



Australian Government

Department of Health and Aged Care



National Aged Care Mandatory Quality Indicator Program

Quick Reference Guide: Medication Management - Polypharmacy

This quick reference guide provides information for approved providers of residential aged care to understand and meet their obligations to collect and report data on medication management - polypharmacy for the QI Program.

The medication management – polypharmacy quality indicator is reported against:



Percentage of care recipients who were prescribed nine or more medications

For the purpose of the QI Program **polypharmacy** is defined as the prescription of nine or more medications to a care recipient.

For the purposes of the QI Program, any medication with an active ingredient is counted in the polypharmacy quality indicator, except for those listed below which must not be included in the count of medications:

- Lotions, creams or ointments used in skin and wound care;
- Dietary supplements, including those containing vitamins;
- Short-term medications, such as antibiotics or temporary eye drops; and
- PRN medications.

Different dosages of the same medicine must not be counted as different medications

Collect medication management polypharmacy data



Identify and record a collection date during the quarter (DD/MM/YYYY)



Complete a single review of medication charts and/or administration records for each care recipient on the identified collection date. All care recipients residing at the service on the collection date must be included in the assessment.

Record the number of care recipients:



- whose medication charts and/or administration records are reviewed to assess for polypharmacy
- who were prescribed nine or more medications
- excluded because they were not assessed due to hospital admission on the collection date

Approved providers of residential aged care must collect and report on both polypharmacy and antipsychotics medication management quality indicator categories, according to the requirements set out in the QI Program Manual 3.0 – Part A (Manual).

Report medication management polypharmacy data



Report the number of care recipients:

- who were prescribed nine or more medications



Additionally, report the:

- collection date for the quarter (DD/MM/YYYY)

Additionally, report the number of care recipients:

- assessed for polypharmacy
- excluded because they were admitted in hospital on the collection date

EXAMPLE

Care recipient A

- prescribed 11 different medications

Care recipient B

- prescribed 10 different medications
- total includes 2 PRN medications

Care recipient C

- prescribed 9 different medications
- total includes 1 ointment for wound care and 1 antibiotic for a UTI

17/01/2022 The collection date for the quarter



Number of care recipients assessed for polypharmacy



Number of care recipients excluded because they were admitted in hospital on the collection date



Number of care recipients prescribed nine or more medications based on a review of their medication charts and/or administration records as they are on the collection date

Data recording templates for each quality indicator are available on the department's website. Use the templates to automatically calculate and summarise data for submission through the My Aged Care provider portal.

Submit QI Program data

There are three ways QI Program data can be submitted:



1. Through the My Aged Care provider portal
2. Via a bulk file upload
3. Through a third-party benchmarking company



Data must be submitted by the **21st day of the month after the end of each quarter**



More information

The QI Program Manual, and other guidance materials, are available on the Department of Health and Aged Care [website](#).

For QI Program assistance, contact the My Aged Care provider and assessor helpline on 1800 836 799. The helpline is available between 8am and 8pm Monday to Friday, and between 10am and 2pm on Saturday local time across Australia, except for public holidays.