

Aged Care Worker interview questions

careertips.com.au: common questions and what they're really testing

What to expect

Interviews for Aged Care Worker roles focus on how candidates handle the physical, emotional and procedural demands of direct care. Panels usually include a facility manager or care coordinator and sometimes a clinical lead, and they're checking for genuine care instinct alongside the practical skills needed to keep residents safe.

- **Behavioural:** Past-experience questions asking you to describe how you've handled situations involving resident care, family communication or teamwork.
- **Scenario/judgement:** Hypothetical situations testing how you'd respond to a resident health change, a behavioural issue or a safety risk in the moment.
- **Safety and compliance:** Questions checking your understanding of infection control, manual handling and reporting obligations under aged care standards.
- **Values-based:** Questions probing your attitude to dignity, privacy and person-centred care, since this underpins how residents and families experience the service.

Interviews typically open with questions about your background and qualifications, move into behavioural and scenario questions about care situations, then cover safety and compliance basics, and close with practical logistics like availability, police check status and physical capacity for manual handling.

1. Tell me about a time you noticed a change in a resident's health or behaviour and how you responded.

Why they ask

This checks whether you actually watch residents closely and know the escalation pathway to nursing staff, which is core to the role's supervision structure.

How to structure your answer

Use STAR: describe the situation and resident context, the specific change you noticed, the action you took including who you reported to, and the outcome for the resident.

Example answer

"I was assisting a resident with breakfast and noticed she was more withdrawn than usual and wasn't finishing meals she normally enjoyed. I mentioned it to the enrolled nurse straight away rather than waiting for the next handover, since I know small behavioural shifts can point to pain or infection. The nurse assessed her and found signs of a chest infection, which was treated early. It reinforced for me that reporting small observations quickly matters as much as the physical care tasks."

2. A resident refuses personal care, such as showering or taking medication. What do you do?

Why they ask

Tests judgement around resident rights, dignity and the balance between encouraging care and respecting autonomy, a daily tension in this work.

How to structure your answer

Walk through your immediate response, how you'd try to understand the refusal, when you'd escalate, and how you'd document it.

Example answer

"I'd start by asking gently why they don't want the shower or medication that day, since there's often a reason like feeling cold, tired or anxious about a routine. I'd offer choices, like a different time or a

warm towel wash instead, rather than pushing. If they still refuse, I respect that right, document what happened and why, and let the nurse know so the care plan can be reviewed. Ongoing refusal isn't just a task to tick off, it's information the care team needs."

3. Walk me through how you'd assist a resident with limited mobility to transfer from bed to chair using a hoist.

Why they ask

A direct process question checking practical competence and safety awareness with manual handling equipment, since incorrect technique risks injury to both worker and resident.

How to structure your answer

Give a clear step-by-step walkthrough: preparation and checks, the transfer itself, and post-transfer safety checks.

Example answer

"First I'd check the resident's care plan for their specific hoist type and weight limits, and make sure the sling is the right size and free of damage. I'd explain the process to the resident so they know what's happening, position the hoist and sling correctly, and get a second staff member if the facility's policy requires two-person assist. During the transfer I'd move slowly, watch the resident's comfort and the sling's positioning, and once they're seated I'd check they're settled properly and their call bell is within reach before moving on."

4. How do you maintain infection control standards during your shift, particularly with continence care?

Why they ask

Infection control is a named specialist skill for this role and a compliance requirement under aged care standards, so panels test specific knowledge, not just general hygiene awareness.

How to structure your answer

Answer as a process explanation, covering PPE use, hand hygiene points and waste handling.

Example answer

"I use PPE such as gloves and an apron for any continence care task, and I change gloves between residents and between dirty and clean tasks even within the same care episode. I wash or sanitise hands before and after each contact, dispose of continence products in the designated clinical waste, and make sure any equipment used is cleaned according to the facility's protocol before it's used again. If a resident has a known infection I follow any additional precautions on their care plan."

5. Describe a time you had to communicate difficult information to a resident's family.

Why they ask

Family communication is a listed task and is often where new workers struggle, so this behavioural question checks emotional maturity and communication skill under pressure.

How to structure your answer

STAR format: the situation, the specific message you had to deliver, how you approached the conversation, and how the family responded.

Example answer

"A resident had a fall during the night and I was on shift when her daughter arrived the next morning before the nurse had called her. I kept my explanation factual and calm, told her what I'd observed and that the nurse had already assessed her mother and organised a GP review, and stayed with her while she processed it. She was upset but told me afterwards she appreciated being told directly rather than left waiting. I learned that staying calm and sticking to what I actually know helps families trust the information."

6. Why do you want to work in aged care, and what do you find most challenging about it?

Why they ask

A values-based question checking genuine motivation, since employers want workers who understand the emotional demands realistically.

How to structure your answer

Answer in two clear parts: your genuine motivation, then an honest reflection on a real challenge and how you manage it.

Example answer

"I got into aged care after supporting my own grandmother through her final years and realised how much difference attentive, patient staff made to her quality of life. The most challenging part for me is when a resident's condition declines and I've built a relationship with them over months. I manage that by leaning on the wider care team for support and reminding myself that the comfort and dignity I provided still mattered, even when the outcome was hard."