Support available for older people, their families and carers through My Aged Care

This fact sheet provides information about the support that is available through My Aged Care and how to make a referral.

My Aged Care

My Aged Care is an Australian Government initiative which supports older people and their families in accessing aged care information and services. It was established in 2013 with the introduction of the My Aged Care website and national phone line (1800 200 422) which operates from 8am to 8pm weekdays and 10am to 2pm on Saturdays local time wherever a person lives.

In July 2015 My Aged Care functions will expand to make it easier for people to access information, have their needs assessed and be supported in accessing aged care services. New functions include:

- a consistent and holistic approach to needs assessment by a skilled workforce,
- electronic referrals to service providers that reflect client preferences, and
- a central client record – accessible by the client, their representatives, and relevant assessors and service providers.

The central purpose is to ensure there is a clear understanding of the client’s care needs and the provision of an efficient pathway to relevant services.

To access this information directly, your patient will need to have nominated you as a representative for the purposes of My Aged Care. If you wish to access this information, please ask your patient to consider making you a representative when they are speaking with My Aged Care. It remains the intention into the future to allow GPs to view a patient’s aged care information through the Personally Controlled Electronic Health Record.

Why is My Aged Care relevant to your health professional role?

My Aged Care is likely to be relevant to many of your patients. For instance, you may find a family member who is concerned about an older person and needs to understand the care options available; you may find a patient is presenting with a declining ability to manage their activities of daily-living and need to either plan for the future or access services now, or you may find that there are questions around the sustainability of a patient’s current care arrangements. My Aged Care is available to assist in each of these situations and would encourage referrals.

When do I make a referral to My Aged Care?

From July 2015, if you are discussing a patients aged care needs or concerns you can refer them to My Aged Care who can assist your patient with information and support to find appropriate services that meet their needs.
How do I make a referral to My Aged Care?

There are three ways you can make a referral.

- Call My Aged Care on 1800 200 422.
  - Contact centre staff are available from 8am to 8pm on weekdays and between 10am and 2pm on Saturdays, local time Australia wide.
  - The patient does not have to be present for a phone referral, however you will need your patient’s consent before you provide information on their behalf.
  - Of course, you can also promote the number to your patient or family member and encourage them to call.
- Use the 'Make a Referral' page on the My Aged Care website at www.myagedcare.gov.au/referral and enter details into the online form.
  - You can add attachments to the information that you enter into the online form.
- Send a fax to the My Aged Care contact centre on 1800 728 174.
  - You may like to use the ‘Make a Referral’ page from the My Aged Care website as a template.

My Aged Care may contact you if additional information is needed in order to contact your patient.

What information do I need to provide in the referral?

You will need to provide the following details in your referral:

- your name and contact details
- the patient’s name and contact details
- your relationship to the patient (for example, as a General Practitioner or community nurse)
- information about why the patient is being referred to My Aged Care
- your patient’s consent to provide their information, or for the contact centre to contact them directly.
- any information that may support your referral.

Personal information and any associated documents are retained securely within the My Aged Care system and will be appropriately shared with assessors and service providers to support the client.

What happens after a referral is made?

Following a referral from you, My Aged Care will contact your patient to talk about the support they need. Following that conversation, the client may be referred for a home support or comprehensive assessment or directly for services.

For more information

The My Aged Care website at www.myagedcare.gov.au provides the information your patients need about aged care. The contact centre is available between 8am and 8pm Monday to Friday and 10am to 2pm on Saturdays by ringing 1800 200 422.

More information about the changes to My Aged Care in 2015, including guidance material, fact sheets and videos, is available on The Department of Social Services website at www.dss.gov.au/MyAgedCare.