



Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck
Minister for Aged Care and Senior Australians
Minister for Youth and Sport

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Free COVID-19 support line for Senior Australians

Senior Australians, their families and carers can now call a dedicated free call support line aimed at supporting the mental health of those impacted by the spread of COVID-19.

Minister for Aged Care and Senior Australians, Richard Colbeck, said talking to someone who understands and listens was an important outlet for anybody struggling to cope as the spread of the virus creates additional pressure on individuals and communities.

Established by the Morrison Government in conjunction with the Council on the Ageing Australia, National Seniors Australia, the Older Persons Advocacy Network and Dementia Australia, the phone line will be staffed with advisers who can offer practical help and advice.

“Each of these long-standing organisations is well regarded, passionate and very experienced in supporting Senior Australians and their loved ones,” Minister Colbeck said.

In addition, the Department of Health is currently working to enable existing home support and home care providers to source technology-based personal monitoring systems for vulnerable Senior Australians who are self-isolating.

It builds on measures announced by the Federal Government including welfare checks for those who have suspended their home support packages and a \$10 million funding injection for the Community Visitors Scheme aimed at keeping people connected.

Minister Colbeck said the COVID-19 phone line is a great initiative that reinforces the message of support for those in isolation, particularly if contact with family or friends is limited.

“I urge people to call this support line if they are feeling lonely or distressed, troubled or confused, or need to talk to someone about their concerns caring for a vulnerable person during the COVID-19 outbreak,” he said.

He said specifically targeted funding packages of \$101.2 and a further \$444 million announced in March had reinforced the aged care sector and provided an important safety net.

“The Federal Government is acting to ensure our most vulnerable residents across Australia stay connected and receive the support and care they need,” Minister Colbeck said.

The support line will operate Monday to Friday, except public holidays, from 8.30am to 6pm.

Call the COVID-19 support line on **1800 171 866**.