

# Care Finder Program

Care finders is an initiative of the Australian Government in response to the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety. It aims to connect and engage older people with significant difficulty accessing aged care services and supports. Find out more here, including the full care finder needs assessment: [gphn.org.au/what-we-do/programs/programs-aged-care](http://gphn.org.au/what-we-do/programs/programs-aged-care)

## To understand local needs for care finder services, Gippsland PHN

- Collected local population data in relation to care finder support
- Consulted key stakeholders, including clinicians, community members, consumers, local government and service providers to identify issues
- Set priorities with members of the Aged Care Working group based on the issues identified

## Priority areas identified were:

### Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People



- Were more likely to experience chronic health conditions and have multiple and complex needs
- Had limited access to culturally safe aged care
- Had a preference for holistic aged care

*"I am respected for who I am and for the cultural values I bring with me"*

### People with a disability



- Gippsland has a high rate of older people with a disability
- Were likely to have multiple barriers to service access, including disrespectful experiences and poor communication
- Lack of sustainable infrastructure, a skilled workforce and services to meet diverse needs

*"I want to be heard, shown respect and offered dignity"*

### People with mental health issues



- Significant service gaps for older people with mental health issues across Gippsland
- Barriers to care include stigma, encountering poorly qualified staff and a lack of access to services and supports when required
- Are more likely to also experience poor physical health, alcohol and other drug issues, homelessness and abuse

*"I am supported to find the right service to meet my needs after seeking help anywhere in the system"*

### People with dementia



- Dementia is a top cause of death and disability in Gippsland, increasing rapidly
- Often do not receive the services and supports they need
- Health professionals, of all backgrounds, continue to have a lack of knowledge

*"My healthcare supports understand the essence of what it is like to live with dementia"*

### People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds



- Greatest population in Latrobe
- Limited access to culturally safe aged care
- Limited opportunities for cultural connections due to small communities

*"... ensure that multicultural and non-English speakers are included"*

### Frail People



- Frailty is associated with a higher risk of falls
- Highest number of people with a need for assistance in Latrobe, East Gippsland and Baw Baw
- Need improved identification of people with declining health to prevent decline and crisis

*"I want affordable, ongoing care"*

### Older people with greatest needs feel safe contacting care finders



- Care finders need to respect and facilitate optimal consumer choice
- Care finders need to be available in a supportive organisation in every local government area
- Need a workforce with diverse skills to suit the variable and complex needs including those experiencing elder abuse, homelessness, care leavers, LGBTQI+

*"I want to talk to a person who understands and doesn't say anything hurtful"*

### Integrate care finder services across health and broader system



- Lack of system integration with aged care can lead to delayed transitions when needed
- Local referral pathways and clear scope of practice
- Increased focus on patient reported outcomes with consumer and professional input to ensure integration works

*"I [want] a one stop shop where you tell your story once"*

### Equitable access to aged care that meets people's needs



- Existing services are not distributed to match population needs
- Demand far exceeds capacity for in-home services and support across Gippsland with delays leading to crises
- Limited skilled workforce across aged care providers to allow person centred care, especially for vulnerable populations

*"I have regular and affordable access to care... within my local community"*

### Identify people with greatest needs not seeking aged care services and supports.



- Lack of awareness of support options in community is a barrier
- Need awareness raising targeting people not seeking support and address the strong desire to maintain independence and fear of residential aged care facilities, especially among men
- Need an assertive approach to identify vulnerable people not accessing aged care services

*"I can get help to work out how the aged care system works and how to get the care I need"*

### Address factors affecting health (social determinants)



- Gippsland has a high proportion of people with unmet basic needs; homelessness, family violence and social isolation
- Target people with multiple and complex barriers, including financial stress, food insecurity, housing and transport

*"I want to be able to afford to look after my health"*