



Independent Evaluation of the Aged Care Quality Standards

An overview for older Australians, their families and carers, and the aged care sector – January 2022

About the Aged Care Quality Standards

Whether you're receiving or providing care at home or in an aged care facility, the Aged Care Quality Standards define what good care should look like. Quality Standards apply to all government-funded aged care providers in Australia.

In response to the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, the Australian Government has been reviewing the Quality Standards. The review focuses on improvements in governance, dementia care, diversity, food and nutrition, and strengthening clinical care standards.

To inform the review, the Department of Health and Aged Care commissioned an independent evaluation of the current Quality Standards.

About the independent evaluation of the Quality Standards

The evaluation focused on:

- whether the Quality Standards can be easily understood
- how relevant the Quality Standards are to each aged care service
- whether the Quality Standards are achievable and measurable
- the impact of the Quality Standards on consumers, providers and other key stakeholders
- barriers to implementing the Quality Standards.

As part of the evaluation 1,377 people completed an online survey, and 323 people took part in 35 focus groups, including older Australians, aged care providers and peak organisations.

What we heard from older Australians and their families

The language of the Quality Standards can be difficult to understand, especially if English is not the reader's first language. A 'user-friendly' version of the Quality Standards should be considered.

What we heard from providers

Key statistics

- 66% of survey respondents reported challenges in implementing the Standards
- 75% of all survey respondents agreed that the wording and intent of the Standards are clear
- The Sector has been making changes to work practices to meet the Standards
- Quality Standards impact providers differently depending on where they are based, their delivery model and the diversity of their residents.
- More time and a range of training materials were needed in order to implement the current Quality Standards.
- More skilled staff and upgrades to IT and business systems were needed to properly embed the current Quality Standards.
- Information needed on performance against Quality Standards.

In summary

The independent evaluation found that, since they were introduced on 1 July 2019, the Quality Standards have contributed to some improvements in the quality and safety of care.

The evaluation also identified opportunities for improvement, including:

- addressing the Royal Commission's recommendations to strengthen areas including diversity, dementia, food and nutrition, and governance in aged care
- removing repetition and clarifying any overlaps
- simplifying the language
- ensuring the Quality Standards are measurable.
- helping aged care providers understand and implement the Quality Standards.

Read the [Evaluation of the Aged Care Quality Standards – Evaluation Report](#).

Next steps

Consultation on the strengthened Quality Standards is open from 17 October to 25 November 2022. For more information and to have your say, visit [AgedCareEngagement.health.gov.au/qualitystandards](https://agedcareengagement.health.gov.au/qualitystandards).



Phone **1800 200 422** (My Aged Care's free call phone line) for general information on the consultation.



Visit agedcareengagement.health.gov.au/qualitystandards

For translating and interpreting services, call 131 450.

To use the National Relay Service, visit nrschat.nrscall.gov.au/nrs or call 1800 555 660.