



Partners in Care Factsheet

Partners in Care is a special program enabling family members and resident representatives to continue visiting their loved ones and participate in their care during the COVID-19 pandemic.

A Partner in Care is someone who has a close and continuing relationship with a resident who is able to commit to a regular routine of assistance and companionship. A documented plan of support is created with the consent of the resident and resident's Partner in Care. This plan is reviewed regularly by all parties, especially the resident where able.

Why Partners in Care?

With the rapid increase in the number of people in the community diagnosed with COVID-19, many IRT aged care centres are experiencing staff shortages as employees either recover from COVID-19 or isolate as close contacts.

The Partners in Care program invites family members and resident representatives to spend more time with their loved one, assist with some care tasks and offer additional emotional support and companionship.

As a Partner in Care you can continue to visit and support your loved one throughout periods of restricted or closed visiting due to COVID-19 rules*.

*Please note that in periods of heightened risk visits by Partners in Care may be prohibited by NSW Health.

The Partners in Care program is aligned with the Commonwealth Government's Partnerships in Care initiative, which supports safe assistance in aged care centres while COVID-19 remains an ongoing risk. Details of this initiative can be found [here](#).

How can I help?

Once it is confirmed that your loved one is comfortable with your participation as a Partner in Care there are many opportunities for you to offer more support, some tasks you or other family may already assist with.

Possible tasks may include:

- Leisure activities e.g. reading, music
- Access to and supervision in outdoor spaces or the community
- Assistance with meals
- Personal hygiene such as grooming
- Bed making and room tidy
- Assistance with phone calls or video calls to friends and other family members

There is no minimum time commitment; your support is deeply appreciated at whatever level you are able to regularly maintain during the periods of morning tea to lunch times; and afternoon tea to dinner times.

Do I need training or other qualifications?

While the main qualification is a genuine interest in helping your loved one and partnering in their care you will need to complete 1.5 hours of online training and a 4 hour face-to-face practical training session.

You will learn best practice Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) protocols and procedures to protect yourself and others from COVID-19. Other training modules will cover the following subject areas:

- Privacy, confidentiality and dignity
- Code of conduct and health work safety
- Protecting yourself and others from COVID-19
- Food hygiene and food safety
- Serious incident response scheme and aged care quality standards

I want to help!

Call our Customer Service Team on **134 478** and express your interest in becoming a Partner in Care for your loved one.

You will be asked to share your name, phone number and details of what types of support you or another family member is willing to assist with.

Once you have registered your interest you will be contacted by the Volunteer Unit Manager to arrange your training and share next steps.

IRT recognises that for many, assisting at this time may not be possible and we thank you for your patience and support as we work under these difficult circumstances to care for your loved one.