

Preparing to go home



3

**TAC information for
people with major injuries**

About preparing to go home

This brochure provides basic information about the support services funded by the TAC for people who have sustained major injuries as a result of a transport accident, and their families.

Major injuries are defined as: spinal cord injuries such as quadriplegia or paraplegia; moderate or severe acquired brain injuries; extensive burns; and/or amputations.

If you would like more detailed information about support services, please contact your TAC Early Support Coordinator or the TAC on 1300 654 329.

For information about the TAC in your own language, call one of the numbers listed on the back of this booklet.



1300 654 329



www.tac.vic.gov.au



myTAC

Your family, friends and your TAC Early Support Coordinator will be there to support you. They will work together with you, and the health professionals at the hospital, to ensure your return to day-to-day life is as smooth as possible.



Getting information and support

As you prepare to leave the rehabilitation hospital and return to your day-to-day life, you may feel uncertain about what the future holds. How will I cope without hospital staff regularly monitoring my treatment? What sort of care and support can I expect? Who will I be dealing with? What role am I expected to play in my ongoing rehabilitation?

We can assure you that you will continue to receive appropriate personalised care and support from your Early Support Coordinator and the health professionals involved. By now they will have planned your safe discharge from hospital. If you have any questions about your discharge plan, don't hesitate to ask.

Your Early Support Coordinator will visit you at home when required. They aim to provide you with all the information you will need to help you face with confidence, the various challenges you will meet in this period of adjustment.

Your family, friends and Early Support Coordinator are there to support you. They will work together with you, and the health professionals at the hospital, to ensure your journey to an independent life is as smooth as possible.

Planning your return to day-to-day life

Although you will be supported, the person with the most important role in ensuring a successful return home is you. We encourage you to actively discuss your needs and options with your Early Support Coordinator. Together you, your Early Support Coordinator and the health professionals involved in your care will develop an Independence Plan that will outline your goals moving from the rehabilitation hospital to your day-to-day life.

Family and friends can help make this move much easier. We suggest that you involve your family or friends in your Independence Plan so that they understand their role in your ongoing support.

Put simply, your Independence Plan sets out what you want to achieve and how you want to achieve it. It maps your journey to independence. It represents the short

and long term goals you want to achieve at home, at work/study and in the community.

The plan will also capture all your goals, no matter how big or small – whether it's going to the movies with friends, managing housework or rejoining the workforce.

Most importantly, it will detail the steps that need to be taken and the key people involved to achieve these goals.

The focus should be on creating a plan that maximises your independence.

Issues you may need to consider are:

- Managing household and day-to-day tasks
- Caring for your children
- Treatment
- Your social life
- Activities you enjoy
- New interests you may have
- Work or study
- Travel arrangements
- Modifications to your home or vehicle

The things your Independence Plan will include are:

- Key contact people
- Summary of your goals in the home, at work, within the community
- How your goals will be achieved
- Dates for goals to be achieved
- Approval for services like physiotherapy, home care etc. that support you to achieve your goals

You, your Early Support Coordinator and the health professionals involved in your care will all work together to achieve your goals. You will all have a copy of your Independence Plan soon after your discharge from hospital.

Remember, you are the most important person in your journey to independence and a successful Independence Plan relies heavily on your involvement.

How the TAC can help


Following your discharge from the rehabilitation hospital, the TAC will continue to fund support services to help you address the goals you have identified with your Early Support Coordinator. These services may include payment for appropriate medical, rehabilitation and disability services provided by qualified health professionals and service providers. The aim of all these services is to help you increase your independence in line with your Independence Plan goals.

The TAC's ability to fund support services is dependent on legislation (the *Transport Accident Act 1986*), your needs, your Independence Plan goals and the relationship between your needs, goals and injuries.

An important service the TAC may consider paying for is an occupational therapist to visit you at home between five and six weeks following your discharge from hospital. The occupational therapist will talk to you about how you are adjusting to life at home and in the community and review the services and supports in place to help you.

This is a great opportunity to discuss the things that are and aren't working. Your Early Support Coordinator will be on hand to update your Independence Plan as required. Your Early Support Coordinator will provide you with more information about this occupational therapist visit at the appropriate time.

Your Early Support Coordinator is your first point of contact, but if you have a general enquiry the TAC has a team of client service officers ready to take your call.

 **Don't hesitate to call our Customer Service Centre on 1300 654 329 or toll-free on 1800 332 556. You can also refer to the brochure *Supporting you after a transport accident* or visit our website at www.tac.vic.gov.au.**

Support and counselling for families

Your relatives and friends may also be anxious and need support as they adjust to your return to day-to-day life. This can be a tense time with a number of 'ups and downs'. Your Early Support Coordinator, community health centres and social workers can advise on how to obtain support for the people close to you. You can ask a nurse or other hospital staff members for an appointment with a social worker or for a referral to an outside agency. There are several organisations that can help and many of their services are free. (Ask your Early Support Coordinator for our information sheet on *Community Services*.) The Road Trauma Support Services, for example, provides counselling referral and information to families affected by road trauma. Their number is 1300 367 797.

The parents, partner, siblings and children of an injured person may be eligible to receive TAC-funded counselling from a registered doctor, psychologist or a provider approved by the TAC. Please note there is a limit on the amount of counselling that the TAC can pay for. If you wish to discuss or clarify your relative's eligibility for counselling, please contact your Early Support Coordinator.

“Returning home is all about attitude. I chose to be positive, and with the support of my family, got on with my life and had fun again.”

TAC client.



What happens next

Returning to day-to-day life

The following outlines what you can expect to happen throughout your rehabilitation and move back to day-to-day life.

| | What happens at the hospital | What happens at the TAC |
|--|---|--|
| Stage 1: The emergency hospital | Immediately after the accident emergency treatment is given. | Ambulance and hospital bills are paid. You are assigned an Early Support Coordinator who will look after you and manage your claim. |
| Stage 2: The rehabilitation hospital | You receive the treatment you need and work through your rehabilitation program. | Appropriate support services are paid. A hospital discharge plan is developed with the treating team and discussions begin about an Independence Plan to help you on your journey to independence. |
| Stage 3: Returning to day-to-day life | You leave the rehabilitation hospital and move back to day-to-day life with the right services in place to support you. You receive treatment appropriate to your needs and Independence Plan goals. Gradually you build activities into your day-to-day life. Within five to six weeks of your return home, an occupational therapist visits to review the services in place to support you. | Together you, your Early Support Coordinator and the health professionals involved in your care will develop an Independence Plan (if you haven't already). Your Independence Plan is monitored and updated as your needs and goals change over time. You, your Early Support Coordinator and treating team continue to work together to achieve your goals and help you work towards independence. We continue to pay for services and offer options that are appropriate to your needs and Independence Plan goals. |

Think about your abilities and interests and focus on what you can do, not on what you can't do.

After leaving the hospital, a new stage of rehabilitation and life begins. You may meet new doctors and therapists from your local area. You may travel to a rehabilitation hospital from home as part of an outpatient program. You may be preparing to return to work or school. You may be thinking about picking up former interests or taking up new ones. Although an Independence Plan will be in place to support you, it can be an emotional time as you, your family and friends adjust to changes.

When you return to your day-to-day life, the TAC plays a role beyond just simply paying support services.

Your Early Support Coordinator will continue to encourage you to think about your abilities and your interests, to focus on what you can do, not on what you can't do. How have your goals changed since the accident? Would you consider working from home? What activities or clubs would you like to be involved in? Rest assured, your Early Support Coordinator will continue to listen to what's important to you. They will also continue to look after your Independence Plan and update it when your needs and goals change. With both you and your Early Support Coordinator monitoring how and if your goals are being achieved, the right services and support will be provided to you at the right time.

If you are feeling uncertain, scared or worried, let your Early Support Coordinator know. They are here for you.

An Early Support Coordinator:

- Is your key point of contact at the TAC
- Meets face to face with you, your family and the health professionals involved throughout the journey from hospital to home and beyond
- Manages your claim by making decisions on requests for treatment and services
- Ensures the right supports and services are in place when you leave hospital and go home
- Works closely with you to develop an Independence Plan, that captures your goals at home, at work and in the community
- Works through the necessary steps to help you achieve your goals
- Shares the Independence Plan with the relevant health professionals to ensure that everyone involved in your care is working towards achieving these goals
- Regularly monitors your Independence Plan to ensure it matches your changing goals and needs
- Supports you on your journey to independence
- Is there to help address any questions, concerns or fears you may have

You play the most important role in successfully returning to your day-to-day life.



What you need to do

You need to ensure that you:

- Discuss your injuries, treatment, hopes, plans and fears with your Early Support Coordinator and the health professionals at the hospital
- Are actively involved with your Early Support Coordinator and treating team in developing an Independence Plan that will suit your abilities, needs, goals and lifestyle in the community
- Actively participate in your rehabilitation program and ask about your hospital discharge plan if you have any questions

- Read the brochure *Supporting you after a transport accident* and talk to your Early Support Coordinator to find out which support services are appropriate to your situation
- Think about your interests and talk to your Early Support Coordinator about avenues you can pursue in the community
- Contact your Early Support Coordinator or the TAC's Customer Service Centre if you have any questions or concerns

Please contact your Early Support Coordinator if you have questions or concerns. Your Early Support Coordinator will be happy to visit you to discuss things in more detail and to provide you with relevant booklets or information sheets.

Contact us

8.30am to 5.30pm, Monday to Friday



1300 654 329 (local call)

1800 332 556 (toll-free outside the Melbourne metropolitan area)



Address

60 Brougham Street, Geelong VIC 3220



Mailing address

TAC, Reply Paid 2751, Melbourne VIC 3001



www.tac.vic.gov.au



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Manage your TAC claim with ease using myTAC, our new mobile app and web portal.

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For information about the TAC in your own language, call one of the numbers listed here:

العربية

1300 138 639

Ελληνικά

1300 138 642

廣東話

1300 138 640

Türkçe

1300 139 073

Polski

1300 139 072

Hrvatski

1300 138 641

Tiếng Việt

1300 139 074

English

1300 139 076

Italiano

1300 138 643

All other languages

1300 139 075

普通话

1300 139 071

