

Looking after the Home Carer

Caring for someone at home who has a disability, or is elderly and frail, can place many physical and emotional demands upon the carer. It is important that carers are aware that there are a variety of techniques, equipment and services that can make their job safer and easier.

SERVICES

Within the community there are services to offer physical and emotional support if you are caring for someone at home.

Carers Support Kit – Carers Queensland provides this kit free of charge. It offers information on services and supports available to carers.

Support Groups – Usually there are support groups related to specific disability groups that can offer support as well as information on the disorder of disability.

Your local community will provide services through the **Home and Community Care (HACC) program, Community Health Centres, Public Hospitals or Nursing Agencies**. Services that are provided may include: In home and day respite care, personal care assistance, house cleaning, laundry, grocery shopping, nursing care, meals on wheels, occupational therapy and physiotherapy services, and local transportation options.

DIAL (Disability and Info Awareness Line), is a good resource to find out who provides these services in your local area.
1800 177 120

Listed below are some problems that clients and their carers may experience and a range of equipment that may assist them in overcoming these difficulties.



BATHING AND TOILETING

(Also see Bath and Shower Equipment and Toileting Equipment Fact Sheets)

The bathroom can be a slippery place and is a potential area for falls and accidents to occur. There is a range of equipment available to improve safety when bathing for both the carer and the person being cared for.

Slip resistant mats or stick on slip-resistant strips can be placed on existing floors to increase slip resistance. Alternately, existing flooring can be replaced with slip-resistant tiles or vinyl.



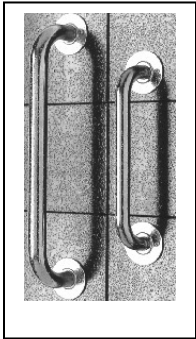
Bath boards and seats fit over the tub allowing someone to sit while bathing and eliminating the need to step over the hob. A range of shower chairs and stools are also available for use in the shower.

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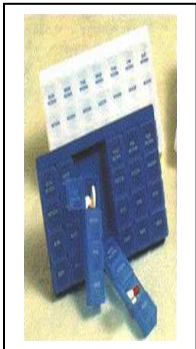


Grab rails that are wall or floor mounted provide a safe and steady place to hold onto for support.

Mobile toilet/shower commodes allow a person to be wheeled into a shower recess and over the toilet.

Bed pans and urinals can be used for toileting while remaining in bed.

A variety of body worn **incontinence products** exist. Some can be washed and reused, and others are disposable.



MEDICATION MANAGEMENT

A range of **dosette boxes** can be used to organise medication and to remind the user if it has been taken.

Many chemists will also arrange medications into webster packs similar to dosette boxes for a small charge.

Electronic pill box reminders are also available. These devices incorporate an alarm which is used to remind the individual to take medication.

DEALING WITH MEMORY LOSS OF CONFUSION

These are some ideas to assist when caring for someone with memory loss and may help to decrease their stress and confusion.

- Maintain a regular routine with as much structure as possible.
- Keep a written list of daily activities in an obvious place for the person to consult if required.
- Include a pictures or photographs of sequences or activities as visual reminders.
- Have the day and date written largely in an obvious place.
- Orient the person to calendars and clocks and where they are located.
- Have doors locked with keys that are removed from the doors to prevent wandering.
- Have the person wear an identification bracelet with their name and phone number in case they wander.
- Lock all cabinets with medication or harmful substances.
- Regularly used and emergency telephone numbers can be written largely and placed near the telephone or programmed into the phone.
- Install a thermostat or hot water shut down device on the hot water outlets to prevent scalding from hot water.

NEED TO KNOW MORE?

Telephone, fax or e-mail your enquiry to obtain further information from one of the therapists about products. Alternatively, you can make an appointment to trial the equipment at our display centres or through our outreach service. Please phone LifeTec for further details.

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