



BELONG AT HOME

# NEWSLETTER

COMMONWEALTH HOME SUPPORT PROGRAM

AUTUMN / WINTER 2026

## Welcome to our Autumn Newsletter

As we move into the cooler months, I want to take a moment to thank you for the trust you place in Belong at Home. It is a privilege to support you in your own home and community, and we never take that trust for granted.

At Belong at Home, our focus remains on helping you live safely, confidently, and with dignity at home for as long as possible. Our team is committed to listening, planning carefully, and providing support that is respectful and responsive.

Because you are a Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) client, this newsletter has been specifically prepared for you. We now provide two versions of our newsletter, one for Support at Home Program (SaH) clients and one for Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) clients. While much of the information is similar, each version is tailored to the program you are on. This helps ensure the information you receive is relevant to you and avoids confusion or unnecessary details.

In this edition, you will find practical safety information, helpful reminders, and service updates. You may also notice we explain why our workers sometimes ask certain questions. These conversations are always guided by care, safety, and making sure your support continues to meet your needs.

Thank you for being part of our community and for welcoming our team into your homes.



*Michelle De Ronchi*

Chief Executive Officer

## This CHSP issue:

- April is Falls Month: Staying Safe at Home
- Shared Transport & Appointment Times
- Worker Safety: Pets
- Worker Safety: Respectful Behaviour
- Scam Safety Tip: Stay Alert, Stay Safe
- Difference between CHSP and SaH
- When is it time to move to Support at Home?
- Grant Funding for CHSP explained

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# April Is Falls Month: Staying Safe at Home



Falls are one of the most common causes of injury for older people, but many falls can be prevented with simple steps. As we age, changes to balance, vision, and strength can increase risk, especially at home.

Small actions can make a big difference, such as keeping walkways clear, ensuring good lighting, wearing supportive footwear, and taking your time when standing or moving around. Falls prevention is about staying independent and confident, not limiting your activities. If something feels unsafe, it's okay to pause and ask for help, staying steady helps you stay independent.

Our team may talk with you about falls from time to time, this helps us support your safety and wellbeing.

## Falls - Why Do We Ask?

We ask questions about falls so we can help keep you safe.

If you are starting to become unsteady, had some near misses or falls, it's important that you speak to your GP. They can check for any reasons that may be contributing (such as medications, or illness).

When you speak to Belong at Home, our team may recommend contacting My Aged Care, to find out what you may be able to access to keep you safe at home (such as falls alarms, physiotherapy, occupational therapy equipment, or an assessment for Support at Home).

These conversations help ensure the right support is in place for you.

## Shared Transport & Appointment Times

Travel costs can add up, particularly for longer trips, for example between Bridgetown and Bunbury. Where possible, sharing transport with another client attending appointments at a similar time may help reduce costs. We also aim to schedule appointments during daylight hours, as travelling at dawn and dusk can be more challenging on regional roads. With current fuel costs and limited fuel reserves, we are mindful of planning travel carefully to help manage expenses. Please speak with our team if you'd like to discuss suitable options.



## Worker Safety: Pets

We understand pets are an important part of many households. To help keep everyone safe, we kindly ask that pets are secured away during visits (guide dogs accepted). This reduces the risk of trips, scratches, or bites and allows our worker to focus on providing you with the best possible support.

Thank you for helping us maintain a safe environment for both clients and workers.



# Worker Safety and Respectful Behaviour



At our organisation, the wellbeing of our workers is a priority. Every member of our team has the right to feel safe, respected, and supported while they carry out their work. Most of our interactions with the people we support are positive, productive and respectful, thank you for being part of this, as it helps support our workers wellbeing and ensures the best possible service for you.

## Respectful Behaviour Is a Shared Responsibility

We value the relationships we build with our clients, families, and visitors. These relationships work best when everyone treats each other with courtesy and respect. To maintain a positive and productive environment, we ask all to uphold the same standards of behaviour that we expect from our workers.

This includes:

- Speaking respectfully on the phone and in person.
- Maintaining appropriate boundaries.
- Refraining from aggressive, intimidating, or inappropriate behaviour.



## If a Situation Feels Unsafe

Our workers have the right to leave unsafe situations, while we always aim to provide the best possible service, safety comes first. If at any time a team member feels unsafe, physically or emotionally, they are empowered to step away from the situation. This may include pausing a visit, leaving a location, or seeking additional support.

If a situation cannot continue safely, services may be rescheduled or alternative arrangements made.

We appreciate your cooperation in helping us maintain a safe and respectful environment. When everyone feels secure and valued, we can focus on what truly matters: delivering high-quality support and building strong, positive relationships.

If you have any questions about our safety or conduct expectations, our team is always happy to discuss them.

# Scam Safety Tip – Stay Alert, Stay Safe

Scammers are becoming increasingly clever, and older Australians are often targeted through phone calls, emails, text messages, or social media.

**Remember:**

- Be cautious of unexpected requests for money or personal information
- Don't feel pressured to act quickly — scammers often create urgency
- Check email addresses and phone numbers carefully
- Talk to someone you trust if something doesn't feel right

If you are unsure about a message or call, it's okay to pause and seek advice. Staying informed is one of the best ways to stay protected.



## CHSP and Support at Home: What is the Difference?

Many of our clients currently receive services through The Commonwealth Home Support Program, (also known as CHSP) which is designed to provide entry level care to older people. Over time, some people may become eligible to transition to Support at Home (SaH), The Support at Home program, which replaced the Home Care Package program last year, is designed for those who require more support to stay independent longer.

Both programs aim to support you to live independently at home, however, **Support at Home offers greater flexibility, choice, and tailored support.**

So what are some key differences?

CHSP	Support at Home (SaH)
Entry-level support	More tailored, ongoing support
Less frequent support	Greater choice of services and more services
Short-term or lower needs	Designed for changing or higher needs
No care management, light-touch support if your needs change.	Includes care management, with a dedicated Care Partner who checks in at least once a month and supports your wellbeing.

**CHSP Coordination:** Coordinators who support CHSP clients aim to respond as soon as possible. In some cases, it may take up to three business days to return your call, as they also support clients with higher care needs under Support at Home.

### When is it time to move to Support at Home?

As people's needs change, Support at Home can offer:

- More choice and control over services
- A personalised care plan that can be adjusted over time
- Better support for complex or increasing needs
- Greater continuity and coordination of services

Moving to Support at Home does not mean you need more care right now, it simply provides more flexibility for the future.

## Grant Funding for CHSP explained

The Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) is funded through fixed government grants, which means providers are funded to deliver a set number of services each year.

As demand for services continues to grow, CHSP funding has not increased at the same rate. At times, this means we may need to pause new intakes, close referral portals, or decline new services once funding is fully allocated.

This does not reflect your eligibility or need. Where appropriate, we can help you explore Support at Home, which offers greater flexibility as needs change. Our team is always available to answer questions and discuss your options.

