

## **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



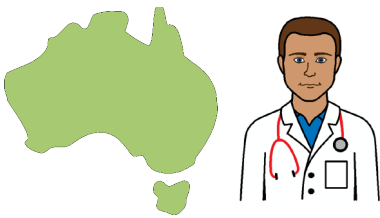
You can get someone to help you

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



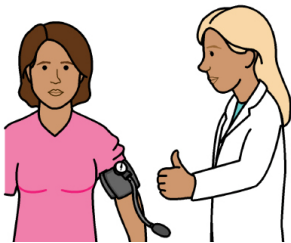
## About this book

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

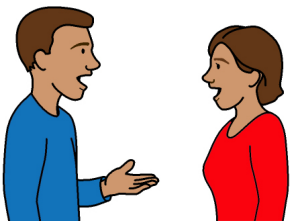


The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care helps make sure health care in Australia is

- good
- safe.



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



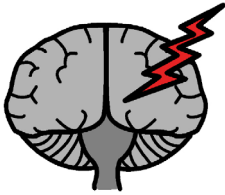
Cognitive impairment means you might find it hard to

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



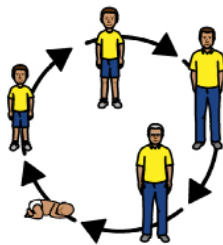
A person might have a cognitive impairment because they have

- 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.

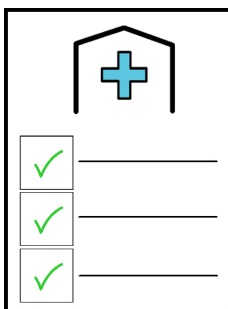
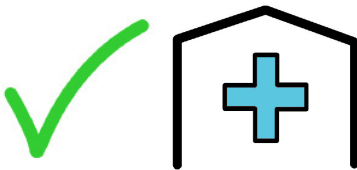
The **National Safety and Quality Health**

**Service Standards** help to

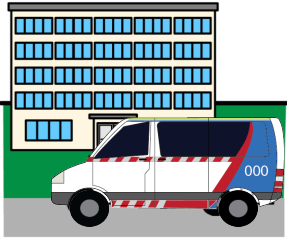
- protect people from harm

and

- make health services better.

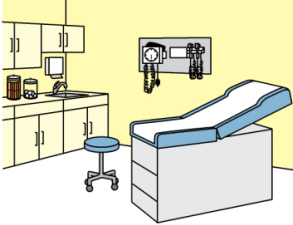


The National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards are a set of rules for health services to make sure people get the best care.

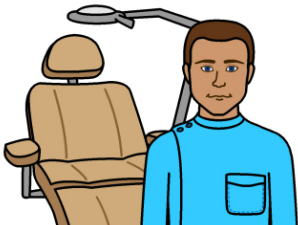


Health services can be

- hospitals



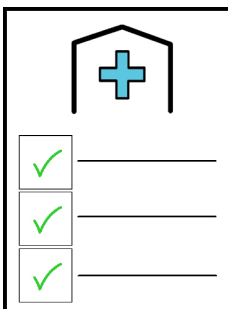
- day surgeries



- public dentists



- community health centres.



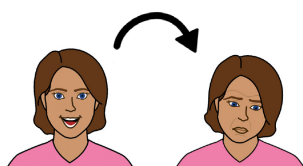
All health services must follow the rules.

## What can I do?

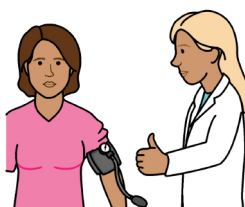


You have the right to tell your doctor, nurse or healthcare staff

- 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.

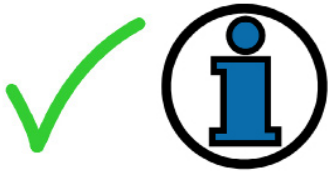


You can get help from

- family or friends
- carers or support people



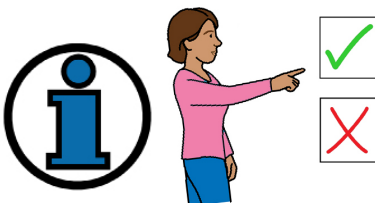
- healthcare staff.



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**.



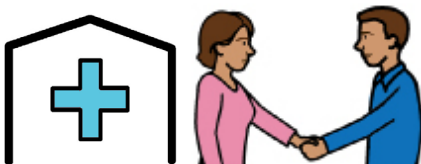
Informed consent means

- 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.

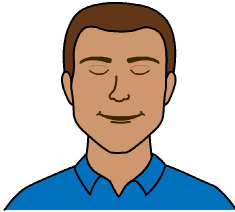


You must be told if something has gone wrong with your health care.



## 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



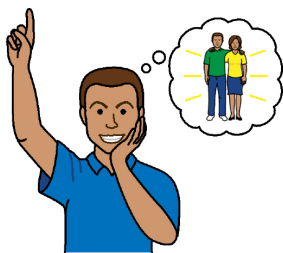
- mobility aids. For example, a wheelchair.

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



- family

- friends

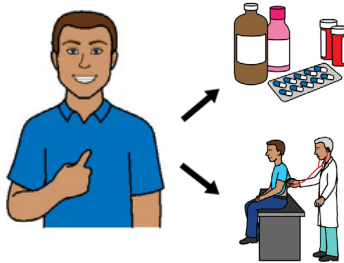


- things you like to remember.

## 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.



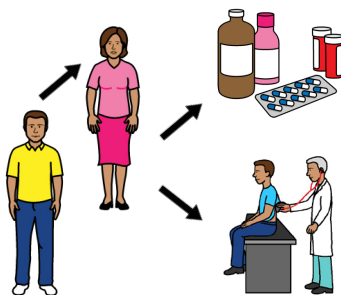
The different ways you can make a choice about your health care are

- 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.

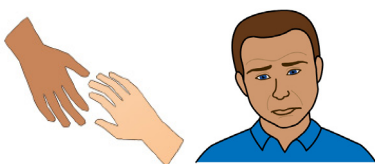


Healthcare staff must get you an interpreter if you need one.



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](https://safetyandquality.gov.au/australian-charter-healthcare-rights)

### **Caring for Cognitive Impairment**

[cognitivecare.gov.au](https://cognitivecare.gov.au)

### **Dementia Australia**

Helpline from 8 am to 8 pm.

Call 1800 100 500

[dementia.org.au](https://dementia.org.au)

### **Advance Care Planning Australia**

[advance-care-planning.org.au](https://advance-care-planning.org.au)



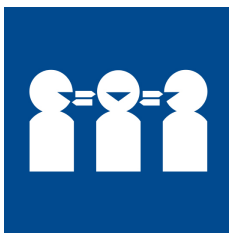
**Cognitive Decline Partnership Centre**  
[cdpc.sydney.edu.au/research/planning-decision-making-and-risk](http://cdpc.sydney.edu.au/research/planning-decision-making-and-risk)

**Australian Delirium Association**  
[delirium.org.au](http://delirium.org.au)

**Brain Injury Australia**  
Call 1800 272 461

[braininjuryaustralia.org.au](http://braininjuryaustralia.org.au)

**Australian Commission on Safety and  
Quality in Health Care**  
[safetyandquality.gov.au/your-rights](http://safetyandquality.gov.au/your-rights)



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

Call 131 450

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Scope's Communication and Inclusion Resource Centre wrote the Easy English version in May, 2020.

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