



Improving quality of care in residential aged care – case study – Residency by Dillons Fremantle

Continuous quality improvement is the systematic, ongoing effort of regularly reviewing and refining processes to improve the quality of care and services, to achieve better outcomes.

Continuous quality improvement is for everyone involved as a partner in the decisions and delivery of care to older Australians.

By sharing and publishing these case studies, the Department hopes that this webinar will help to build a community of practice to support continuous quality improvement across the sector.

There are a number of quality improvement models used in health care delivery. The PDCA Tool – Plan, Do, Check, Act is the model featured in the [Star Ratings Improvement Manual](#) and [Quality Indicator Program Manual Part B](#) to support continuous quality improvement in quality indicator outcomes, compliance, resident experience and staffing, and can be used across all aspects of care delivery.

Aged care provider information

Service name: Residency by Dillons Freemantle.

Aged care provider: Jacqueline Elizabeth Dillon Business Pty Ltd ACN 166 078 388 as Trustee for the Jacqueline Elizabeth Dillon Business Unit Trust ABN 20 907 629 trading as Residency by Dillons.

Location: Freemantle, Western Australia.

Service characteristics: Metropolitan and Female only.

How long has the service been in operation?

Residency by Dillons has been in operation for over 36 years, Residency by Dillons Fremantle was established in 2019.

Is there something that you feel makes your service unique? Residency by Dillons Fremantle is a female only residential aged care facility, providing accommodation and services for up to 23 residents.

Plan, Do, Check Act approach to quality improvement

Plan

What quality outcome/s were you trying to achieve? What did you identify needed improvement, and what key tasks were identified to address the intended goal/s?

In 2019, changes were made to the Aged Care Standards, placing increased emphasis on person-centred services.

From a Lifestyle perspective, our goal was to assist individuals in identifying and cultivating their own strengths and abilities, enabling them to lead independent and fulfilling lives. A resident might have some challenges in their health and abilities, but they still have goals they want to achieve. And despite coming into aged care, there is a desire to continue being part of a community.

“My Engaging Talent” was a project that was sourced out of one of our previous continuous improvement projects - “My Story Matters”. We identified that there exists a wide array of leisure activities that can bring joy to older individuals but what matters most is to identify activities that capture their interest and offer a sense of purpose. The questions we had were:

1. Could a resident coordinate and carry out an activity for their peers?
2. Would there be more engagement from peer to peer in an activity?
3. Would this create a sense of purpose and community connection?

One of our organisations philosophies is “what am I waking up for today?” It’s not solely about waking up, getting dressed and having a meal. We wanted to support our residents to be excited about each day, who are they going to meet? Are they going out? Or are they having family and friends visit? What activity are they going to participate in? And what activity are they going to take the lead in?

What barriers and/or enablers did you discover to the proposed activities?

During this project, we encountered a notable obstacle: new consumers in our home often required time to express their thoughts. It was quite understandable, as they were adjusting to this significant change in their living environment. Providing the essential support and reassurance became a central aspect of our responsibilities in helping them through this transition.

For person-centred care to thrive, it was vital to maintain ongoing communication among families, caregivers, staff and other professionals (GP, Physio etc). This approach ensured that care consistently aligned with the agreed-upon objectives and remained centred on the individual's needs and preferences.

How did your service ensure that they had enough staff and staff with the appropriate skills and experience to support the quality improvement activity?

This project necessitated not only the involvement of the Lifestyle Team but also the PCAs, nurses, hospitality, and all other departments to oversee its implementation and assess its effectiveness. What was imperative was for staff to establish connection with consumers and create avenues for them, providing support and cultivating environments that foster independent decision-making and active participation in meaningful lifestyle activities.

Do

How did your service:

- **assign key tasks and carry out planned activities?**

The initial step involved a transformation in the appearance of our monthly calendar. By incorporating more personalised activities, we provided consumers with something to anticipate. For instance, if a resident's name was associated with an activity on the calendar, it allowed them time for preparation, and created a sense of anticipation. Our objective was to underscore the importance of attending to the distinct care needs and preferences of each individual, rather than solely concentrating on their cognitive abilities or medical conditions.

We strived to offer social engagements and experiences that harmonized with their personal preferences, activities, and interests even before they entered aged care.

Activities that are connected to the individual values, life experiences, roles, routines, and that resonate with their sense of personal hobbies, have proven to be more meaningful, motivating, and enjoyable for our consumers. This approach significantly facilitated the customisation of activities for our monthly lifestyle calendar.

Activities were prominently featured on our monthly calendar. Consumers with personalised activities received weekly reminders, and we offered them support for planning and execution. It was essential for them to understand that they shouldn't feel pressured or overwhelmed. If, on the day of the activity, they chose not to proceed, we had alternative options readily available. Our primary concern was to ensure that they enjoyed the process of planning and execution, looking forward to it rather than feeling burdened or anxious.

The success or failure of each activity was determined by daily activity charts and continuous feedback from consumers, both immediately after the activity and on an ongoing basis.

Check

How did your service:

- **collect and document information and evidence to check improvements were being made?**

The evaluation of each personalised activity hinged on various factors, including daily activity charts, feedback from consumer behaviour, their overall engagement, and attendance records.

The evaluation was crucial in gauging consumer satisfaction, and this feedback was a determining factor in shaping the activities included on the next month's calendar.

Did your service:

- **find that there were any unintended consequences?**

At times, consumers might have felt overwhelmed or been unwell on the day of the activity. However, we always had alternative options readily accessible to accommodate such situations.

Act

If the improvement steps were successful:

- **why do you think they worked?**

The success of these activities was evident through the increased consumer satisfaction we observed. Our primary objective was to ensure that the person-centred activity model acknowledged a consumer's values and desires, ultimately making them feel more valued, and proud of what they are doing.

- **were there any hurdles? And how did you respond to any challenges?**

An obstacle we encountered was, for example when a resident who coordinated an activity passed away, this activity was no longer offered to the other residents. Staff provided emotional support to the residents, and where able, the lifestyle team would coordinate for an alternate activity.

- **how did you celebrate success with consumers and staff?**

- This program has been established at the other Residency by Dillons locations, with great success. Such as one resident was a professional opera singer, and now performs in a concert every month to the other residents delight.

- The residents who have coordinated activities have had recognition through resident meetings and BBQ party luncheons.

The project and its findings were presented to the Consumer Advisory Committee held in April 2023. The project was also presented to the Residency by Dillons Executive Team.

Next steps

What is your service considering as the critical next steps to continue to maintain successful quality outcomes or further improve the quality outcomes for your consumers?

Our primary goal would be to continue to nurture person-centred activities for residents, empowering them to take the lead in activities they are interested in, thereby promoting their self-worth, independence and peer-to-peer connections.