

Single Aged Care Quality Framework - Options for assessing performance against aged care quality standards

Closes 21 April 2017

Opened 9 March 2017

Contact

qualityagedcare@health.gov.au

Overview

The Australian Government is committed to the quality of care of older people and considers the health, safety and welfare of aged care recipients a high priority. As part of reforms to the aged care system, the government is developing an end-to-end, market-based system with the sector, where competition and ultimately the consumer, drives quality. This includes a Single Aged Care Quality Framework with:

- a single set of aged care standards for all aged care services
- a streamlined approach for assessing provider performance against quality standards
- improved information on quality to help consumers to make choices about the care and services they need.

Options for assessing service provider performance against the new standards

The Options Paper for assessing service provider performance against the aged care quality draft standards is attached below for feedback. The Options Paper details three proposed options:

- **Option 1:** An assessment process based on aged care setting with different approaches used for residential settings and home/community settings (based on the status quo with improvements)
- **Option 2:** Introducing a single risk based assessment process that is applicable to all aged care settings
- **Option 3:** Use of a safety and quality declaration by organisations providing low risk services readily available to the broader population. (If supported this option can be combined with Option 1 or Option 2.)

The Options Paper is attached below. The paper includes specific options for your consideration. Your feedback and comments will help us identify the preferred approach.

Note: consultation on a draft set of aged care quality standards is also open and the consultation paper can be accessed at:

<https://consultations.health.gov.au/aged-care-access-and-quality-acaq/single-quality-framework-draft-standards>

Why We Are Consulting

We would like your input.

Lodging your submission in response to the Options Paper is your opportunity to contribute to, and directly influence, the reforms and the quality of aged care in Australia.

How to make a submission

1. Download and read the Options Paper (see below under '**Related**'). Please note that these documents are read-only.
2. Complete the [Online Survey](#).
3. Click on '**Submit**'.

The Department will use any information collected in accordance with its [APP Privacy Policy](#) at <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/privacy-policy>

If any of your responses to the following questions contains personal information of a third party, you warrant that you have obtained the consent of that person to have their personal information disclosed to the Commonwealth for the purposes of this survey.

This consultation closes on Friday 21 April 2017. Late submissions will not be accepted.

Contact

If you are having difficulty completing an online submission, please contact qualityagedcare@health.gov.au for assistance.

Other ways to have your say

The department is holding a webinar on Wednesday 29 March 2017 and regional consultation forums in Geelong, Alice Springs and Townsville during the consultation period.

Information on the webinar and regional consultation forums will be published on the [department's website](#) at <https://agedcare.health.gov.au/quality/single-quality-framework-focus-on-consumers> shortly.

Visit the [department's website](#) at <https://agedcare.health.gov.au/quality/single-quality-framework-focus-on-consumers> to subscribe to announcements and the eNewsletter to keep up to date with important messages affecting the aged care sector, including updates on the Single Aged Care Quality Framework.

Introduction

Thank you for taking the opportunity to read and consider the Options Paper.

1. What is your email address?

This information will not be published.

2. Are you answering on behalf of an organisation? If so, please provide your organisation's name.

☐ Yes

☐ No

3. Do you give consent for your submission to be published in whole or in part?

☐ Yes

☐ No

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More detail about you

Please take a few moments to provide us with more information about who you are.

4. What role best describes you? Please select all that apply.

- ☐ Aged care consumer, including family and/or carer
- ☐ Aged care service provider
- ☐ Aged care worker/professional
- ☐ Aged care advocate
- ☐ Peak body - consumer
- ☐ Peak body - provider
- ☐ Peak body - professional
- ☐ Other - please specify below

5. Do you identify with any special needs groups, or does your organisation provide support or services to any special needs groups? Please select all that apply.

- ☐ People from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities
- ☐ People from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds
- ☒ People who live in rural or remote areas
- ☐ People who are financially or socially disadvantaged
- ☐ People who are veterans of the Australian Defence Force or an allied defence force including the spouse, widow or widower of a veteran
- ☐ People who are homeless, or at risk of becoming homeless
- ☐ People who are care leavers (which includes Forgotten Australians, Former Child Migrants and Stolen Generations)
- ☐ Parents separated from their children by forced adoption or removal
- ☐ People from lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans/transgender and intersex (LGBTI) communities

6. Where do you live, or, where does your organisation operate? Please select all that apply.

- ☐ NSW
- ☐ VIC
- ☐ QLD
- ☐ WA
- ☐ SA
- ☐ TAS
- ☐ ACT
- ☐ NT

7. What is your location, or the location where your organisation operates? Please select all that apply.

- ☐ Metropolitan
- ☐ Regional
- ☐ Rural/Remote

8. If you are an aged care provider, please select all the types of care your service delivers.

- ☐ Residential care
- ☐ Home care
- ☐ Commonwealth Home Support Programme services
- ☐ Transition care
- ☐ National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Program services
- ☐ Multi-purpose services
- ☐ Innovative care services
- ☐ Short term restorative care services

9. If you are an aged care service provider, which option below best describes the size of your organisation?

- ☐ Small
- ☐ Medium
- ☐ Large
- ☐ Very large

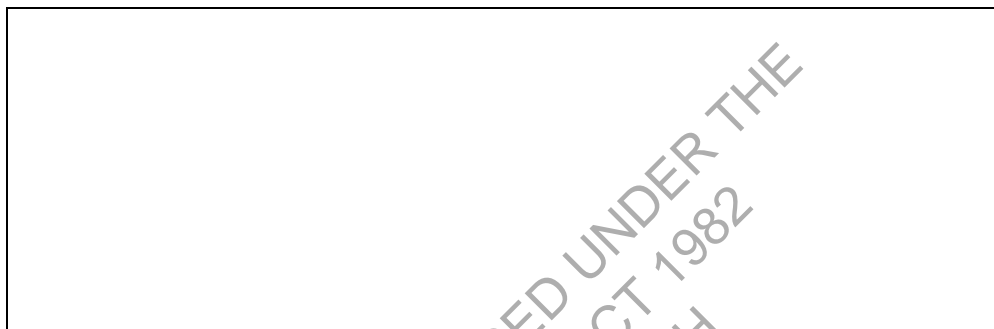
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Questions about how service provider performance is assessed against the aged care draft standards

Please share with us below your views about the current arrangements and any other comments or suggestions you would like to make about the reforms.

The Options Paper includes sections entitled “Your Thoughts” which may help prompt your feedback to questions in this this section of the survey.

10. What are the features of the existing assessment and monitoring process that should be retained?



Options paper - Your thoughts

- What are the strengths of the current aged care quality assessment arrangements?

11. What are the features of the existing assessment and monitoring process that need to be changed?



Options paper - Your thoughts

- What aspects of the current aged care quality assessment arrangements need to be improved?
- What other issues need to be considered in the design of any new quality assessment arrangements?

Questions about the Options Proposed

Please give us your views on options by answering the questions below.

The Options Paper includes sections entitled “Your thoughts” which may help prompt your feedback to questions in this this section of the survey.

12. Which option do you prefer? Please give reasons.

- ☐ Option 1
- ☐ Option 1 with Option 3
- ☐ Option 2
- ☐ Option 2 with Option 3
- ☐ Other

Summary of the options

Features common to all options

- A single set of aged care standards applicable across all care types (except for those set out in Option 3).
- A wider range of methods for assessing performance against the aged care standards.
- Continued use of data and intelligence to inform the risk-based assessment.
- Greater consumer involvement in the assessment process.
- Capacity for the Quality Agency to recognise compliance with other similar quality standards.
- Better information available to the consumer about the outcomes of the assessment.
- Government retains the capacity to examine complaints and take compliance action where the organisation does not comply with any of its legislative/contractual responsibilities.

The table below outlines the key features of three options.

Table 2: Summary of options for aged care quality assessments

Options	Key features of each option
Option 1: Quality assessment process based on care setting, with different approaches for residential care and home/community care (based on status quo)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All organisations would be required to meet the new aged care standards. • There would continue to be one quality assessment process for residential care (accreditation) and another for home/community care (quality reviews). • Services would continue to receive a report of major findings of the assessment and, for residential care services, a decision in relation to accreditation of the service. • Improvements to existing arrangements would be achieved by the features common to all options.
Option 2: Single risk-based assessment process applicable to all aged care settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All organisations¹ would be required to meet the new aged care standards and would be subject to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – a regular assessment process to enable the service to demonstrate performance against the standards. A service assessed as meeting the aged care standards would be recognised through accreditation – ongoing monitoring. If a service is not complying with the standards, the organisation would be expected to address the non-compliance within a timeframe agreed with the Quality Agency. The non-compliance would also be referred to the department for consideration as to the need for any other action. • Performance against the standards (i.e. the nature and depth of the assessment), as well as the extent of monitoring necessary would be proportionate to the risks to the health, safety and wellbeing of consumers
Option 3: Safety and quality declaration by organisations providing low-risk services readily available to the broader population (can be combined with Option 1 or 2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisations that provide low-risk services would be approved to provide aged care under the <i>Aged Care Act 1997</i> or through a funding agreement. • These organisations would be required to declare that they are compliant with basic safety and quality requirements, rather than being required to meet the aged care standards or undertake the quality assessment process. • These organisations would be required to satisfy all other responsibilities, including having a complaints resolution mechanism and working with the Aged Care Complaints Commissioner to resolve any complaints.

¹ The new aged care standards will apply to organisations providing: residential care, home care, flexible care (including innovative care services, multi-purpose services (in a manner consistent with the spirit and intent of the standards), short-term restorative care and transition care), CHSP and NATSIFACP services

Options paper - Your thoughts

In relation to the features proposed to be common to all options:

- Do you agree that the features common to all options should be part of aged care quality assessments?
- What are some of the different ways in which an organisation (and its services) could demonstrate its performance against the standards?
- How could consumers be more effectively involved in the assessment process?
- What information is most valuable to consumers?
- What are the critical elements of any assessment process?
- How can information gained from a quality assessment drive competition in the market and assist consumers to make choices?

If Option 1 was adopted:

- What are the advantages and disadvantages of this option?
- Should any new assessment approaches be included in this option?
- How can this option best accommodate future changes in service delivery (for example, new models of service delivery)?

If Option 2 was adopted:

- What are the advantages and disadvantages of this option?
- To differentiate between organisations (and their services) to enable more targeted quality assessments, would it be sufficient to consider the following risks or should other matters also be taken into account:
 - The nature of the services being delivered
 - The level of responsibility the services has for the consumer's health, safety and wellbeing
 - The performance history of the organisation and its services
 - The organisation's compliance with any other relevant standards or quality frameworks?
- How can we best create a more risk-based approach to performance assessment?
- What support would organisations (particularly community/home care organisations) need to transition to this approach?
- Should organisations that provide transition care also be subject to this single quality assessment framework (noting that the quality of most of these organisations is regulated by state and territory governments)?

If Option 3 was adopted:

- What are the advantages and disadvantages of this option?
 - What criteria should be used to determine whether an organisation should be subject to safety and quality declaration rather than assessment?
 - What types of organisations should be eligible to use this arrangement?
 - Is there an alternative approach that provides appropriate safeguards for consumers while minimising red tape for organisations that only deliver low-risk services?
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13. Please provide details of any other options that we should consider.

14. Will your preferred option/s maintain appropriate safeguards for consumers? Please explain your answer.

15. Will your preferred option/s decrease the regulatory burden on aged care organisations? Please explain your answer.

Options paper - Your thoughts

- The Department seeks your comments on the impacts of the various options.
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Other Comments

16. Do you have any other comments or specific suggestions about the matters discussed in the Options Paper?

Please send your submission to:

Email: qualityagedcare@health.gov.au

Mail: The Director
Quality Standards Section
Quality Reform Branch
Aged Care Access and Quality Division
Department of Health
MDP 463
GPO Box 9848
CANBERRA ACT 2601