



Australian Government
Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission

Engage
Empower
Safeguard

Corporate Plan

January 2019 - June 2019



Message from the Commissioner

I am pleased to present the first Corporate Plan of the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (the Commission) as required under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act).

This Corporate Plan is part of our annual performance cycle, ending with our annual report and annual performance statements. This ensures we meet our obligations of performance and accountability under the PGPA Act.

The Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety has been established to determine the full extent of issues in aged care and to understand how we can meet the challenges and opportunities of delivering age care services now and into the future. This Corporate Plan recognises that the work of the Royal Commission frames our operating environment and it provides a platform for the Commission's full cooperation and support.

The Corporate Plan supports the Government's expectation that the Commission will protect and enhance the health, safety, well-being and quality of life for aged care consumers, promote confidence and trust in aged care services and promote engagement with consumers about the quality and care of services they receive. The Plan is informed by advice from the Aged Care Quality and Safety Advisory Council in relation to its strategic priorities and approaches.

This is a critical period for the Commission as we work to build a new organisation with a stronger focus on consumers, strengthened regulation, better engagement with consumers and providers, and greater transparency. The Corporate Plan outlines our priorities, strategies and accountabilities against each of our six legislated functions.

This Corporate Plan sets out clear and measurable work that will help us build a Commission that protects and enhances the safety, health, well-being and quality of life of aged care consumers.

Janet Anderson PSM

Commissioner
February 2019



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Introduction

The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (the Commission) was established on 1 January 2019 and operates independently and objectively in performing its functions and exercising its powers as set out in the *Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission Act 2018* and the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission Rules 2018.

The Commission is a non-corporate Commonwealth entity under the PGPA Act.

The Commission replaces the Australian Aged Care Quality Agency and the Aged Care Complaints Commissioner. Combining these functions into one independent agency supports a stronger focus on consumers, strengthens regulation, supports better engagement with consumers and providers and promotes transparency. From January 2020, subject to legislative amendment, the Commission will incorporate the regulatory functions of the Department of Health.

The Commission's efforts are driven by its legislated functions and by the Government's Statement of Expectations.

This Corporate Plan spans a six-month period from the commencement of the Commission on 1 January 2019, until the end of the reporting period on 30 June 2019.

The Corporate Plan is part of an integrated annual performance cycle. The Commission's performance measures cascade through our corporate, operational, business, team and individual performance plans.

Our purpose

To protect and enhance the safety, health, well-being and quality of life of aged care consumers.

Our vision

Older Australians trust and have confidence that aged care services protect and enhance their safety, health, well-being and quality of life.

Our role

To independently accredit, assess and monitor aged care services that are subsidised by the Australian Government. The Commission also seeks to resolve complaints about these services, provides education and information about our functions and engages with consumers to develop and promote best practice models to engage consumers in the provision of their care.

Our values

We undertake our work consistent with the Australian Public Service (APS) values, outlined in the *Public Service Act 1999*.

Impartial

We are apolitical and provide the Government with advice that is frank, honest, timely and based on the best available evidence.

Committed to service

We are professional, objective, innovative and efficient, and work collaboratively to achieve the best results for the Australian community and the Government.

Accountable

We are open and accountable to the Australian community under the law and within the framework of Ministerial responsibility.

Respectful

We respect all people, including their rights and their heritage.

Ethical

We demonstrate leadership, are trustworthy, and act with integrity, in all that we do.

Our functions

Our functions are set out in the *Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission Act 2018* and drive our strategic priorities under this Corporate Plan. Our functions are:

1. To protect and enhance the safety, health, well-being and quality of life of aged care consumers
2. To promote the provision of quality care and services by:
 - i) approved providers of aged care services; and
 - ii) service providers of Commonwealth-funded aged care services
3. To develop, in consultation with aged care consumers and their representatives, best practice models for the engagement of providers with their aged care consumers and to promote those models to providers.
4. To deal with complaints made, or information given to the Commissioner in accordance with the Rules about an approved provider's responsibilities under the *Aged Care Act 1997* or funding agreement.
5. To regulate aged care services according to the Rules by accrediting, conducting quality reviews, monitoring the quality of care and services and registering quality assessors.
6. To provide education and information about matters relating to one or more of the Commissioner's functions to consumers and their representatives, providers of aged care services and the public.

Our approach

We carry out our functions in a way that supports a stronger focus on consumers, strengthens regulation, supports better engagement with consumers and providers and promotes transparency.

This approach includes:

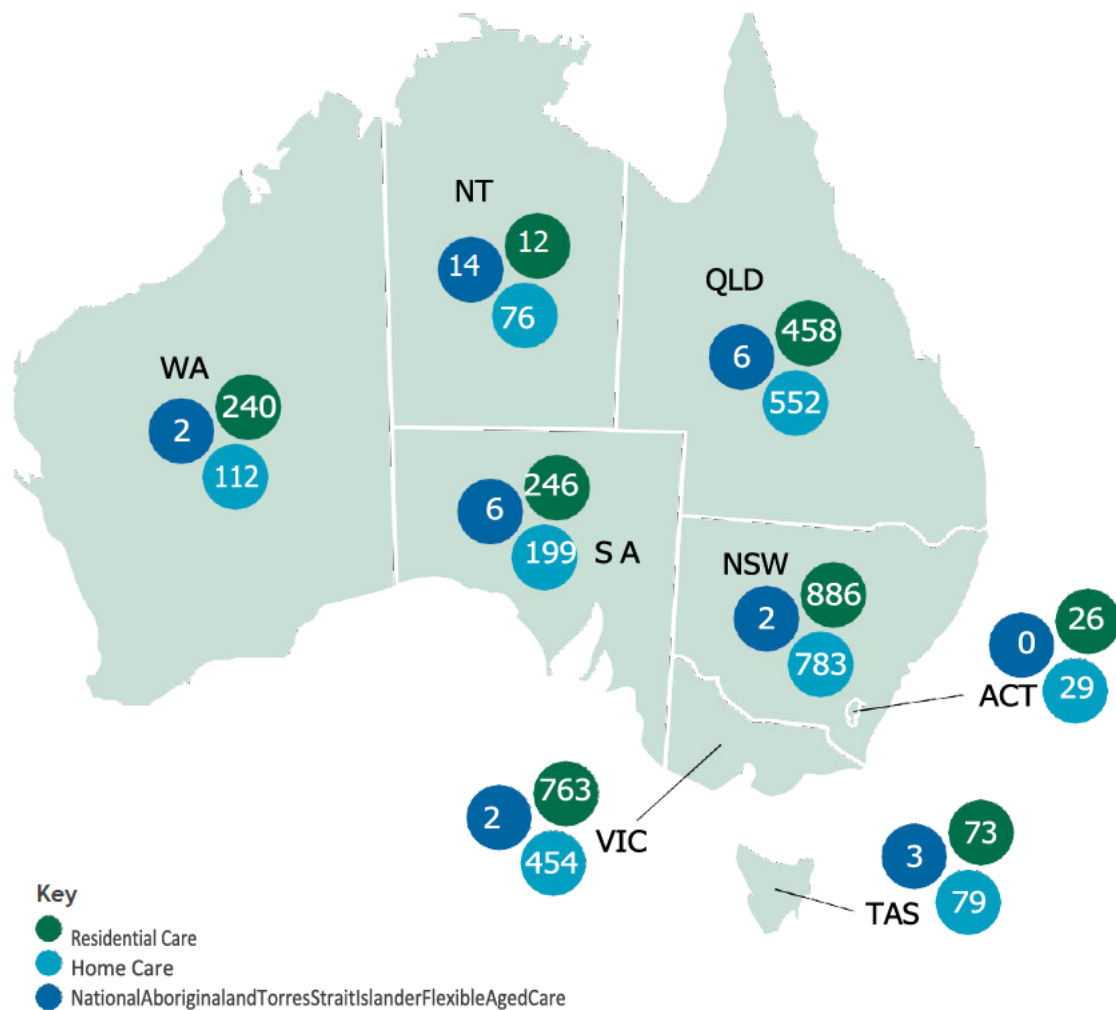
- taking account of the Government's broad policy framework including its consumer-centred aged care agenda and aged care quality improvement agenda
- giving a high priority to cooperating with and responding to requests from the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety
- being open to new ways of working to improve outcomes for aged care consumers
- developing and maintaining productive working relationships with aged care consumers, providers and other key stakeholders
- supporting a workforce culture and staff capability to achieve our priorities
- ensuring transparency in the way we work
- being accountable and seeking feedback to improve our practices and performance.

Aged Care Services as at 30 June 2018

Figure 1

Aged care services at a glance

As at 30 June 2018, there were **2,704** residential services, **2,284** home care services and **35** National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flexible Aged Care services



Our operating environment

More than 1.3 million older Australians receive some form of aged care service from approximately 2,704 residential aged care services, 2,284 home care services or 35 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flexible Aged Care services across Australia (as at 30 June 2018).

The Government is undertaking significant reform of the aged care sector to ensure the safety, health and welfare of older Australians. The Review of National Aged Care Quality Regulatory Processes (Carnell-Paterson Review) found that the current aged care regulatory system needs further reform to provide the assurance the community expects.

The establishment of the Commission on 1 January 2019 represents a major reform to the regulation of aged care services. The Commission provides a trusted single point of contact for aged care consumers, their families and aged care providers. The Commission also supports a stronger focus on consumers, strengthens regulation, supports better engagement with consumers and providers and promotes transparency.

The appointment of a Chief Clinical Advisory and Clinical Advisory Panel will provide expert clinical advice to the Commissioner in carrying out the Commission's functions. New consumer engagement functions will also support improved consumer outcomes through the development of best practice models of consumer engagement in aged care.

Subject to legislative change, the aged care regulatory functions currently undertaken by the Department of Health will be transferred to the Commission from 1 January 2020, further strengthening regulatory processes.

New Aged Care Quality Standards will come into effect from 1 July 2019. The focus of the new Standards is on outcomes for consumers. The new Standards will give older Australians and their families a greater say in the care they receive, and increased confidence in the quality of their care and services. The new Standards will also make regulation simpler for providers and deliver continuous improvement in services.

The Department of Health is working with the sector to develop a single Charter of Aged Care Rights. The Charter will replace the current charters of rights in respect of residential care, home care and short-term restorative care. The Charter will make rights clearer for care recipients, regardless of subsidised care type and will support the Commission's complaints process and the new Standards.

Key areas of reform which the Commission is working collaboratively with the Department of Health to develop are summarised in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Summary of Aged Care Reforms

- Single Charter
 - Implement a single charter of rights and responsibilities for all aged care consumers
- Improved regulation
 - Introduce a clinical governance framework to support providers to meet the requirements of the single set of quality standards
 - Implement improved risk profiling and information sharing
 - Progressively move towards risk-based assessment
- Greater transparency for consumers
 - Implementation of an open disclosure framework to support providers to meet the requirements of the standards
 - Develop 'easy to read', plain-English audit reports
 - Develop and implement a process to name non-responsive or non-compliant providers
- Home Care Quality and Compliance
 - Develop an end-to-end compliance response to safeguard the quality, safety and integrity of aged home care services
- Build a sustainable regulatory system
 - Develop a resource model for aged care regulation

Regulator performance

The Commonwealth Regulator Performance Framework sets out the Government's clear expectations of Commonwealth regulators.

The Commission is accountable under this framework against six outcome-based key performance indicators comprising: reduced regulatory burden, communications, risk-based and proportionate approaches, efficient and coordinated monitoring, transparency, and continuous improvement.

This sets a strategic framework for us to improve our systems, processes and performance in specific areas such as case management, our data on risk and performance, and reviewing our operational practices to achieve greater efficiency and targeted outcomes.

This framework applies to our performance in both residential and home care services and we embed these performance measures into planning for our capabilities and regulatory services. We regularly seek feedback from the sector and use this feedback to inform continuous improvements to our approach and to adapt to changes in our external environment.

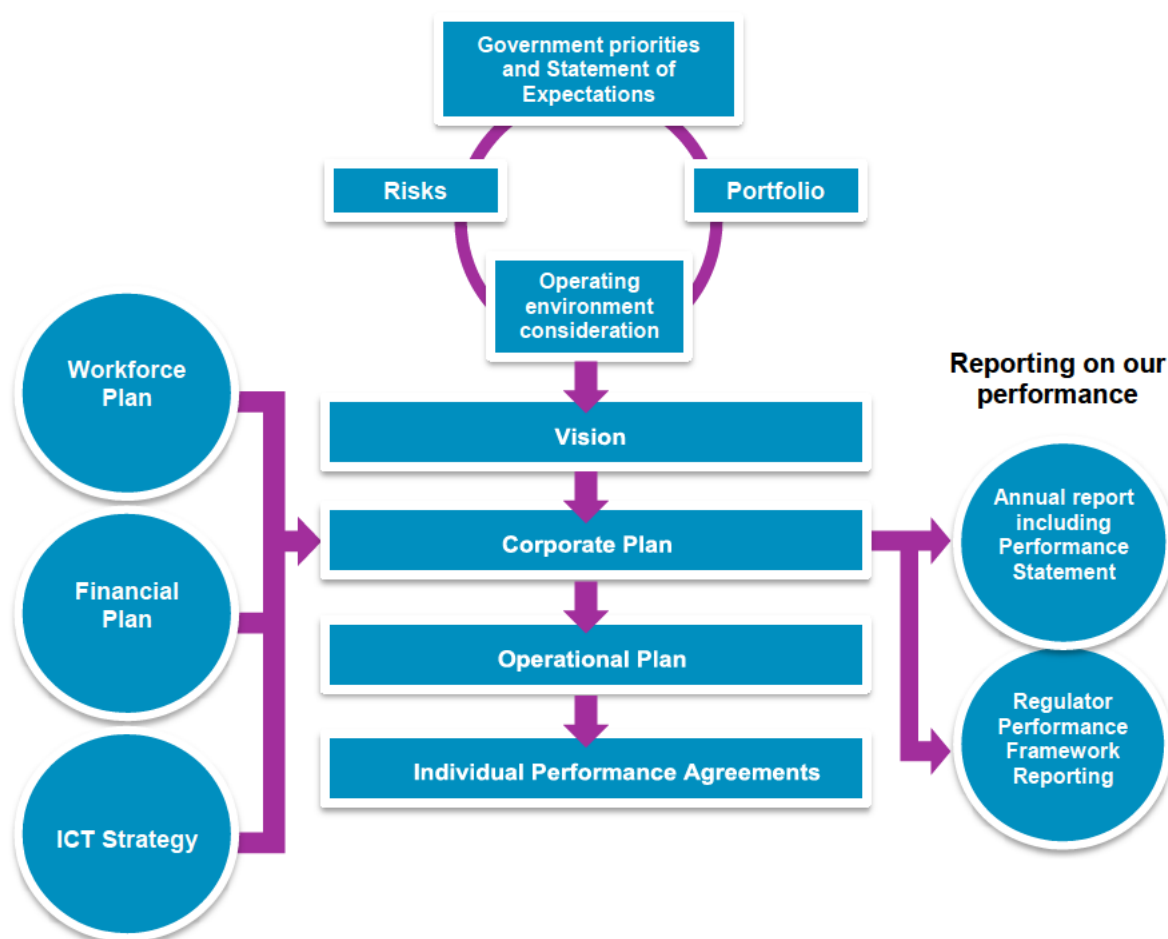
Risk-based regulation

The Commission continues to strengthen its risk-based approach to the regulation of aged care services across Australia.

We recognise that most providers deliver quality care and are committed to improving consumer outcomes. Our risk-based approach means we focus more of our activity to where providers are not meeting the standards and areas of identified risk.

When assessing providers, as well as checking that policies and procedures comply with the standards, we are now focusing more on the quality of consumer experience as well as on the prevention of harm. This involves listening more closely to consumers and their representatives and enhancing our use of complaints data, intelligence and assessment of risk.

Our planning and reporting model



Our plan at a glance

Our Purpose

To protect and enhance the safety, health, well-being and quality of life of aged care consumers.

Our priorities

1. Establish the Commission as an effective organisation to protect and enhance the safety, health, well-being and quality of life of aged care consumers
2. Promote the provision of quality care and services
3. Enhance consumer engagement functions
4. Ensure effective complaints resolution for aged care consumers
5. Ensure effective regulation of aged care services
6. Enhance information and education to support the Commission's functions

Our capability

- Leadership and culture
- Change management
- Innovation
- Information Technology
- Governance
- Workforce
- Stakeholder engagement
- Risk management

Our priorities

1. Establish the Commission as an effective organisation to protect and enhance the safety, health, well-being and quality of life of aged care consumers

Intended result:

An Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission that supports an increased focus on consumers, strengthens regulation, supports better engagement with consumers and providers, and promotes transparency.

Focus area	Our aim	Performance measures
1.1 Corporate Governance	Effective and joined up delivery of Commission functions	A Commission structure in place that supports an increased focus on consumers, strengthens regulation and promotes transparency
	Role of the Chief Clinical Advisor established and Clinical Panel in place	Chief Clinical Advisor appointed to assist the Commission in areas of clinical care and options developed for an expert clinical panel
	New Charter and strategic operating model for the Aged Care Quality and Safety Advisory Council established	A new Charter and strategic operating model in place to support the Advisory Council's strategic focus
	Plan and support the transfer of regulatory functions from the Department of Health from 1 January 2020	Active engagement with the Department of Health to support legislative changes to strengthen regulation and transition the Department of Health regulatory compliance staff to the Commission from 1 January 2020
1.2 Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety	Respond to information and witness notices within required timeframes	100% of requests from the Royal Commission responded to within requested timeframes to support the Royal Commission's work
	Apply learnings from the Royal Commission in a timely way to improve operational performance	100% of issues identified and responded to throughout the Royal Commission to inform operational improvements

1.3 Corporate resources and capability	Establish the Commission as a single, trusted point of contact for aged care consumers	Evidence of positive consumer uptake of the website and 1800 telephone line
	Implement a staff engagement and communication strategy to support change processes	Staff engagement and communication strategy designed and implemented to support change processes
	Implement a quality assurance framework to support continuous improvement	A quality assurance framework designed that supports the Commission's continuous improvement of its operations
	Implement an improved Performance Development Framework to support staff capability	Performance Development Framework implemented to support staff capability
	Ensure effective corporate services in place to support functions	Corporate services projects delivered on time and to budget
	Commence enterprise bargaining for a new enterprise agreement for Commission staff	Enterprise bargaining commenced on a new Commission enterprise agreement
1.4 Information sharing	Enhance information sharing across the Commission and other key regulatory bodies and establish Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs)	<p>MOU in place with the Department of Health</p> <p>MOUs with other regulatory bodies identified and scoped</p>

2. Promote the provision of quality care and services

Intended result:

Increased commitment from aged care providers to ensure safety and quality outcomes for consumers and increased confidence and trust in the provision of aged care services.

Focus area	Our aim	Performance measures
2.1 Risk based regulation	Develop and publish a risk based regulatory strategy	A risk based regulatory strategy developed and operationalised to inform the Commission's risk-based approach to regulation
	Publish regular regulatory bulletins/alerts to explain risks, regulatory approach and data on regulatory trends	Regulatory bulletins and alerts published on key risks, the Commission's regulatory approach and trends
2.2 Greater transparency	Implement quarterly reporting on complaints data and provider performance against the standards	Publication of the Commission's first quarterly report to provide greater visibility and transparency of sector wide risks and regulatory performance
2.3 Leadership on aged care quality regulation	Provide leadership on key issues relating to aged care quality and safety through information and regulatory campaigns and research partnerships	Participation in key stakeholder forums
		Communication and engagement plan in place that identifies opportunities to promote aged care quality and safety
		Publication of articles and regulatory bulletins on topics critical to the provision of safe, quality aged care that are informed by data and research
2.4 Regulatory performance framework	Monitor performance and seek feedback against the regulatory performance framework to identify improvements	Active participation in development and implementation of policy reforms and budget measures
		Improved performance against the regulatory performance framework self-assessment for 2018/19
		A plan developed to address areas of deficiency

3. Enhance consumer engagement functions

Intended result:

Providers using best practice models to engage with consumers in the provision of their care.

Focus area	Our aim	Performance measures
3.1 Consumer experience reporting	Undertake further analysis and research into consumer experience report (CER) data	Improved information from CER in residential care informs the Commission's priorities, campaigns and regulatory services
	Develop CER questions and methodology to support CER implementation in home care under a single quality framework from 1 July 2019	Resources and systems in place to implement and conduct CER interviews in home care by 1 July 2019
3.2 Consumer information	Develop and publish consumer information to support implementation of the new Aged Care Quality Standards and other reforms	Information developed and accessible to support consumer awareness of the new Aged Care Quality Standards and other reforms
	Ensure consumers are empowered to make a complaint about their aged care services	Information developed and accessible to promote awareness of the Commission's functions and powers in relation to resolving complaints about aged care providers
3.3 New consumer engagement function	Undertake consultation to establish new consumer engagement functions	A consultation and engagement plan in place to inform consumer engagement functions

4. Ensure effective complaints resolution for aged care consumers

Intended result:

There is increased effectiveness and awareness of aged care complaints processes and consumer rights by consumers and providers.

Focus area	Our aim	Performance measures
4.1 Management of complaints	Ensure efficient and effective management of complaints to meet performance targets	>70% of complaints closed within 30 days, 80% within 60 days and 90% within 90 days
	Seek feedback to inform improvements to complaints resolution processes	≥85% of people who complete the complaint feedback survey express satisfaction with the service, fairness and impartiality and transparency of the process
		A plan in place to mitigate risk to performance targets resulting from any increase in volume of complaints
4.2 Joined up processes	Review complaints processes to support the Single Charter of Rights and new Aged Care Quality Standards	Complaints processes established and in place that support the Single Charter of Rights and new Aged Care Quality Standards
4.3 Complaints officer workforce	Support effective recruitment, training, performance management and professional development of complaints officers	A recruitment and development plan that is contemporary and supports workforce needs

5. Ensure effective regulation of aged care services

Intended result:

Improved quality and safety for consumers of aged care services through more effective regulation, a risk-based regulatory approach and preparation for the implementation of the new Aged Care Quality Standards.

Focus area	Our aim	Performance measures
5.1 New Aged Care Quality Standards	Implement a program of work to support the transition to the new Aged Care Quality Standards (both internally and externally) including sector information, tools and resources to support quality assessment from 1 July 2019	<p>Audit methodologies developed and tested prior to implementation</p> <p>Guidance material improvements implemented prior to implementation</p> <p>Information updates provided in a timely manner</p>
5.2 Regulatory program	<p>Deliver program of regulatory work to meet performance standards and targets</p> <p>Implement enhanced risk profiling and increase information sharing to inform risk based approach</p>	<p>100% site and quality review audits conducted within statutory timeframes</p> <p>98% of services providing care in the home and community receive a quality review within legislative timeframes</p> <p>100% Regulatory Performance Framework Targets achieved</p> <p>100% of applications for re-accreditation completed within the statutory timeframes</p> <p>An Unannounced site visit conducted on 100% of residential aged care services within the year</p> <p>Streamlined triage and collection of information to inform timely, risk-based regulatory monitoring</p> <p>Contribution to Department of Health development of business case for IT infrastructure for risk-based approach</p>

5.3 Assessor workforce	Support effective recruitment, training, performance management and professional development of quality assessors	<p>Recruitment strategy is contemporary and increases the pool of available quality assessors</p> <p>Continuing Professional Development program developed and in place to support quality assessor capability</p>
5.4 Regulatory policies and practices	Develop policies and guidance material to support consistent quality assessment under the new Aged Care Quality Standards	<p>Program implemented to support quality assessor workforce transition to the new Aged Care Quality Standards</p> <p>A framework developed to quality assure the consistency of assessment outcomes and decisions</p>
5.5 Regulation of home care services	Implement improvements to home care regulation to manage risks	<p>98% of quality reviews conducted in home care services within statutory timeframes</p> <p>Increased use of information and intelligence to inform regulation of home care services</p> <p>98% Regulatory Performance targets achieved for home care services</p>

6. Enhance information and education to support the Commission's functions

Intended result:

Greater confidence and trust in aged care services through empowered consumers and informed providers in relation to compliance with quality standards and best practice service provision.

Focus area	Our aim	Performance measures
6.1 Effective education programs	Develop and deliver effective education programs to support transition to the new Aged Care Quality Standards from 1 July 2019	Sector engagement activities planned and promoted throughout 2019 >90% of people who complete the education program feedback survey are satisfied with the Commission's education and engagement activities
	Develop an online learning platform to support sector wide education and internal professional development	Online learning platform established to support sector wide education and internal professional development
6.2 Sector engagement and communication	Develop a strategy to support sector engagement and communication to support Commission's functions	A strategy developed and operationalised to support sector engagement and communication of the Commission's functions including proactive media
6.3 Enhanced information and communication	Consult on and develop enhanced information and communication for consumers, providers and the public	Enhanced information and communication for consumers, providers and the public

Capability

The Commission will continue to build organisational capability to support delivery of our purpose and functions. Key areas of capability improvement include:

Leadership and culture

We continue to support our leadership capability through a distributed leadership approach and enhanced communication and engagement activities.

Change management

We are focused on ensuring an effective Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission and implementation of aged care reforms through enhanced change management capability.

Innovation

We are committed to exploring new ways of working to achieve efficiencies and more effective processes for regulation of aged care services and management of complaints.

Information Technology

We continue to improve our information technology capability through the implementation of our ICT strategic plan and investment in innovative solutions supporting our performance and data analytics capability.

Governance

We continue to enhance our governance through effective organisational design and engagement with the Aged Care Quality and Safety Advisory Council.

Workforce

We are investing in our workforce to attract and retain highly skilled and capable staff. A priority is ensuring our front line staff are equipped with the skills and capability to support the implementation of the new Aged Care Quality Standards.

Stakeholder engagement

We continue to improve our engagement with stakeholders through strengthened partnerships and innovative approaches. We are committed to listening and improving our services from the feedback we receive.

Risk management

We are working to better understand sector wide and provider risk through the development of an enhanced risk management framework. We continue to enhance our risk management policies to better understand and manage enterprise risks.

Risk oversight and management

Internal risks

We are committed to effectively identifying and managing risk as required by Section 16E of the Public Governance Performance and Accountability Rule 2014. We have a clear methodology that identifies potential adverse events, the likelihood of their occurrence, and the impact of their occurrence and mitigation strategies in the event of their occurrence. Our risk management approach also recognises the positive opportunity of engaging with risk to ensure we maintain our value to consumers and the aged care sector.

Risk is managed across all levels of the Commission through a continued focus on strengthening rigour and consistency in our auditing processes, effective governance to ensure transparent decision making, and continuous improvement in financial management to ensure efficient use of resources.

The key risks that we are responding to in the current environment include:

1. not meeting Government and community expectations of our role
2. insufficient resources to meet increases in complaints or incidences of failure in the delivery of aged care services
3. insufficient flexibility in our regulatory approach to address emerging issues
4. insufficient regulatory intelligence and data analytics to effectively monitor risk and performance of aged care services
5. lack of understanding by providers of the requirements of the new Standards, and improvements in outcomes for consumers
6. insufficient resources and capability to support transformational change.

Understanding and responding to industry risk

Our primary responsibility is to assess performance against the relevant standards and to manage the resolution of complaints about aged care services. Through our new functions of consumer engagement we will identify models of best practice in consumer engagement and promote these to providers.

The implementation of the new Aged Care Quality Standards will challenge previous risk management methodologies. There will be a need for enhanced advice on clinical issues, a greater understanding of and focus on consumer choice, better connected data and improved risk assessment.

We will continue to work closely with consumers, aged care experts and service providers to ensure clear guidance and promotion of what is expected under the new Standards and monitoring improvements in the outcomes for consumers.