

About healthcare rights for people with cognitive impairment

Australian Commission on Safety and
Quality in Health Care



Easy English



Hard words

This book has some hard words.

The first time we write a hard word

- the word is in **blue**
- we write what the hard word means.

You can get help with this book



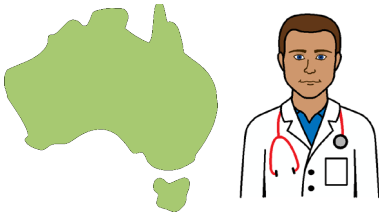
You can get someone to help you

- read this book
- know what this book is about
- find more information.



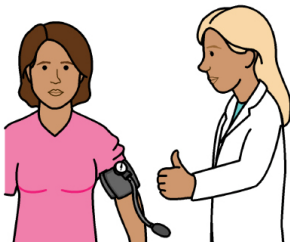
About this book

This book is written by the **Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care**.

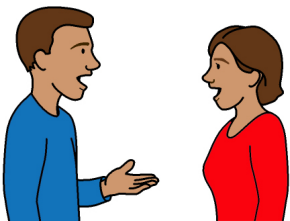


The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care helps make sure health care in Australia is

- good
- safe.



This book will help people living with **cognitive impairment** get good health care.



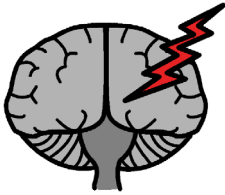
Cognitive impairment means you might find it hard to

- tell other people what you need
- think and remember
- tell other people how you feel.



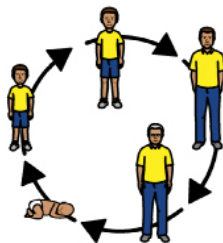
A person might have a cognitive impairment because they have

- dementia
- intellectual disability
- a brain injury
- **delirium.**



Delirium can be when a person suddenly becomes confused. For example

- can **not** pay attention
- has memory loss
- sees things that are **not** there.



You might live with cognitive impairment for

- your whole life. For example, Down Syndrome.

or



- a shorter time. For example, delirium.

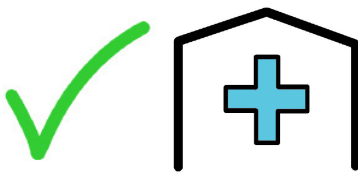
What do I need to know?

People with cognitive impairment have the right to health care that is



- safe
- good
- supported.

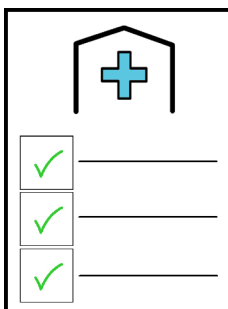
The **National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards** help to



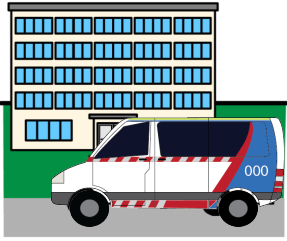
- protect people from harm

and

- make health services better.

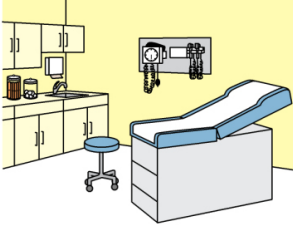


The National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards are a set of rules for health services to make sure people get the best care.

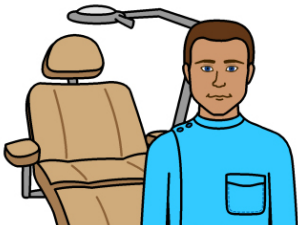


Health services can be

- hospitals



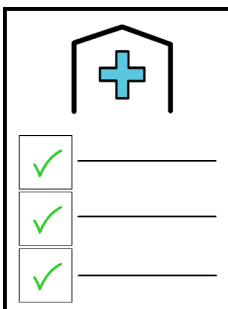
- day surgeries



- public dentists



- community health centres.



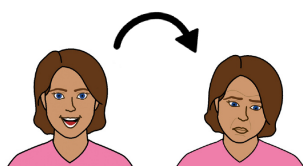
All health services must follow the rules.

What can I do?

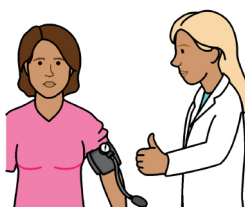


You have the right to tell your doctor, nurse or healthcare staff

- if you need help
- if you do **not** feel like your normal self



- what is important to you



- what treatment or care plan you want



- about the medicine you take.

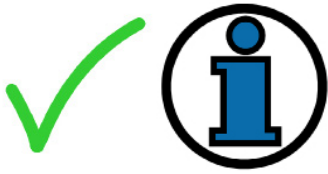


You can get help from

- family or friends
- carers or support people



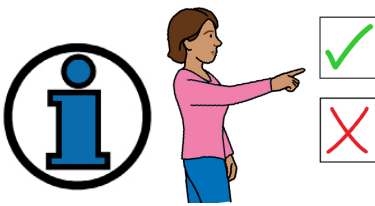
- healthcare staff.



You must be given the right information by health services.

For example, test results or what is good or bad about a treatment.

If you get the right information you will be able to give **informed consent**.



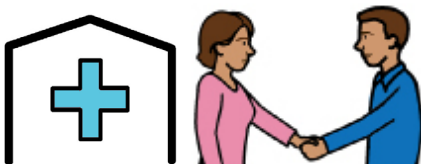
Informed consent means

- you get all of the information to make the right decision

and



- you say yes or no to something.



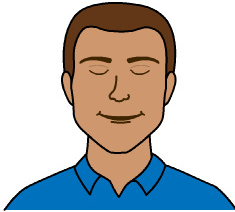
You have a right to get treatment in a place that is safe, calm and respectful.



You must be told if something has gone wrong with your health care.

How your support person or carer can help

When you are in hospital your support person or carer can help you to feel



- safe

and



- supported.

Your support person or carer can tell healthcare staff



- if you do **not** feel like your normal self

- what you do on a normal day so you feel comfortable



- what medicine you take.

Your support person or carer can make sure you have things you need in hospital.

For example



- glasses



- hearing aids



- dentures



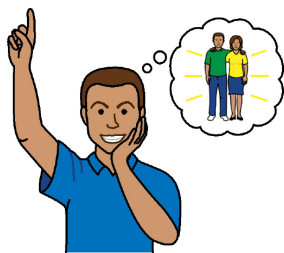
- mobility aids. For example, a wheelchair.

To help you feel comfortable in hospital your support person or carer can talk to you about



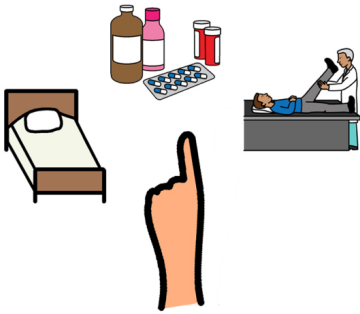
- family

- friends

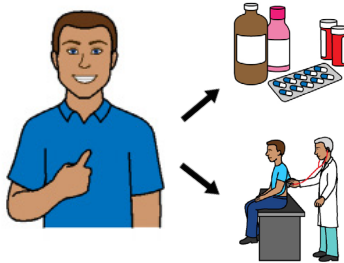


- things you like to remember.

When you make a choice about health care



It is important for people with cognitive impairment to have support to choose the health care they get.



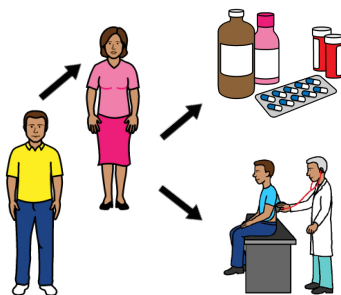
The different ways you can make a choice about your health care are

- you can make your own decisions about your health care.



- you need a support person to help you make decisions about health care.

For example, a family member or a carer.



- you can **not** make a decision about health care for yourself and someone else makes legal decisions for you.

What healthcare staff will do

All healthcare staff must give care that is



- good



- safe

- respectful.



Healthcare staff must get you an interpreter if you need one.



Healthcare staff must be able to

- ask you questions to find out if you have cognitive impairment



- keep you safe while you are in their care

- support you if you are upset.

How to give feedback



You can give the healthcare service **feedback**.

Feedback is when you tell someone

- what they have done well
- what they can do better.

You can tell them about a **complaint**.



A complaint is when you

- are **not** happy

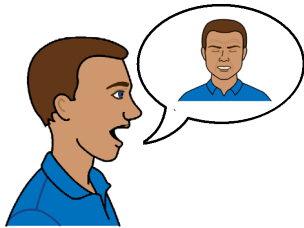
and

- tell them the reason.

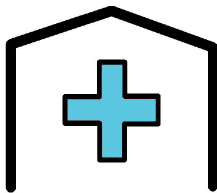


If you are **not** happy with the complaint result you can talk to the health complaints authority in your state.

If things go wrong there is a process called **open disclosure**.



Open disclosure is when your healthcare service talks with you about what happened while you were in their care that caused you harm.



You talk with

- the healthcare service



- your family



- your carer

- other support people.



For more information about open disclosure go to our website and search for **Open Disclosure**.

<https://safetyandquality.govcms.gov.au>



Or click this link to see the [Open Disclosure Framework](#)



Where to find support

Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights

safetyandquality.gov.au/australian-charter-healthcare-rights

Caring for Cognitive Impairment

cognitivecare.gov.au

Dementia Australia

Helpline from 8 am to 8 pm.

Call 1800 100 500

dementia.org.au

Advance Care Planning Australia

advance-care-planning.org.au

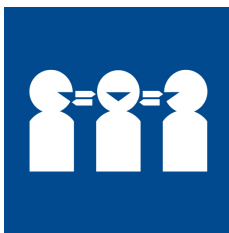
Cognitive Decline Partnership Centre
cdpc.sydney.edu.au/research/planning-decision-making-and-risk

Australian Delirium Association
delirium.org.au

Brain Injury Australia
Call 1800 272 461

braininjuryaustralia.org.au

**Australian Commission on Safety and
Quality in Health Care**
safetyandquality.gov.au/your-rights



If you need help with English
Contact the Telephone Interpreting Service.

Call 131 450

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