Safe and quality aged care services

Older Australians have a right to safe and quality aged care that supports their health and maintains their dignity and quality of life.

The Australian Government is progressing a wide range of reforms informed by the comprehensive recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, and through feedback and insights received from older Australians, their families and carers, service providers, the workforce and advocacy groups.

A new approach to regulating aged care

A well-functioning aged care system needs to be supported by contemporary regulation, which ensures that aged care services are high-quality and safe. We are developing a new regulatory model that will be people-centred and risk-proportionate based on best-practice principles. It will drive continuous improvement in the aged care sector.

We are consulting with older Australians, their families and carers, the sector and experts, and seeking feedback to inform the new aged care regulation model.

Reviewing Aged Care Quality Standards

The Aged Care Quality Standards define what good care should look like. We are urgently reviewing the Quality Standards. Through significant consultation with older Australians, their families and carers, the sector and experts, we aim to improve the Quality Standards with a focus on key areas, such as dementia, clinical care, governance, diversity and food and nutrition.

Painting a picture with data

We are working with consumer groups, other government agencies, researchers and providers to develop an Aged Care Data Strategy. This will set out an agreed vision for the future national aged care data system. It will support people to make informed choices about their care, and help to manage, monitor and improve the quality and safety of aged care.From December 2022, Star Ratings will be published, which will help older Australians and their families decide which residential aged care service best fits their needs.

Growing a capable and committed workforce

Older Australians need a skilled, diverse and valued workforce to provide high-quality care. We are working on a range of solutions to boost workforce numbers and increase the skills of workers, including:

* supporting a real wage increase for workers
* additional TAFE and university training places, graduate and clinical placement programs, scholarships and additional payments
* migration pathways for qualified, experienced workers
* more training, especially in the areas of dementia care, palliative care, and infection and prevention control
* registered nurses onsite 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in aged care homes from July 2023
* ensuring aged care providers deliver on average 215 minutes of care per day from October 2024.

Transparent, accountable and financially sustainable services

Changes made to legislation in August 2022 will improve the care, pricing, transparency, accountability, financial management and sustainability of aged care providers. The changes to legislation will enable:

* the new Australian National Aged Care Classification (AN-ACC) funding model to come into effect on 1 October 2022. AN-ACC offers a more equitable approach to funding that better matches funding with the costs of delivering care
* a new body, the Independent Health and Aged Care Pricing Authority, to provide advice on aged care prices
* an updated Financial and Prudential Monitoring, Compliance and Intervention Framework to provide government with greater oversight of the financial risks faced by the sector. The framework will also help ensure providers meet their obligations to refund deposits to residents in residential care
* new governance and quarterly reporting requirements, which place greater accountability on service providers to be transparent.