



National Aged Care Design Principles and Guidelines

Fact sheet for architects and the design community

The National Aged Care Design Principles and Guidelines help to improve the design of residential aged care for the benefit of the people living and working in aged care homes.

What does this mean for architects and designers?

The Principles and Guidelines are an evidence-based resource to help guide the design community when designing, building or refurbishing aged care homes. They include design features that range from simple, low-cost changes that can be introduced to existing aged care homes, to more substantial features that better suit new buildings.

What do architects and designers need to do?

When engaging with aged care providers on projects to build or refurbish aged care homes, we encourage you to refer to the Principles and Guidelines to guide the design process.

The Principles and Guidelines were introduced as voluntary and uptake by the aged care sector will help inform long-term arrangements and future regulatory considerations.

How have the Principles and Guidelines been structured?

The Principles and Guidelines are structured around four principles:

- 1. Enable the Person – Help people live in a place that looks after their health, wellbeing and sense of identity.**

- Thoughtful design can reduce the impact of changing mobility, cognition, continence and frailty that residents may experience.
- 2. Cultivate a Home – Create a familiar space where people have privacy, control and feel they belong.**
 - Evidence shows that small household models can reduce agitation, pacing and exit-seeking behaviours and improve social interaction, eating and infection control.
 - 3. Access the Outdoors – Support people seeing and spending time outdoors in nature.**
 - Accessing the outdoors is linked with a range of health, psychological and social benefits, which have a positive impact that is hard to achieve in other ways.
 - 4. Connect with Community – Encourage people to connect with family, friends and community and to stay involved in meaningful activities.**
 - Many people in aged care homes are at risk of social isolation and exclusion. Creating opportunities for residents to connect with each other and with family, friends and the broader community is important for wellbeing.

Each principle addresses a design challenge in an aged care home. They are supported by a series of guidelines that promote social and care outcomes and contain checklists of practical changes that can be made.

What support is there?

We ran a *Reimagining where we live* aged care design ideas competition to test and promote awareness of the draft Principles and Guidelines. We encourage you to view the winning and highly commended concept designs by entrants to help inspire your next aged care design project. These concepts show how the Principles and Guidelines can help create home-like environments that promote quality of life, enjoyment, wellbeing and connection to community.

You can find more information about the design ideas competition at health.gov.au using the search term 'Reimagining where we live'.

You can find more information about accommodation reform at health.gov.au using the search term 'improving accommodation'.

Scan the QR code to view the full set of the Principles and Guidelines.



Let's change aged care together

We invite Australians to continue to have their say about the aged care reforms.



Visit agedcareengagement.health.gov.au



Phone **1800 318 209** (Aged care reform free-call phone line)

For translating and interpreting services, call 131 450 and ask for 1800 318 209.

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