



Star Ratings Frequently Asked Questions

Version 1.2

Why was Star Ratings implemented?

The Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety highlighted the need for a simple and transparent way to compare the quality of aged care homes.

Star Ratings was developed in response to the Royal Commission recommendation for a rating system for aged care homes based on measurable information about service quality.

The Australian Government is investing in a range of practical measures to ensure residential aged care meets the needs of older people in Australia. By focusing on transparency, accountability and capability, the government is improving quality, safety and dignity in aged care.

What are the benefits of Star Ratings?

Increased transparency about the quality of care in residential aged care will help rebuild trust in the sector. Star Ratings provides benefits for providers, including:

- a greater understanding of how your service is performing
- the ability to benchmark against other providers using nationally consistent quality measures
- the opportunity to see the results of continuous improvement activities through improved Star Ratings
- the opportunity to showcase your performance and the quality of care you provide.

How frequently are Star Ratings updated?

Star Ratings are updated at different time periods:

- 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.

The Overall Star Rating automatically recalculates when new data is available.

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 following their survey.

Do all aged care homes have Star Ratings?

All Commonwealth funded residential aged care homes receive a Star Rating.

Star Ratings are not published for in home aged care services, National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flexible Aged Care and Multi-Purpose Services Program services, as all required data is not currently reported by these service types.

What are the reporting requirements for Star Ratings?

No additional reporting is required by providers for Star Ratings. All data contributing to Star Ratings is already reported through existing mechanisms:

- Information for **Residents' Experience** is collected from face-to-face surveys with at least 10 per cent of residents across all residential aged care homes.
- **Compliance** uses information from regulatory decisions made by the Aged Care Quality and Safety.
- **Staffing** uses information reported on registered nurses, enrolled nurses, personal care workers and assistants in nursing from the Quarterly Financial Report.
- **Quality Measures** uses information about 5 crucial areas of care reported through the National Aged Care Mandatory Quality Indicator Program.

How do I preview my Star Ratings data for the upcoming quarterly update?

Star Ratings are only available for preview through the new Government Provider Management System (GPMS).

If you are an Organisation Administrator, you will first need to log in to GPMS and authenticate your identity through your My Aged Care Service and Support Portal authentication process using either VANguard or myGovID. Once you do this, you can then use the same login details for the My Aged Care Service and Support Portal and GPMS. You can then set up other members of your organisation/s with 'reviewer' access. If you need help, please call the My Aged Care Service Industry, Provider and Assessor Helpline on 1800 836 799. It is open Monday to Friday (8am to 8pm) and Saturday (10am to 2pm) local time across Australia.

If you are a reviewer of your organisation's quarterly Star Rating you will need to contact your Organisation Administrator and request they set you up with 'reviewer' access to the Star Ratings of specific services. If you don't know who your Organisation Administrator is, please call the My Aged Care Service Industry, Provider and Assessor Helpline on 1800 836 799.

It's important to keep your Organisation Administrator's contact details up-to-date in both the My Aged Care Service and Support Portal and GPMS so we can send you important notices.

You must also continue to manage and update all information about your organisation through the My Aged Care Service and Support Portal.

For more information, please go to the [About the Government Provider Management System](#) webpage.

What happens if data is not submitted or is submitted late?

Providers need to meet their legislated reporting obligations for data used in Star Ratings. If data is not submitted on time, information will not be available to inform the periodic updates to Star Ratings.

- **Residents' Experience** – there is no data submission required as this data is provided by a third-party vendor. If an aged care home does not participate in the annual Residents' Experience Survey, it will result in a 1 star Residents' Experience rating.
- **Compliance** – there is no data submission required as this rating is based on the type of formal regulatory notice issued by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission or period without formal regulatory notices being issued.
- **Staffing** – if data is not submitted on time each quarter, the aged care home may receive a 1 star Staffing rating.
- **Quality Measures** – if data is not submitted within 21 days of the end of each reporting period, the aged care home will receive a 1 Star Quality Measures rating.

Can I fix incorrect Quality Measures data that has been used to calculate my Star Ratings?

To fix incorrect data for Quality Measures please access the self-service section of the My Aged Care portal.

Refer to page 18 of the [National Aged Care Mandatory Quality Indicator Program Manual 2.0 - Part C](#) for guidance with technical issues related to updating your quality indicator data.

Can I fix incorrect Staffing data that has been used to calculate my Star Ratings?

It is important to note that the provider preview period is not an opportunity to further amend the data for specified care workers to change a service's Staffing rating outcome.

If a provider believes their Staffing rating is not consistent with the information submitted, the first step is to check the information in your Quarterly Financial Report submission. This was emailed to the nominated person who submitted the report.

If you have a query about the calculation or the data used for the Staffing rating, contact the My Aged Care Service Industry, Provider and Assessor Helpline on 1800 836 799.

I think there's an error in my Star Ratings, what should I do?

The first step is to check self-reported data where appropriate. You should also review your Residents' Experience Report which provides details on the outcomes of the annual Residents' Experience Survey. Please note resident responses cannot be contested. However, IT and data errors relating to the Residents' Experience information can be investigated by the department.

If you believe data used for the Compliance rating is incorrect, please contact the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission on 1800 951 822 or email info@agedcarequality.gov.au.

If you have concerns regarding IT or technical errors, or to report incorrect self-reported data, please contact the My Aged Care Service Industry, Provider and Assessor Helpline on 1800 836 799. The helpline is open Monday to Friday between 8am-8pm and Saturday between 10am-2pm.

How is reported data checked?

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 it effectively delivers 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 far back will historical information be displayed?

Historical information, up to 3 years will be displayed for services on My Aged Care. Star Ratings displays the most up-to-date information available. Please refer to question: How frequently are Star Ratings updated? for details on frequency.

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.

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 specific formal regulatory notice to direct the home to take suitable corrective action.

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.

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

The clinical and care needs of individual residents can vary between aged care homes. To account for this variation and enable fair comparison between aged care homes, quality indicator data is risk adjusted prior to calculating the Quality Measures rating. This adjustment, to account for varying resident acuity is likely why information presented in your Quality Measures rating does not precisely align to your self-reported quality indicator data.

Similarly, when it comes to the Staffing rating, each aged care home has its own care minutes target reflecting the AN-ACC case-mix of residents in that service. The Staffing rating is based on whether a service meets, or is above or below their case-mix adjusted target, to enable a fair comparison between aged care homes.

Further information on risk adjustment, case-mix adjustment and the algorithms for calculating Star Ratings are available in the [Star Ratings Provider Manual](#).

How can providers improve their Star Ratings?

You can improve your service's Star Rating by:

- understanding the information that is used to calculate Star Ratings – see the [Star Ratings Provider Manual](#)
- reflecting on performance and identifying opportunities for improvement, for example using the Plan-Do-Check-Act model or continuous quality improvement frameworks – see the [Star Ratings Improvement Manual](#)
- accessing existing improvement resources relevant to the reporting area, such as the [National Aged Care Mandatory Quality Indicator Program Manual 2.0 – Part B](#) supporting improvement across the quality indicators
- making targeted changes to improve care quality across the four sub-categories.

Will the new quality indicators be included in Star Ratings?

No, the new quality indicators for collection from 1 April 2023 will not be included in Star Ratings at this time. Future inclusion is subject to government decision.

What happens if an aged care home did not participate in the Residents' Experience Survey program?

If an aged care home chose not to participate in the Residents' Experience Survey program, the service will receive a Residents' Experience rating of 1 star and this will negatively impact their Overall Star Rating.

Will the Residents' Experience Survey results be available to aged care homes for ongoing improvement?

Outcomes of the Residents' Experience Surveys are collated into Residents' Experience Reports provided to each residential aged care home. This resource can be used by aged care homes to identify areas for continuous improvement, ensuring that they can directly address any areas of concern. Outcomes are also used to determine a service's Residents' Experience rating under the Star Ratings system, improving aged care quality through transparency.

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 836 799** (My Aged Care service provider and assessor helpline)



Visit **health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/star-ratings-for-residential-aged-care**

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 or call 1800 555 660.