



# 2023 Residents' Experience Surveys

## Questions & Answers

### **How often will Residents' Experience Surveys be conducted?**

Residents' Experience Surveys are currently planned to be conducted annually. This allows residential aged care homes adequate time to review their Residents' Experience Report and implement improvements to further increase the quality of care they are providing. The updated survey results feed into the Star Ratings' Residents' Experience rating available to view through the 'Find a provider' tool on the My Aged Care Website.

### **Will you make the survey results available to the public and aged care homes?**

Within 6 weeks of the surveys being completed, each home will receive a Residents' Experience Report detailing the de-identified feedback for their home. Providers are encouraged to use this feedback to inform their plans for quality improvement. The responses are also used to inform the Residents' Experience rating in Star Ratings. The Residents' Experience rating accounts for 33 per cent of the Overall Star Rating for each home. Star Ratings assist older people and their families make informed choices about their residential care.

### **How do you ensure that the confidentiality of residents is maintained when surveys are conducted at the service?**

Surveys are conducted on site in a face-to-face format at each service. Residents are selected to participate in the Residents' Experience Survey at random. While the survey team may require assistance from workers in gaining access and navigating the service, workers should not be present while surveys are being conducted.

To ensure the integrity of the Residents' Experience Survey, and residents right to anonymity through the process, it is of great importance that workers at residential aged care homes respect the privacy of residents while the survey is being conducted. The survey responses are also de-identified, so that specific residents are not connected to any specific feedback.

## **What is the relationship between the Consumer Experience Quality Indicator and the Residents' Experience Survey?**

Six new quality indicators will be introduced to the National Aged Care Mandatory Quality Indicator Program (QI Program) from 1 April 2023. Two of the quality indicators are based on direct resident feedback. The new Consumer Experience and Quality of Life quality indicators require services to report quarterly on the percentage of residents who report 'good' or 'excellent' experience of a service using the 'Quality of Care Experience – Aged Care Consumers' and 'Quality of Life – Aged Care Consumers' assessment tools.

This assessment tools are different to the Residents' Experience Surveys conducted by the third party survey team, the results of which are reported through Star Ratings. The department is exploring options to align the consumer experience and quality of life assessments across the QI Program and Residents' Experience Survey. Any updates to the approach will be a decision of government and communicated in advance to the sector through regular channels.

## **Will helping onsite survey teams impact workers' ability to meet their core responsibilities?**

The survey process has been made as simple as possible to minimise impact on residential aged care service teams. Services will be contacted to schedule a visit, confirm resident information, explain the program and have the opportunity for any concerns to be addressed. Services may be asked to help the survey team in gaining access to the site and also navigating around the service. Staff are not required to chaperone the survey team at all times and are not present during the surveys, to maintain the confidentiality of resident feedback.

## **Can an Aged Care Home cancel a scheduled visit?**

An aged care home can request to cancel a scheduled site visit if there are urgent issues, such as natural disasters or COVID-19 lockdowns. However, the aged care home is responsible for ensuring that the cancelled visit is rescheduled, primarily to ensure their residents have an opportunity to share their feedback, but also keeping in mind that non-participation can negatively impact the home's Star Rating. If a service cancels more than three times without a valid reason such as a health outbreak (for example), it will be considered that the service does not consent to participate.

## **What happens if an aged care home doesn't participate in the survey?**

Participation in the Residents' Experience Survey is voluntary. However, Residents' Experience Survey outcomes are used to determine an aged care home's Residents' Experience rating, which accounts for 33 per cent of the Overall Star Rating for each residential service. Aged care homes that do not participate will receive a Resident Experience rating of 1 star, and will miss an opportunity to let their residents share their feedback.

## **Why are you including older people with cognitive impairment?**

People with cognitive impairment should not be excluded from having their voices heard and the opportunity to provide feedback to shape the care they receive. This is particularly important as more than half of all older people residing in aged care homes are living with dementia. The Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety highlighted that any presumption of an older person's cognitive capacity may lead to them being excluded from the conversation about their care.

## **How are you supporting people with cognitive impairment to participate?**

The survey team is trained in working with people with cognitive impairment and in determining if a person can engage meaningfully in the survey process. The survey methodology has been designed to support participation by providing visual aids, such as written questions and smiley face response scales.

However, if a person is unable to participate – for example, if they are at an advanced stage of illness, and are unable to respond or meaningfully engage in each question, then the survey does not continue. Any responses that may have been captured will be deleted and not included in any reports.

While we will always aim to speak to the residents directly first, it is critical that, in the absence of engagement with a resident, a representative is able to act as the voice of the resident. We also think it is important to seek the right person to represent a resident's voice. Prior to being surveyed as a proxy for a resident, the representative will be asked if they are the best person to represent the voice of the resident. If they are not, then a different representative may be contacted to act as a proxy. This process helps to ensure that the opinion of the proxy most closely reflects the experience of the resident.

## **How are you supporting culturally and linguistically diverse residents to participate?**

The approach to surveying residents has been developed to meet best practice methods, ensuring that it is both inclusive and sensitive to the needs of residents. This includes ensuring that the survey team is trained to engage with older people from diverse backgrounds in an appropriate manner. Where needed, language interpreters are engaged to assist and, in some

circumstances, a nominated representative may be contacted to complete the survey on the resident's behalf.

## When does the results of Residents' Experience Survey response updated?

The outcomes of the Residents' Experience Survey for each aged care home are published on the GPMS Portal and the My Aged Care website on a quarterly basis. For homes that had their surveys finalised in one quarter will have their Residents' Experience Survey results uploaded to the Portal and My Aged Care website the following quarter.

The department does not have specific dates on when the results will be available on the GPMS Portal or the My Aged Care website.

Updates on Star Ratings, including information about provider preview and quarterly publication will continue to be communicated to aged care providers through multiple channels, including the Your Aged Care Update eNewsletter. You can subscribe to the weekly eNewsletter through the [Department's website](#).

## Let's change aged care together

We invite Australians to continue to have their say about the aged care reforms.



Visit [agedcareengagement.health.gov.au](https://agedcareengagement.health.gov.au)



Phone **1800 318 209** (Aged care reform free-call phone line)

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