's daily activities such as bringing them out to a gathering.



Visit [www.aic.buzz/dementia-brochures](http://www.aic.buzz/dementia-brochures) or scan the QR code for more information on dementia.



4

### Acknowledge your loved one's feelings

Have an open mind and be flexible: Your visit may not go according to how you have planned, but that is all right. With an open mind, adapt to your loved one's energy levels, mood, etc.

Dementia can cause your loved one to experience feelings of anxiety, anger and agitation. Acknowledge how your loved one feels and provide some assurance.

5

### Adapt your communication style

Explore other methods of communication other than talking. Hold your loved one's hand, give him or her a hug, a shoulder rub or hand massage to complement or replace conversation.

Communicate clearly by asking closed ended questions ('yes' or 'no' reply) instead of open ended questions. Listen patiently and allow him or her time to respond or search for the right words. With dementia, your loved one's ability to express himself herself may be affected. Try not to finish his or her sentence.

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### Keep in touch

Often, it is assumed that with memory loss, interaction with loved ones and friends holds little or no purpose. However, offering your loved one your time and presence helps to sustain their emotional wellbeing. Be comfortable with silence as it is not a bad thing. Savour each other's presence and your time with each other.

## Taking public transport

Public transport is a common mode of transport for Singaporeans. This does not change even with the onset of dementia. Having an easily accessible transportation system enables persons living with dementia to stay connected to their friends, families, and community, and even to healthcare.

### Tips for travelling on public transport with your loved one

- Plan the route before you make the journey.
- Allow enough time for travel.
- Take note of any situations or triggers that may make your loved one with dementia feel uncomfortable.
- Bring along a friend or relative for extra support if needed.

### Challenges faced by persons living with dementia

Dementia can make it challenging for people to access transport. Some reasons are:

- Memory loss of transport routes.
- Disorientation to time and place.
- Misplacing items whilst travelling (e.g. ezlink card, bag).
- Decreased judgement and difficulty planning and organising transport.
- Difficulty in communicating to transport operators where they want to go.
- Changes in mood or behaviour whilst using public transport.

A person living with dementia should be aided by a caregiver as they may not feel comfortable travelling alone. Not allowing a person living with dementia to go out may make them socially isolated and depressed.

For service information, linkage and resources on mental health or caregiving, email [ccmh@aic.sg](mailto:ccmh@aic.sg)

### Initiatives by local transport providers

**Grab** has introduced their **GrabAssist** programme, where drivers are trained in helping out passengers with different accessibility needs.

**SMRT** launched the **Go-To-SMRT** initiative to provide wayfinding, first aid, and support to persons living with dementia and their caregivers at selected MRT stations and bus interchanges.



## Festive celebration

Festivities are typically a time for joy and celebration across all cultures. However, it may present as a stressful time for both caregivers and persons living with dementia due to a disruption in their usual routine. Here are some practical tips on how you can make the time an enjoyable one for all family members.



### 1. Consider the food

Food is often a highlight in family get-togethers. Ensure that the food being served can also be savoured by your loved one. Try to serve softer food in smaller portion sizes for easier swallowing and digestion.



### 2. Planning the day

Try to keep to your loved one's usual routine as much as possible. Allocate rest time in the schedule or stagger visit timings if you have relatives coming by, to avoid overwhelming him or her.



### 3. Preparing for the festivities

Try to involve them with simple activities, such as rolling the dough when baking festive goodies, or folding paper decorations. The preparation process can also help to orientate your loved one in the present moment and get them excited for the upcoming celebrations.



### 4. Communicate with your relatives

Allow your relatives to spend some one-on-one time with your loved one with dementia.



### 5. Prepare some reminiscence materials

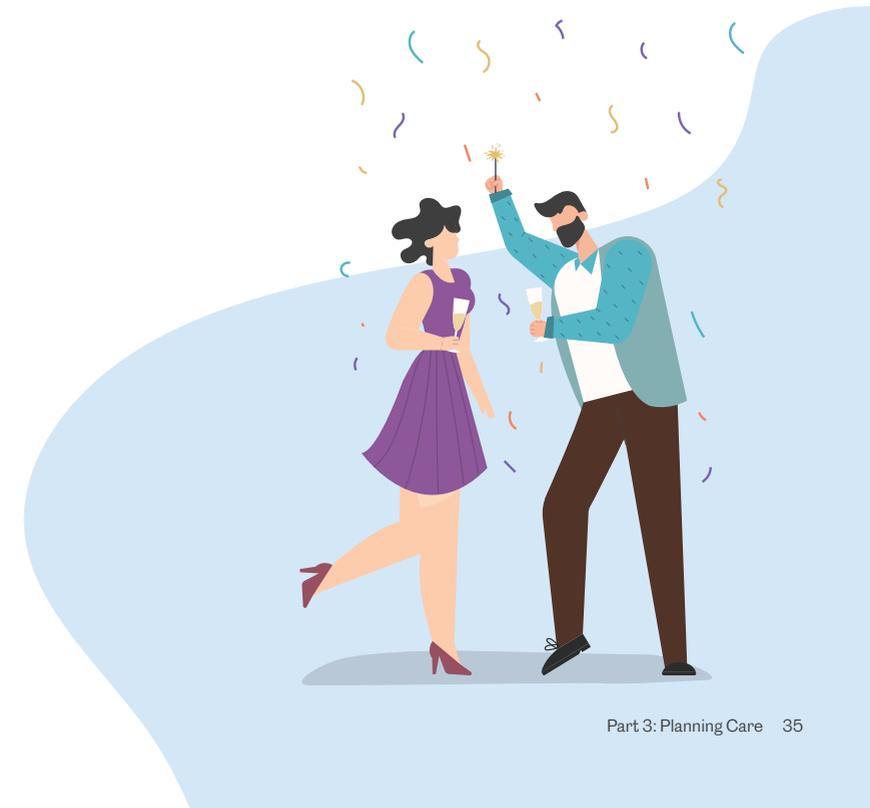
Get your relatives involved by putting together a scrapbook with old photos and mementos from the past. This serves as a conversation starter between your relatives and your loved ones with dementia.



### 6. Enjoy the festivities

Get a relative or friend to help out with your caregiving duties so that you will have some time off for yourself to enjoy the festivities and celebrations too.

Visit [www.aic.buzz/dementia-brochures](http://www.aic.buzz/dementia-brochures) or scan the QR code for other useful resources on dementia.



## 7. Employment for Persons with Young-Onset Dementia

It is hard to decide whether to tell an employer about a diagnosis of young-onset dementia. There are no set rules that work for everyone. For many people, it depends on the extent to which the symptoms affect their ability to do their job, the pace at which symptoms are progressing, and the support that may be required of (or that is likely to be offered by) the employer.

Young-onset dementia may have no impact on a person's ability to do their work at the early stage, although it is likely to do so over time. It is important for people living with young-onset dementia to consider options before making a decision about continuing with on-going employment or informing their employer.



### Employment for persons with young-onset dementia

While your loved one with dementia may be mentally ready and attempts to continue or return to the workforce, he or she needs to be prepared.

As a caregiver, you may share or discuss these tips with your loved one with young-onset dementia.

#### Assessing the work situation

- Consider possible safety risks associated with dementia symptoms (for example, if operating machinery, being responsible for financial matters or driving work vehicles) and if there is a duty of care to inform an employer or clients receiving a service.
- Allow time to absorb the diagnosis and do not rush into any decisions.
- Fully review all aspects of the situation before telling an employer.
- Talk to family, health professionals and where appropriate, a union representative about working conditions and health issues.
- Before considering resignation from employment, seek consultation and advice about employee entitlements and rights.

#### It may be useful to consider

- Job satisfaction or work performance in the current role.
- Access to staff counselling.
- The number of years of service to the company.
- The nature of the work you do, and whether changes associated with young onset dementia may affect others.
- The ability of the company to provide support.
- Relationships with peers and management.
- Whether it may be possible to change or reduce duties or put in place supports that may assist in carrying out the job.
- Available superannuation, death or disability insurance.
- The availability of an advocate when interacting with the employer.

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The Agency for Integrated Care (AIC) aims to create a vibrant care community for people to live well and age gracefully. AIC coordinates and supports efforts in integrating care to achieve the best care outcomes for our clients.

We reach out to caregivers and seniors with information on staying active and ageing well, and connect people to services they need.

We support stakeholders in their efforts to raise the quality of care, and also work with health and social care partners to provide services for the ageing population. Our work in the community brings care services and information closer to those in need.