



Annual Public Forum 2021

Q & A resource

Aged Care

1. Is aged care seeing any changes in the number or characteristics of young people being referred to and entering aged care?

Since the [Young People in Residential Aged Care \(YPIRAC\) Strategy 2020-25](#) began, there has been a 62% decrease in the number of people entering residential aged care (RAC), however there are around 50 people entering aged care every month. Additionally, there are more than 3,000 younger people currently living in aged care.

2. Why are there still so many people entering aged care, and what is being done about it?

There are factors that contribute to people ending up in aged care, which include:

- People needing respite
- People not having tested their eligibility for the NDIS yet
- Not having access to suitable housing and needing a way to get out of hospital

The Federal Government has developed the YPIRAC Strategy 2020-25, which is working towards the following targets (apart from in exceptional circumstances):

- No people under the age of 65 entering residential aged care by 2022
- No people under the age of 45 living in residential aged care by 2022
- No people under the age of 65 living in residential aged care by 2025

The federal agencies with joint responsibility for implementing the YPIRAC Strategy are the Department of Social Services (DSS), Department of Health (DoH) and the NDIA. Demonstrating the commitment to the targets outlined in the Strategy, the NDIA has established a specialist YPIRAC planning team to develop and implement NDIS plans for participants identified as living in, or being at risk of entering, aged care. YPIRAC planners work closely with participants, their families, and nominees/guardians to develop their NDIS plan to support achievement of the participant's goals, including exploring and transitioning to alternative accommodation.

The NDIA has also implemented Hospital Liaison Officers (HLOs) across Australia to work closely with hospital clinical care teams, discharge planners, social workers, planners and support coordinators to identify people at risk of entering aged care and connect them to the most appropriate pathway to support the participant through their journey out of hospital into the community.

In an effort to achieve the YPIRAC targets the Federal Government has funded [The Ability First Systems Coordinator Program](#) which aims to support younger people living in aged care who are not NDIS eligible. The program looks at alternative ways to keep people out of RAC. The NDIA has YIPRAC planners who work specifically with younger people living in aged care and the Ability First systems coordinators.

The Federal Government continues to meet with State and Territory Governments to discuss trends around entries and exits, and additional measures and strategies that may assist in reducing the number of younger people entering or living in aged care, especially those not eligible for the NDIS or housing supports under the NDIS.

For details on the progress of actions to reduce the number of younger people in residential aged care, please go to dss.gov.au/ypirac.

3. When considering barriers such as health, location and housing availability what specific cohort of young people will be the hardest to get out of aged care by 2025?

People with the most complex needs, people with potentially complex behaviour, people with dementia and Parkinsons, people who have very high levels of support needs, such as 24/7 line of sight support. Along with people that don't have a strong network of supporters around them, such as those that don't have a lot of family, people that don't have guardians or only have distant guardians.

4. How can we resolve the issue of aged care facilities creating barriers or roadblocks to clients in order for allied health care specialists to undertake assessments required for SDA applications?

The Department of Health encourages residential aged care providers to assist NDIS participants and NDIA representatives with NDIS planning. RAC facilities should be supporting access for clients to undertake these assessments.

Where a younger person does not feel they are able to access the services they require to support their goals to move, they or their representative can contact the Department of Health at: Health.YPIRAC@health.gov.au and the department can facilitate a discussion on this matter.

5. There are 3,232 young people living in aged care with the numbers steadily decreasing - does that mean in a few years time there will no longer be young people living in aged care, or will there always be exceptions?

The Federal Government released the Young People in Residential Aged Care (YPIRAC) Strategy in 2020. The Strategy outlines the commitment to ensuring no younger person is living in or enters aged care by 2025, except in exceptional circumstances. You can read the strategy [here](#).

6. What role do aged care providers play in supporting younger people to explore alternative housing options?

While aged care providers are not experts in disability housing and are not responsible for helping younger people access housing options, they do have an understanding of what care and services the younger person is currently receiving and can be supportive and provide opportunities for younger people to explore other housing arrangements.

NDIS participants are supported to explore options with YPIRAC planners who have expertise to assist younger people, their families and carers in exploring reasonable and necessary support options to meet their home and living goals.

Younger people who are not NDIS participants or who are not eligible for the NDIS can receive support from system coordinators available through the Ability First Australia Systems Coordinator Program. To find out more about this program contact Ability First Australia on 1800 771 663. More information on this initiative can also be found at: <https://abilityfirstaustralia.org.au/young-people-in-residential-aged-care-systems-coordinator-program/>

All housing and support options should be explored and considered by the NDIA and YPIRAC planners prior to a referral going to the Age Care Assessment Team (ACAT (in Victoria - ACAS)). Where suitable, age appropriate accommodation is available and can be funded through an NDIS plan, or accessed through State Government or community housing arrangements, ACAT should decline a referral for people with disability under 65.

The Summer Foundation runs the [UpSkill program which builds the capacity of support coordinators and allied health professionals. Training is available across many aspects of the NDIS, including supporting younger people out of aged care. Aged care staff would benefit from attending the training and using the Summer Foundation's resources to support the younger people in their care to explore their housing options - Supporting young people living in aged care to benefit from NDIS and Moving out of a nursing home resources](#)

7. How can we accelerate the effort to get young people out of residential aged care much faster when currently 68% of people leave aged care because they die*? *Source AIHW

Supporting a young person to leave RAC requires a collaborative approach that may include the RAC provider, system coordinators, support coordinators and other NDIS providers.

Importantly, all younger people should be given the option to live in the community, be given information on home and living supports through the NDIS and mainstream/community services and housing.

Sharing ideas of how other younger people consider their housing needs, planning for their life outside of aged care and living in the community can help a person ignite the possibility of living well in the community. Resources and videos on moving out of a nursing home can be found on the [Housing Hub](#).

Support coordinators can play a key role in bringing stakeholders together, facilitating and enabling a person-centred approach for the younger person moving to the community. A younger person may require specialist support coordination to address complex support needs and navigate the barriers to leaving RAC; this can be funded through the NDIS.

If a younger person chooses to stay in RAC, they should know they can consider their housing options at any time and start the process of living their life in the community. They should have support and funding included in their NDIS plan to enable them to spend time in the community exploring their interests and opportunities to try new things, make new friends or develop new skills. This may include utilising short-term accommodation outside of RAC.