



People leaving aged care

People leave aged care services for a number of reasons, including moving to another service for the same or a different care type. This topic presents data on the length of time people spend using aged care services, and the number of people who exited these services, during 2022–23.

The time that a person spends using an aged care service in a single episode is referred to here as ‘length of stay’, regardless of whether they used community or residential care. Here we describe length of stay using the median value: around half of people have a length of stay longer than the median, and around half of people have a length of stay shorter than the median.

When a person leaves an aged care service it is referred to here as an ‘exit’ (excluding short periods of leave, such as for family visits or hospital stays).

For exits that took place in 2022–23, over 74,300 were from permanent residential care, and more than 79,700 were from home care. The largest proportion of exits during this time was for respite residential care (over 93,700), reflecting that people often use this care type for short periods of time and on multiple occasions.

Reasons for leaving aged care

People can leave aged care services for varying reasons. Reasons for exit include death, moving to another service, moving to another care type or returning to living in the community. How long people stay in aged care services and the reasons for leaving are likely to differ among care types.

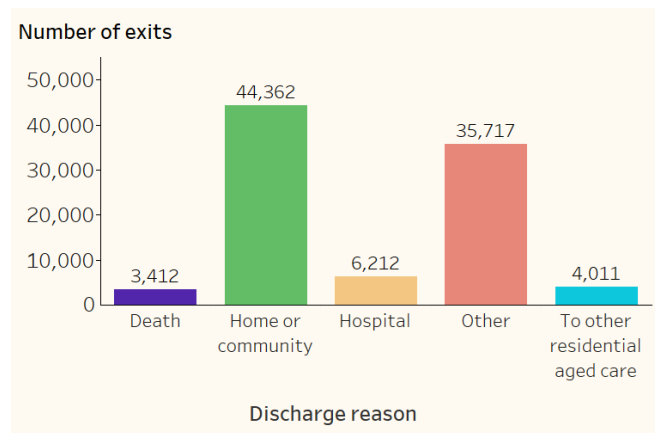
In 2022–23, most exits from permanent residential care were due to death (84% of exits), while the most common reason for exit from home care was to enter residential care (39%).

For exits from permanent residential care, the longest median length of stay was for those who died in care (almost 22.8 months).

People leaving home care had similar median length of stay whether they exited due to death or due to entering residential care (15.6 months and 16.6 months, respectively).

For respite residential care (Figure 1), transition care and short-term restorative care, the most common reason for exit was to return home or to community-based living (47%, 64% and 64% of exits, respectively).

Figure 1: Number of exits from respite residential care by discharge reason, 2022–23



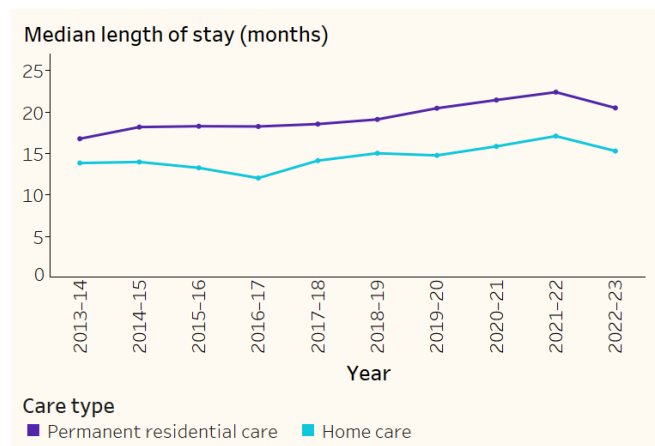
People leaving aged care over time

There have been changes in the typical length of stay and the number of exits for different care types over the last 10 years.

Between 2021–22 and 2022–23, the median length of stay decreased by almost 2 months for people leaving permanent residential care and for people leaving home care.

However, trends over the decade from 2013–14 to 2022–23 indicate that the median length of stay increased by almost 1 and a half months for home care and by more than 3 and a half months for permanent residential care (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Length of stay by care type, 2013–14 to 2022–23



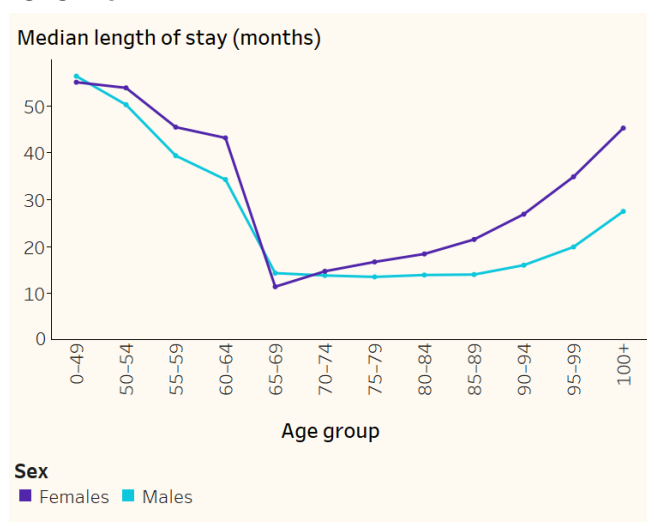
People leaving aged care by age and sex

Although the majority of people using aged care services are people aged 65 and over, younger people also access and exit these services.

For exits that took place in 2022–23, the median length of stay in permanent residential care and home care was longer for women than men.

For both men and women, the median length of stay in permanent residential care generally increased with age from age 75 onwards, however the longest length of stay was for men and women aged 0–49 at exit (56.4 months and 55.1 months, respectively) (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Length of stay in permanent residential care, by age group and sex, 2022–23



People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds leaving aged care

Many older Australians were born overseas, speak a variety of languages, may not speak English fluently or have different religious or cultural practices. These characteristics can influence how people access and engage with aged care services and the support they require.

The median length of stay for people leaving permanent residential care was 2.4 months shorter for people who preferred to speak a language other than English compared with people who preferred to speak English.

Where can I find out more?

GEN topic: People leaving aged care

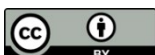
<<https://www.gen-agedcaredata.gov.au/Topics/People-leaving-aged-care>>

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians leaving aged care

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (First Nations) people are eligible to receive aged care services at an earlier age than non-Indigenous people. In 2022–23, First Nations people accounted for 1.6% of exits from aged care services.

First Nations people left all care types at younger ages than non-Indigenous people. The proportion of exits from permanent residential care by First Nations people were highest in age group 80–84 years at exit, whereas exits by non-Indigenous Australians were highest in age group 90–94 years at exit.

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Any enquiries about or comments on this publication should be directed to: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, GPO Box 570, Canberra ACT 2601
Tel: (02) 6244 1000 | Email: GEN@aihw.gov.au