



# Unplanned Weight Loss Quick Reference Guide – National Aged Care Mandatory Quality Indicator Program

This quality indicator collects data on the number of care recipients who experience unplanned weight loss. This guide provides advice on how to assess care recipients for unplanned weight loss, including examples of how you can record the data, as part of the National Aged Care Mandatory Quality Indicator Program (QI Program).

## What is unplanned weight loss?

Unplanned weight loss is a reduction in a care recipient's body mass where there is no written strategy or ongoing record relating to planned weight loss.

There are two categories measured by the unplanned weight loss quality indicator:

**Significant unplanned weight loss** The loss of weight equal to or greater than **three kilograms** over a three-month period

**Consecutive unplanned weight loss** The loss of any amount of weight **every month** over three consecutive months

## Why is unplanned weight loss a quality indicator?

An older person's experience of unplanned weight loss can lead to a number of adverse clinical events and impact quality of life. Unplanned weight loss can increase the risk of serious health issues such as hip fracture, poor wound healing, loss of strength and mobility, malnutrition and even death. Monitoring unplanned weight loss helps an aged care service see how processes are working and highlights areas that may need improvement.

## How to collect unplanned weight loss quality indicator data

You must weigh each care recipient at around the same date and time each month, on the same weighing device and in clothing of a similar weight.

The following care recipients should **not** be included in the unplanned weight loss quality indicator:

- Care recipients who are absent, e.g. in hospital
- Care recipients receiving end of life palliative care
- Respite care recipients

**Only record the number of care recipients that have lost weight, NOT the amount of weight they have lost.**

## Collect

You must assess unplanned weight loss according to the National Aged Care Mandatory Quality Indicator Program Manual

## Example

Care recipients A and B are each weighed on the first Monday of each month this quarter:

Care recipient A weighed 75kg at the end of last quarter.

- Month 1 weight: 73.5kg
- Month 2 weight: 73kg
- Month 3 weight: 72kg

This care recipient would be recorded as one count for **significant unplanned weight loss** and one count for **consecutive unplanned weight loss** for the quarter.

Care recipient B weighed 83kg at the end of last quarter.

- Month 1 weight: 83kg
- Month 2 weight: 84kg
- Month 3 weight: 83kg

There is no reportable significant unplanned weight loss or consecutive unplanned weight loss for this care recipient under the QI Program.

## This is how you could record your data:

Care Recipient	Weight from previous quarter	Month 1		Month 2		Month 3		Total weight loss >3kg	Weight lost every month?	Comments
		Weight (kg)	Weight change (kg)	Weight (kg)	Weight change (kg)	Weight (kg)	Weight change (kg)			
Care Recipient A	75	73.5	-1.5	73	-0.5	72	-1	Y	Y	Referred to Dietitian
Care Recipient B	83	83	0	84	+1	83	-1	N	N	
Total								1	1	

## Submit

You must submit service level data that includes each care recipient every quarter

## More information

The [National Aged Care Mandatory Quality Indicator Program Manual](#) includes definitions on each quality indicator and comprehensive guidance on how to collect data and ensure compliance with the legislation and can be downloaded from the Department of Health website [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au).

If you have questions about the QI Program, please contact the My Aged Care Provider and Assessor Helpline on **1800 836 799**.