Statement of Rights:

The new Aged Care Act includes a Statement of Rights outlining the rights that older people have when accessing aged care services.

It promotes quality and safe care for older persons accessing, or seeking to access, funded aged care services. It is also a reference for providers and workers so they can take steps to act in a way that promotes older people's rights when delivering care.

The rights outlined in the Act help to ensure that older people and their needs are at the centre of the new aged care system.

What the Statement of Rights means for providers

Registered providers must:

- take all reasonable and proportionate steps to act in line with the Statement or Rights when they deliver aged care services
- show that they understand the rights of older people under the Statement of Rights
- have ways to make sure they act in line with the Statement of Rights.

If an older person believes that a provider isn't acting in a way that's in line with the Statement of Rights, they can make a complaint to the Complaints Commissioner.

Rights under the Act

Here is what the Statement of Rights includes:

1. **Independence, choice and control**

Older people have the right to **independence, autonomy, empowerment, and freedom of choice**. This means older people have the right to make their own decisions and have control over:

- the funded aged care services they have been approved for
- how they access those services
- their money and belongings.

Older people have the right to choose the way they live, even if there is some personal risk. If necessary, older people should also be supported to make those decisions and to have them respected.

2. **Equitable access**

Older people have the right to a fair and accurate assessment to find out what funded aged care services they need. Assessments for care should be culturally safe, trauma-aware and healing-informed. This means older people should have **equitable access** to an assessment for care that respects and recognises their:

- culture and background
- personal experience and any trauma
- cognitive conditions such as dementia.

3. **Safety and quality**

Older people have the right to **quality and safe** funded aged care services.
This includes the right to access services:

- that are free from any violence, abuse and neglect
- that value and support their identity, culture, spirituality and diversity
- from workers with the right training and skills.

4. **Privacy**

Providers and anyone working in the aged care system must respect and protect older people's **privacy** and access to their information. Older people have the right to get information about the funded services they use.

5. **Communication and feedback**

Communications should be **person-centric** – putting the older person first.
Older people have the right to:

- get information in a way they understand
- communicate in the language or method they prefer
- raise issues without fear of being punished or treated unfairly.
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6. **Support, advocacy and connection**

Older people have the right to stay connected with people that are important to them, such as family, friends and carers.

Older people also have the right to stay connected with their communities, like through leisure, spiritual or cultural activities, and pets. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have a right to stay connected with their community, Country and Island Home.

Older people may also need support to understand their rights, make decisions or make a complaint. They have the right to access and get support from an advocate or someone else they choose.

Statement of Principles

The Statement of Principles guides how the aged care system should work. It guides decision-makers and people administering and regulating the Act to put the safety, health, wellbeing and quality of life of older people first.

Principles in the Act

Here's what the principles include:

1. **Person-centred care**

The safety, health, wellbeing and quality of life of older people is always at the centre of delivering funded aged care services. Person-centred care means putting older people first, recognising each person accessing aged care as an individual. It also involves respecting each person's preferences, needs and rights.

2. **Empowering workers and carers**

The aged care system:

- values workers and carers
- supports a diverse and well-trained workforce
- recognises the important role of carers and advocates.

The Act empowers workers and carers to give feedback and support change and new ideas in the aged care system.

3. **Transparent and sustainable aged care**

The aged care system is accountable to the people who use it and work in it and to the wider community. The Australian Government and decision-makers make sure the system to be sustainable and resilient, so it is stable, reliable and consistent into the future. Information about the aged care system is accessible and clear. It is available in a range of languages and formats.

4. **Continuous improvement**

The aged care system should always aim to improve and be innovative, trying new ideas and ways of working. This may be through regulation, feedback, complaints, or other communication.