



# Star Ratings for residential aged care

## Fast facts: Star Ratings campaign

### Call to action

To access Star Ratings and resources visit [www.health.gov.au/StarRatings](http://www.health.gov.au/StarRatings)

### Duration

Advertising is running from 6 October to 28 December 2024 nationally across free-to-air television, digital video, digital search and in medical centres and pharmacies.

The campaign will be supported by information and resources to help older people and their support networks to access Star Ratings and commence their aged care journey.

### Target audiences

Older people 65+ and their representatives 45+ (carers, families and decision makers).

### Aim

Build awareness, trust, and use of Star Ratings nationally with older people and their support networks.

### Research findings

- Awareness of Star Ratings was low amongst target audiences at 16%.
- 19% of older people's support networks expect to start the aged care journey in the next 5 years.
- Most carers are females 45+ who are supporting their parents.
- Research found that there is an opportunity to promote Star Ratings as a helpful tool for people to use in the early stages of planning for residential aged care.

### Media enquiries

Media enquiries should be emailed to [news@health.gov.au](mailto:news@health.gov.au)

# Star Ratings backgrounder

## What are Star Ratings?

Star Ratings helps older Australians compare the quality and safety of residential aged care homes. Each home has an Overall Star Rating made up of ratings in 4 sub-categories:

- Residents' Experience
- Compliance
- Staffing, and
- Quality Measures.

The more stars an aged care home receives, the better the quality and safety of care.

- 5 stars = an excellent quality of care
- 4 stars = a good quality of care
- 3 stars = an acceptable quality of care
- 2 stars = improvement needed
- 1 star = significant improvement needed

First introduced in December 2022, Star Ratings is a response to a critical recommendation of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, providing improved transparency and accountability on the quality of residential aged care homes.

## How are Star Ratings calculated?

Aged care homes receive an Overall Star Rating made up of ratings across 4 sub-categories:

- **Residents' Experience** – how people feel about the care they get. Around 20% of all residents in Australian aged care homes are surveyed every year about their overall experience at their home.
- **Compliance** – how well an aged care home is meeting its obligations to provide safe, quality care and services.
- **Staffing** – the average amount of care time residents get from nurses and care workers – we compare this with the minimum average care targets the Australian Government sets.
- **Quality Measures** – looks at areas of health that are important indicators of care quality, including falls and major injury, unplanned weight loss, pressure injuries, medication management and the use of restrictive practices.

These sub-categories are weighted and combined to make up a home's Overall Star Rating.

- 33% is the Residents' Experience rating
- 30% is the Compliance rating
- 22% is the Staffing rating
- 15% is the Quality Measures rating.

## **How frequently are Star Ratings updated?**

Star Ratings are updated regularly and at different times based on when data becomes available:

- Compliance data is updated daily in response to regulatory decisions made by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (the Commission) and weekly in response to changes in accreditation decisions.
- Residents' Experience data is collected annually and updated quarterly from surveys that residents have completed.
- Staffing and Quality Measures data is collected from aged care providers and updated quarterly.

An aged care home's Overall Star Rating automatically recalculates when new data is available.

It takes approximately 3 to 5 months for providers' self-reported data and Residents' Experience Survey data to be available in Star Ratings. This allows time for submission by providers, data validation by the Department, and where necessary, the opportunity for providers to correct data omissions or errors. This also allows providers to receive and review Residents' Experience Reports after the 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 new, recently transferred or offline homes, in home aged care services, respite 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 by independent survey teams through face-to-face surveys, with around 20% of residents responding across all residential aged care homes each year.

- Compliance uses information from regulatory decisions made by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission.
- 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 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% 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 legally required to submit true and accurate data. Failure to do this can result in the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission taking 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% of data used to calculate the Overall Star Rating.

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

Star Ratings has been co-designed with older people, data experts and the sector to make sure it effectively delivers a fair and accurate indication of an aged care service's performance – based on the things that really matter:

- what residents think of the care they receive at their aged care service
- whether the service has any recent formal regulatory action with the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (Commission)
- the amount of time staff spend on caring for residents
- performance against a number of quality indicators of care that can impact a residents' health and wellbeing.

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 is undertaken by the department.

## **How is the Compliance rating calculated and how often is it updated?**

The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (Commission) is responsible for monitoring the quality of care provided by aged care homes. When the Commission determines that a home is non-compliant with their responsibilities under the *Aged Care Act 1997*, the Commission will notify the provider of the non-compliance and any regulatory actions taken in response to the non-compliance.

The Compliance rating is calculated using the:

- presence of specific formal regulatory notices made by the Commission
- absence of specific formal regulatory notices for a certain time period, and
- period of time accreditation has been granted by the Commission.

The Compliance rating is designed to reflect when the Commission has needed to issue a formal regulatory notice due to the failure of a provider to take necessary action to meet their obligations, including compliance with the Aged Care Quality Standards.

Not all instances of non-compliance with the Aged Care Quality Standards will result in a formal regulatory action, such as where providers demonstrate the ability to achieve necessary actions to correct any non-compliance quickly. Only instances that result in formal regulatory action will impact a provider's Compliance rating and Overall Star Rating.

The Compliance rating is refreshed daily in response to regulatory notice changes and weekly in response to accreditation decisions.

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.

An aged care home that receives a 1 or 2 star Compliance rating cannot receive higher than a 1 or 2 Overall Star Rating respectively, regardless of how they perform in other sub-categories.

## **How far back will historical information be displayed?**

Historical ratings information of up to 3 years will be displayed for services on My Aged Care. Star Ratings displays the most up-to-date information available.