



Frequently asked questions about aged care advocacy

What is Advocacy?

Advocacy is the process of supporting an individual to speak up for their rights and needs. An ADA Australia advocate is someone who is by your side, working with you, to give you a voice and help you to resolve issues.

Who is eligible to receive support from ADA Australia?

- You currently receive an Australian Government funded aged care service
- You are seeking an Australian Government funded aged care service
- You are the carer or representative of the person above and have permission from the person you are supporting.

Do I have to pay for ADA Australia's services?

No, our services are free.

I do not currently receive any aged care services. How can ADA Australia assist me to access the support that I need?

We can provide you with free and independent information about available care and support options.

This may include:

- Supporting you to access aged care services by engaging with My Aged Care, attending aged care assessments and meetings with service providers
- Supporting you to get the most from your aged care services
- Information about fees and charges
- Supporting you to have a say in your care and the things that impact you.

I am receiving aged care services. How can ADA Australia assist me?

If you are currently receiving care services in your

home or your aged care home, we can assist you with:

- Understanding your rights and responsibilities
- Raising and addressing care related concerns with service providers
- Communicating your preferences
- Providing information about service agreements, fees, statements and budgets
- Issues related to your care plan
- Researching care and equipment options
- Referrals for assessments and additional services.

What is ADA Australia unable to assist with?

ADA Australia provides independent information and advocacy support. As such we are unable to:

- Recommend which provider or services you should choose
- Provide financial advice or legal advice.

Where we are unable to assist, we will always try to refer you to the appropriate service.

Can ADA Australia make my service provider resolve my issue?

No. We cannot force a service provider to take any action. However, we can support you to discuss your concerns at a meeting with the service, and assist you to negotiate a resolution where possible. If your issue is not resolved to your satisfaction, we can refer you to the relevant complaint and regulatory bodies.

Are ADA Australia's services confidential?

Yes, our services are confidential. Our advocates will always seek your permission before discussing your situation or concerns with anyone else. We will always try to ensure your confidentiality is maintained by being discreet when calling you on the phone or visiting you in person.

Can ADA Australia support clients with impaired capacity?

It is not our role to assess a person's capacity. We follow a process that ensures people do not have their rights compromised by their lack, or perceived lack of ability to give clear direction.

We will look at whether the person is able to make a decision regarding the particular issue. For example, a person's capacity to make financial decisions may be limited, but they may still be able to give clear direction about lifestyle decisions such as the types of activities they enjoy, or the meals they prefer.

Our Community Legal Service, **ADA Law**, provides specific advocacy support, legal advice and representation to adults whose decision-making capacity is impaired or in question, in relation to guardianship and administration matters.

To contact ADA Law, FREECALL 1800 232 529.

Can ADA Australia work with carers, family members and friends?

With your permission, family members, carers and friends can contact us on your behalf to raise and address concerns.

However, we will also need to discuss the issue with you. Your directions and wishes will guide the work that we do. Family members, carers and friends can be included in discussions and the process to support you.

We can also work with formal decision makers such as your Enduring Power of Attorney. However, again we will always ensure that your views and wishes direct anything we do.

How does ADA Australia support people with diverse needs?

ADA Australia aims to provide inclusive advocacy services to a range of diverse groups listed under the Aged Care Act 1997 including:

- people from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities
- people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds
- people who live in rural or remote areas
- people who are financially or socially disadvantaged
- people who are veterans of the Australian Defence Force or an allied defence force including the spouse, widow or widower of a veteran
- people who are homeless, or at risk of becoming homeless
- people who are care leavers (which includes Forgotten Australians, Former Child Migrants and Stolen Generations)
- people separated from their children by forced adoption or removal
- people from lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans/transgender and intersex (LGBTI) communities.

To ensure that our services remain accessible and responsive we provide free access to interpreting services and employ a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse advocate, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advocates and advocates who are members of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) communities. We also provide rural and remote outreach services from our regionally based offices.

When can I contact ADA Australia?

To access advocacy support you can call the free Aged Care Advocacy Line on 1800 700 600 between 8am-8pm Monday to Friday and 10am-4pm Saturday.

You can also contact us or find out more information by visiting our website at www.adaaustralia.com.au

If you would like to speak to an advocate from the identified groups above, please let us know when you call.