



# Star Ratings Frequently Asked Questions

## Version 1.2

Star Ratings are available for all aged care homes through the 'Find a provider' tool on the My Aged Care website. Star Ratings provide an insight into the quality of care delivered by individual aged care homes based on an Overall Star Rating and four sub-categories: Residents' Experience, Compliance, Staffing and Quality Measures.

Star Ratings help older people and their representatives to easily compare aged care homes and make choices about the best residential care for themselves or their loved one.

## Where can I find Star Ratings and how do I use them?

You can find Star Ratings by clicking on the 'Find a provider' tool on the My Aged Care website.

You can filter homes by Overall Star Rating as well as by the sub-category ratings.

If you are entering aged care, you can also search and compare aged care homes by information that is important to you, such as location, cost, the type of care the home offers, as well as by speciality and culture.

We recommend you use Star Ratings to learn how an aged care home you might be interested in is performing. If you are a resident, we encourage you to ask the staff about your home's Star Ratings and find out what they are doing well and what they are doing to improve.

Visit [www.myagedcare.gov.au/find-a-provider](http://www.myagedcare.gov.au/find-a-provider) or scan the QR code to get started.



## What information is used to calculate Star Ratings?

Aged care homes receive an Overall Star Rating and a rating across four sub-categories:

- **Residents' Experience** – a sample of 10 per cent of residents are surveyed annually about their overall experience at their aged care home. Residents' Experience makes up 33 per cent of the Overall Star Rating.
- **Compliance** – based on regulatory decisions by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission. Compliance makes up 30 per cent of the Overall Star Rating.
- **Staffing** – the average amount of care time residents receive, based on care delivered by registered nurses, enrolled nurses, personal care workers and assistants in nursing, compared with the minimum average care targets set by the Australian Government. Staffing makes up 22 per cent of the Overall Star Rating.
- **Quality Measures** – based on information about five crucial areas of care, including falls and major injury, unplanned weight loss, pressure injuries, medication management and the use of restrictive practices. Quality Measures makes up 15 per cent of the Overall Star Rating.

## What does the 1–5 Star Rating scale represent?

- 1 Star – 'significant improvement needed'
- 2 Stars – 'improvement needed'
- 3 Stars – an 'acceptable' quality of care
- 4 Stars – a 'good' quality of care
- 5 Stars – an 'excellent' quality of care.

## My aged care home has a low rating. What should I do?

If your aged care home receives a low rating, we encourage you to speak to your provider to understand why they received the rating, and what actions they are taking to improve. Raising concerns with your provider is often the fastest way to have your questions answered or concerns addressed.

We understand these conversations with providers can be difficult. If you would like support, please contact the Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN). To connect to the free advocacy service in your state or territory call 1800 700 600.

Alternatively, if you have a concern or complaint that you have not been able to resolve by talking to your provider, the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission can support you to resolve your complaint.

Complaints can be made by:

- calling 1800 951 822

- lodging online at [www.agedcarequality.gov.au/making-complaint/lodge-complaint](http://www.agedcarequality.gov.au/making-complaint/lodge-complaint)
- or writing to Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission, GPO Box 9819, in your capital city.

You can use Star Ratings to explore other options for residential aged care if you are considering moving to a new aged care home or changing providers. More information on changing aged care providers is available:

- online at [www.myagedcare.gov.au/node/1623431](http://www.myagedcare.gov.au/node/1623431)
- or call My Aged Care on 1800 200 422.

## **What is being done to improve the homes with 1 and 2 Star Ratings?**

The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission monitors homes to make sure they are complying with their obligations to provide safe and quality care. The Commission is aware of the individual homes that have received 1 and 2 Star Ratings and is working with them to improve their performance.

## **Why do some aged care homes not have an Overall Star Rating?**

To calculate and display an Overall Star Rating on the My Aged Care website, a home must have ratings for all four sub-categories.

For new aged care homes, or homes that have had a change in ownership, no Overall Star Rating will be displayed for a period of approximately 12 months. This gives the aged care home time to collect and report the information that is used to calculate the ratings such as, quality indicator and care minutes data, and for Residents' Experience Surveys and Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission assessments to be conducted.

## **Why are some aged care homes missing a sub-category rating?**

There are several reasons why a sub-category rating may not be displayed. This may be due to a home being new, operating under new ownership, having recently reopened after major repairs or renovations, experiencing technical (data or IT) issues, or receiving a temporary exemption due to significant health or weather related circumstances.

If you are interested in an aged care home that is missing a rating we recommend contacting the provider directly for further information.

## **How do Star Ratings consider the differing needs of residents to ensure fair comparison?**

The care needs of residents can vary between aged care homes and need to be taken into account to ensure fair comparison. Resident's care needs are determined using the Australian National Aged Care Classification (AN-ACC) which is assigned to each resident after an independent assessment of their care needs.

The care requirements of residents are taken into account when calculating the Quality Measures sub-category rating, to allow fair comparison.

The Staffing rating also accounts for the differing care requirements of residents. Homes with residents experiencing higher care needs will have a higher average care minutes target than homes with residents experiencing lower care needs.

## **How up to date are Star Ratings?**

- Compliance data is updated daily in response to regulatory decisions and weekly in response to changes in accreditation decisions.
- Staffing and Quality Measures data is collected and updated quarterly.
- Residents' Experience data is collected annually and updated quarterly for available surveys that have been completed.
- It takes approximately three months for self-reported and Residents' Experience Survey data sets to be available through the Star Ratings. This allows time for assessment and data validation by the Department of self-reported data, and where necessary, opportunity for providers to correct data omissions or errors. This also allows providers to receive and review Residents' Experience Reports post survey.

## **How do you make sure the correct information is submitted by providers for the calculation of Star Ratings?**

Aged care providers self-report data to the government through the National Aged Care Mandatory Quality Indicator Program and care minutes as part of their Quarterly Financial Report. This data is used to calculate the Quality Measures and Staffing sub-category ratings which make up 37 per cent of the Overall Star Rating for an aged care home.

Self-reported data in Star Ratings may be subject to assessment or verification and is reviewed by the department before it is calculated for Star Ratings. Providers are required to submit true and accurate data to comply with their legal obligations. Failure to do this can result in compliance action against the provider.

The department undertakes a data validation process to check the reasonableness of submitted Quarterly Financial Report data for care hours and labour costs. Quality checking will identify discrepancies and questionable patterns that suggest inaccurate information has been reported.

The Residents' Experience and Compliance sub-category ratings are not self-reported by the provider. These contribute the remaining 63 per cent of data used to calculate the Overall Star Rating.

## How can the Department assure the accuracy of Star Ratings?

- Star Ratings are based on calculations, informed by international and expert advice. Methods were developed with data experts, older people and the sector to make sure Star Ratings provides a fair and accurate indication of an aged care home's performance.
- To ensure rating accuracy, data validation is undertaken through:
  - user testing and business verification testing
  - quarterly data and system analysis, that also informs Star Ratings modelling, evaluation and system enhancement
  - industry validation by enabling a provider preview for aged care homes to:
    - review their updated Star Ratings
    - report any errors in self-reported Quality Measures or Staffing data, and
    - report any IT or technical errors.
- Data assessment or validation of self-reported data may be undertaken by the department.

## How is the Compliance rating calculated?

The Star Ratings Compliance rating reflects an aged care home's current compliance status and may update daily as changes to that status occur. It is based on the:

- presence and type of formal regulatory notice issued by the Commission
- period without specific formal regulatory notices being issued
- period accreditation has been granted by the Commission.
- Compliance ratings are calculated based on a home having:
  - 1 star — specific formal regulatory notice e.g. Sanction
  - 2 stars —specific formal regulatory notice e.g. Notice to Remedy
  - 3 stars — no specific formal regulatory notices for a period of up to 1 year  
or  
a current notice to revise the Plan for Continuous Improvement
  - 4 stars —no specific formal regulatory notices for a period of 1–3 years
  - 5 stars —no specific formal regulatory notices for 3 years or more and having been granted accreditation for a 3 year period by the Commission.

- The Star Ratings of an aged care home will be impacted by non-compliance against the Aged Care Quality Standards if the Commission issues a sanction or formal regulatory notice to direct the home to take suitable corrective action.
- Compliance ratings are updated daily in response to regulatory decisions and weekly in response to changes in accreditation decisions.

## How do regulatory decisions made by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission impact on the Compliance rating?

The Commission monitors the quality of care and services provided by aged care services.

When the Commission determines that the service is non-compliant with their responsibilities under the *Aged Care Act 1997*, the related Rules and Principles, the Commission will notify the service of the non-compliance and any regulatory actions taken in response to the non-compliance.

The table below outlines how specific formal regulatory notices issued by the Commission will impact on the Compliance rating of an aged care service.

Type of notice issued	Compliance rating
Notice of Decision to Impose Sanction Notice of Requirement to Agree Issuance of Infringement Notice – Victimisation Issuance of Infringement Notice – Compliance Notice	1 star
Notice to Remedy Compliance Notice – Code of Conduct Compliance Notice – Incident Management Compliance Notice – Restrictive Practices	2 stars
Notice of direction to revise plan for continuous improvement that is currently active	3 stars

- No aged care homes with a Compliance rating of 4 or 5 stars will have active formal regulatory notices in place.

## How does non-compliance with the Quality Standards impact Star Ratings?

Star Ratings are designed to reflect when the Commission has needed to issue a formal regulatory notice due to failure of a provider to take necessary action to meet their obligations, including compliance with the Aged Care Quality Standards. Where providers demonstrate the ability to achieve necessary actions to correct any non-compliance the Commission may not need to issue a formal regulatory notice. In all cases where non-compliance is detected, the Commission will continue to monitor the provider’s progress regardless of whether a formal regulatory notice is issued.

## Case study 1

Aged care home A has a Compliance rating of 4 stars. After an assessment by the Commission, the home is found to be non-compliant with three requirements of Standard 3 (Personal Care and Clinical Care) and two requirements of Standard 7 (Human resources). Concerns relate to the delivery of safe and effective care to residents in the areas of wound care, pressure care and pain management, management of clinical deterioration, and the availability and adequacy of skilled and trained workers to respond to residents' care needs in a timely manner.

The Commission has identified an immediate and severe risk to the health, safety and wellbeing of people receiving care. Taking into account the provider's response, the Commission decides to issue a Notice of Requirement to Agree requiring the provider to fix the serious compliance issues at the home.

The effect of the Notice of Requirement to Agree is an immediate reduction in the home's Compliance rating from 4 stars to 1 star. The Overall Star Rating will also reduce to 1 star.

The Commission will actively monitor and engage with the provider to ensure action is taken to fix the serious non-compliance and address the Commission's concerns. At the end of the notice period, the Notice of Requirement to Agree will move from being a 'current compliance notice' on My Aged Care to a 'non-current notice'. At this time, if the Commission is satisfied with the provider's response resulting in no other specific formal regulatory notices being issued, the home will be given a 3 star Compliance rating.

## Case study 2

Aged care home B has a Compliance rating of 4 stars. After an assessment by the Commission, the home is found to be non-compliant with one requirement of Standard 8 (Organisational Governance). Concerns relate to the home's organisation wide governance systems (its processes for resident assessment, informed consent and regular review) in relation to environmental restraints for residents entering and exiting the home (including by the home's security fencing and gate).

The provider's response to the non-compliance demonstrates the home acted quickly to fix the identified issues and fix the non-compliance. This includes having updated their Plan for Continuous Improvement which is considered by the Commission.

As there is no immediate risk to people receiving care resulting from the non-compliance and the provider is already addressing the issues, the Commission decides not to issue a formal regulatory notice but to continue to monitor the home's performance.

In this example, the home is non-compliant with the Aged Care Quality Standards, however the home's Compliance rating will remain at 4 stars as the non-compliance is either in the process of being resolved quickly or is already resolved. The My Aged Care 'Find a Provider' tool will show the non-compliant requirements as 'not met' until the Commission conducts a new assessment of the home and makes a new finding.

All performance reports detailing a service's compliance against the Aged Care Quality Standards are published and available to consumers and their representatives on the '[Find a report](#)' web-page on the Commission's website.

## **How does the Compliance rating impact Overall Star Ratings?**

A residential aged care home receiving a 1 star Compliance rating will receive a 1 star Overall Star Rating regardless of how they perform in other sub-categories. Aged care homes receiving a 2 star Compliance rating will be capped at a 2 star Overall Star Rating.

## **How do Star Ratings affect new residential aged care homes and those with a change in service ownership?**

For new residential aged care homes, or services that have had a change in ownership, no Overall Star Rating will be displayed for the first 12 months. This gives the service time for their annual Residents' Experience Survey and Commission assessments to be conducted, while Quality Measures and Staffing sub-categories will be published after two quarters of reporting.

## **Why are Residents' Experience Surveys only conducted annually?**

The Residents' Experience Survey isn't intended to replace continuous and meaningful engagement between aged care homes and their residents, their representatives and their families. Aged care homes should continue to seek ongoing feedback directly from their residents for continuous improvement. The survey was designed to be an annual activity to give providers adequate time to make meaningful changes in response to the survey outcomes. However, the Australian Government is committed to ensuring resident experience remains at the centre of care and has introduced quarterly reporting on consumer experience and quality of life quality indicators (CEQOL) tools as part of the expanded National Aged Care Mandatory Quality Indicator Program expansion.



Phone **1800 200 422**  
(My Aged Care's free call phone line)



Visit **[MyAgedCare.gov.au/find-a-provider](https://www.myagedcare.gov.au/find-a-provider)**

For translating and interpreting services, call 131 450 and ask for My Aged Care on 1800 200 422. To use the National Relay Service, visit [nrschat.nrscall.gov.au/nrs](https://nrschat.nrscall.gov.au/nrs) or call 1800 555 660.