



Fact sheet: Assistance with food and meals for older Australians impacted by COVID-19

31 March 2020

This Fact Sheet is for the information and advice of older Australians. It outlines the support available to you if you are isolated and finding it difficult to access food and basic household items.

Prioritised online ordering

We are working with grocery suppliers on priority access to their online and telephone shopping for older and vulnerable people including if you are registered with My Aged Care.

You can call the My Aged Care contact centre on 1800 200 422 to register for My Aged Care.

Urgent referrals to food and supply service providers

Many Commonwealth funded providers, such as Meals on Wheels, can assist you with access to regular food supplies and prepared meals.

If you are in urgent need of support, the My Aged Care contact centre can refer you directly to these services in your local area. Services can be set up quickly for up to 6 weeks without the need for an assessment. You can also arrange this directly with your provider if you prefer.

Additional support for those most in need

An additional \$50 million in funding has been provided for Meals on Wheels and similar services to support older people requiring prepared meals during this difficult time. This is in addition to the \$70 million in funding made available to Commonwealth Home Support Providers, including Meals on Wheels, who are facing extra costs as a result of the impact of COVID19. We will also work with commercial providers who have been supporting airlines and the entertainment industry, and now have spare capacity, as well as local catering businesses, particularly in regional areas, to continue operations and support vulnerable older Australians through the CHSP.

Additional support for those crisis

If you are an older Australian in crisis, uncomfortable with, or unable to access the internet to order groceries, and your support networks are unavailable, the My Aged Care contact centre can help.

To meet immediate needs, people in crisis who are isolated, have no other supports, and are in crisis, will be able to receive assisted access to basic food and groceries. The contact centre will also connect you a service provider to ensure you have the ongoing support you need. An additional \$9.3 million in funding to My Aged Care to ensure that they can do this work to support vulnerable older people.

We will provide updated versions of this Fact Sheet when new information comes to hand at www.health.gov.au.

More information on the COVID-19 National Health Plan is available at <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-national-health-plan-resources>