



Australian Government

**Department of Health
and Aged Care**

Terms of reference

Aged Care Advisory Group

Reviewed November 2024



Purpose

The Aged Care Advisory Group (Advisory Group) is a permanent advisory group under the auspices of the Australian Health Protection Committee (AHPC) to provide advice on matters relevant to health protection in the aged care sector. This may include preparation and planning for prevention, management and recovery from emergency events including infectious disease outbreaks and natural disasters in services delivering Commonwealth funded aged care*.

*This includes but is not limited to residential aged care facilities, home care providers, providers of Commonwealth Home Support Program services, and flexible aged care services including transition, restorative, respite, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flexible aged care services.

Objectives

1. Provide advice on aged care health protection matters, including emerging health threats related to infectious diseases and the environment, including natural and human made disasters.
2. Provide advice on the role of governments in prevention and response approaches to emergency, natural disaster or infectious disease outbreaks in aged care.
3. Review evidence on health protection matters, which are predicted to or are impacting, services delivering aged care, provide advice on gaps in planned prevention or response, and strategies to strengthen prevention and responses approaches.
4. Provide advice on maintaining the rights, quality of life and dignity of people in aged care settings and their families in the implementation of prevention and responses approaches.
5. Provide advice on resident and family communication activities that aged care services should consider as part of the preparation, prevention, response and recovery phases of emergency and outbreak planning and management.
6. Provide advice on research or studies to further understand and mitigate infectious diseases among older Australians in aged care.
7. Provide advice to improve access by aged care consumers to the wider health system as part of prevention or response to infectious disease outbreaks and emergencies, including primary care, palliative care, and other specialist services such as acute care, mental health, allied health and oral health services.

Chair

The Chair of the Advisory Group is the Australian Government Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer.

Membership

Members are approved by the Australian Chief Medical Officer as the AHPC Chair, the overarching committee to the Advisory Group. Members are selected for their following areas of expertise:

- Infection control and infectious disease prevention

- Allied health
- Primary Health Care
- Gerontology
- Consumer advocacy
- Aged Care Rehabilitation
- Residential aged care
- Public Health research
- State government officials with responsibility for emergency response processes
- Quality and Safety
- The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission Clinical Advisory Team
- Representatives from other Commonwealth Departments from time to time and as relevant to matters at hand

Membership can be amended at the discretion of the AHPC Chair.

The Advisory Group has one standing observer:

- The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commissioner

Meetings

Meetings are held regularly at the discretion of the Chair; and provide advice out-of-session as required. Members will be provided with agenda papers prior to each meeting.

Members are asked to respect the confidentiality of meetings and to declare any perceived or actual conflicts of interest.

Proxies

A Member may nominate a proxy to attend a meeting in their absence. This is at the discretion of the Chair.

Reporting arrangements

Following each meeting, a report on the meeting outcomes is provided to the AHPC.

A progress report against tasks outlined in the forward work plan will be provided to the AHPC once a year.

Reports or position statements seeking further action will be submitted to the AHPC for action.

Forward meeting schedule

A forward meeting schedule will be maintained by the Secretariat in collaboration with the Chair and submitted to members for approval. Members can nominate topics for inclusion on the forward meeting schedule.

Review

A review of the Advisory Group's activities and strategic direction will be undertaken by the Department. An optimal time for a review of the Advisory Group will be agreed in consultation with the Chair.