



More Choices for a Longer Life – reducing the misuse of medicines in residential aged care

The Government will increase funding for aged care by \$7 billion over five years. The Government will prioritise better use of medicines in aged care, including the use of psychotropic medicines. This will directly improve the quality of life, quality of care and safety of senior Australians living in residential aged care.

A new unit of clinical pharmacists will be established within the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission and will work directly with residential aged care providers to educate them around best practice use of medicines. The Government is also supporting a Canberra trial to embed a part-time pharmacist in all 27 residential care facilities to ensure the quality use of medicines.

The National Aged Care Quality Indicator Program will expand to include two new quality indicators – falls and fractures, and medication management, ensuring quality care and minimising the use of chemical and physical restraint.

Why is this important?

Senior Australians deserve the highest quality care. As we age, our care needs can become more complex and if this happens, we rely on doctors, pharmacists, nurses and care workers to provide us with the best care possible.

Better medication management will improve the care received by people in residential aged care. For example, better use of psychotropic drugs will have a significant impact on the quality of life of people who experience behavioral and psychological symptoms of dementia, by reducing the risk of falls, pneumonia and stroke. Better use of antibiotics will also reduce the risk of people developing infections. Quality indicators will build on the existing indicators, meaning the areas of medication management, use of chemical and physical restraints, and falls and fractures are addressed in an integrated way.

Prescribers and aged care workers need better information about the effectiveness and use of medicines in aged care settings. This initiative delivers the approach needed to ensure better use of medicines, focusing on regulation, education and intervention.

Who will benefit?

More than 240,000 senior Australians living in residential aged care will benefit from better quality care. More than 2,600 residential aged care providers will benefit from better evidence-based guidance around the use of medicines and greater clarity around regulatory requirements and quality standards.

How much will this cost?

This will cost \$7.7 million from 2019–20 to 2022–23.

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