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## New national guide explains aged care referral options

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An easy-to-follow referral guide is now available to help GPs, specialists and other health professionals support their patients to access aged care services.

Developed by Brisbane North and Brisbane South PHN in consultation with health professionals, the aged care system resource guide is designed to help health care professionals better navigate the aged care system and support their older patients to make informed decisions about their care.

The digital PDF features a colour-coded flow chart that links aged care programs to referral processes and outlines referral options for aged care Australia-wide.

Executive Manager for Aged and Community Care System Improvement at Brisbane North PHN, Sharon Sweeney (pictured), said health professionals are a key contact point for patients attempting to navigate the complex aged care system.

“Australia has an ageing population that is increasingly aware of self-determination and individual responsibility for achieving good health and wellbeing,” Ms Sweeney said.

“As a result, people are more likely to seek the advice of health professionals when choosing aged care services that meet their needs,” she said.

Laura Casey, Brisbane South PHN's Program Manager for Older People added, “At Brisbane South and Brisbane North PHN we are proudly supporting people in our community to live healthy and fulfilling lives as they age.”

“We hope this guide will empower health care professionals to support their older patients to confidently make informed choices about their long-term care, and where possible, help them to live independently for longer,” Ms Casey said.

The guide offers advice on referring via the My Aged Care portal and about how to find suitable additional supports for vulnerable clients and their carers.

It also includes links to consumer guides for relevant aged care programs.

To download the resource, go to <https://bnphn.org/AC-refer>.

### ENDS ###

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### **Editor's note:**

A press quality image of Sharon Sweeney holding the new aged care referral guide is available for download from the Brisbane North PHN media room. Go to:

<https://brisbanenorthphn.org.au/media/multimedia/high-resolution-images>

### **About Brisbane North PHN and Brisbane South PHN**

Both PHNs are independent, not-for-profit Primary Health Networks. There are 31 Primary Health Networks nationwide, seven of which cover Queensland. They support clinicians and communities across their respective regions.

Brisbane North PHN covers North Brisbane, Moreton Bay and parts of the Somerset region, while Brisbane South PHN covers a large area south of the Brisbane River, including metropolitan, rural and remote island locations. Between them, both PHNs covers approximately 8,000 km<sup>2</sup> and a population of well over two million people.

The key objectives of PHNs are:

- increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of medical services for patients, particularly those at risk of poor health outcomes, and
- improving coordination of care to ensure patients receive the right care in the right place at the right time.

For more information about PHNs in Queensland, go to [www.queenslandphn.org.au](http://www.queenslandphn.org.au).