



Quick reference: Working with registered supporters

This quick reference helps you to follow a clear process when an older person has a registered supporter. Your role is to make sure the older person's voice, rights and choices stay at the centre of all decisions.

What is a registered supporter?

The registered supporter role exists to promote older peoples' rights to make their own decisions, with support if necessary. A registered supporter can help the older person they support to make and communicate their own decisions, and access and understand information about their aged care services. Registered supporters must follow duties under the *Aged Care Act 2024* (Cth) (the Act) that are designed to promote the older person's safety, rights, will, and preferences.

What is supported decision-making?

Supported decision-making is the process of providing support to help older people make and communicate their own decisions, rather than having decisions made for them. This allows older people to remain in control of their lives.

Supported decision-making processes and approaches enable people to exercise their legal capacity, including making or communicating their decisions, will, and preferences, by provision of the support they may want or need, to do so. This support may involve a range of persons, services, and assistive technologies.

Supported decision-making does **not** mean making a decision for, or on behalf of, another person.

Supported decision-making principles and processes **do not** depend on an older person having a registered supporter. Aged care providers, responsible persons, and aged care workers should implement supported decision-making principles and processes, where appropriate, regardless of the presence or absence of a registered supporter or other person supporting an older person.

Older people must be at the centre of decision-making and decisions about their aged care.

Quick links

- [Aged care providers policy for registered supporters](#)
- [Registered Supporters in Aged Care](#)

Step-by-step process for engaging with registered supporters

Use these steps each time a decision is made

Older people have the right to be supported (if necessary) to make their own decisions, have those decisions respected, and to take personal risks. This support can be provided by a registered supporter, or by any other person or process that an older person wants or needs support from.

If you are engaging with a registered supporter, you may find the following steps useful.

Remember that it is **not** the role of a registered supporter to make decisions for an older person.

1. Check direction	2. Confirm roles	3. Make it accessible	4. Watch for role slip	5. Manage disagreements	6. Record it
Ask the older person if they want a registered supporter involved, and how.	Confirm the role of the older person and the role of the registered supporter in the decision-making process.	Consider how to present the decision to make it clear and understandable for the older person e.g. plain language, visual / audiovisual aids, interpreters.	If the registered supporter responds first or appears to communicate their preferences (as opposed to those of the older person), redirect back to the older person.	Park arguments, reconfirm the older person's decision, will or preference, and engage registered supporters in a conversation focused on the decision, will or preferences of the older person.	Make a record of the decision-making process: who was there, supports used, decisions, will or preferences that the older person made or communicated, and any concerns.

Go-to prompts

Quick phrases to ensure focus remains on the older person

- How would you like me to help you make this decision?
- It is your choice, [registered supporter] can help you, but you can decide.
- Would you like [registered supporter] involved in this decision? How would you like them to support you?
- [Registered supporter], I would like to hear what [older person's] decisions or wishes are.

Things to look out for

Signs that the supporter may not be acting in line with their role

- The registered supporter speaks over or contradicts the older person
- The registered supporter refuses to allow you to check-in privately with the older person
- The older person changes their views or is reluctant to speak-up when their registered supporter is around
- Signs of pressure or coercion from the registered supporter

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If you notice any of these signs: ***Pause – Separate – Escalate – Document***

- **Pause:** stop the conversation or action if you notice something concerning.
- **Separate:** create space to check in privately with the older person.
- **Escalate:** raise the concern to a supervisor or manager for follow-up.
- **Document:** record what happened, what was observed, and any action taken.

Documenting the process

Things to include when making a record of the decision-making process.

- **Roles present:** note who was involved in the discussion (older person, registered supporter, staff, others).
- **Supports provided:** record any aids or adjustments used (interpreters, plain language, extra time, hearing/vision supports).
- **Options explained:** list the choices offered and how they were presented to the older person.
- **Older person's decision (their words):** capture the decision in the older person's own language wherever possible.
 - However, remember to encourage and accept different ways of receiving, understanding, and communicating information by older people. This includes respect for all kinds of communication, including written, verbal, and non-verbal communication, and communication using assistive technology.
- **Disagreements handled:** describe any differing views and how the older person's choice was confirmed.
- **Concerns + action taken:** record any concerns noticed and what steps you took (pause, separate, escalate).