



Statement of Intent Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission

1 Introduction

This Statement of Intent outlines the response from the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (ACQSC) to the Minister's Statement of Expectations for the ACQSC dated 25 February 2019.

2 Role and functions

The ACQSC's purpose is to protect and enhance the safety, health, well-being and quality of life of aged care consumers by holding aged care providers to account for the quality and safety of the services they provide, and the outcomes they achieve. The four principal functions of the ACQSC relate to consumer engagement, complaints, quality assessment and monitoring, and education. The ACQSC will act competently, independently and objectively in performing its functions and in exercising its powers as set out in the *Aged Care Quality and Safety Act 2018* and the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission Rules 2018.

In undertaking its functions, the ACQSC will put consumers at the centre of the picture, fully engage with consumers and providers, pursue efficient and effective regulation, and promote transparency and accountability. The ACQSC will also target areas of risk and aged care services that provide sub-standard care, and respond early to failures in care by aged care providers.

3 Relationship with Government and responsible Minister

The Commissioner will keep the Minister fully informed in a timely manner about any emerging trends, issues or risks relevant to its operations and functions. The Commissioner will also inform the Secretary of the Department of Health of relevant issues and information, including any concerns or clarification of legislative requirements, resourcing and policy.

The Aged Care Quality and Safety Advisory Council will make an important contribution to both the direction and implementation of the ACQSC's role and responsibilities. The Commissioner will meet regularly with the Advisory Council and seek its advice in relation to the functions of the Commissioner.

4 Government's policy priorities for aged care

In undertaking its role and functions, the ACQSC will take account of the Government's broad policy framework and work collaboratively with the Department of Health on the development and implementation of aged care reform initiatives including:

- 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
 - Develop and implement a Serious Incident Response Scheme
 - Progressively move towards risk-based assessment
 - Implement Government decisions regarding the National Quality Indicator Program
- Greater transparency for consumers
 - Implement an open disclosure framework to support providers to meet the requirements of the standards
 - Develop 'easy to read' plain-English audit reports (by July 2020)
 - Develop and implement a process to name non-responsive or non-compliant providers
 - Develop a differentiated performance rating system (by July 2020)

- Home Care quality and compliance
 - Develop an end-to-end compliance response to ensure the quality, safety and integrity of aged home care services
- Build a sustainable regulatory system
 - Develop a resource model for aged care regulation.

5 Other priority areas

The ACQSC recognises the significance of the work of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety and will fully support and cooperate with requests for information, witnesses and assistance. The ACQSC will also closely monitor the Royal Commission’s proceedings and be responsive to issues emerging, and to its findings and recommendations.

The ACQSC will ensure its processes and activities are efficient, effective and deliver high quality outcomes. Priority will be given to consistent, objective assessment and monitoring against existing quality standards and supporting the transition to the new Aged Care Quality Standards from 1 July 2019. This will include training for registered quality assessors, as well as education and information for consumers, providers and the public to support the new Standards.

All accreditation site audits will be conducted without notice and ACQSC will expand its program of assessment contacts outside normal business hours. Particularly close attention will be given to monitoring and taking action to mitigate the risk of sub-standard care including through analysis of complaints, non-compliance and consumer experience data.

The ACQSC will also give priority to working closely with the Department of Health to plan and implement a seamless transfer of provider approval and compliance functions from the Department of Health from January 2020, and to operationalising its new consumer engagement and clinical advisory functions. The ACQSC will recruit a Chief Clinical Advisor, and seek and consider clinical advice relevant to its functions.

6 Engagement with stakeholders

As the national regulator, ACQSC will develop and maintain productive relationships by engaging with consumers and aged care providers across multiple channels and settings to support the delivery of its functions and further Government reforms.

The ACQSC will also promote public awareness and confidence in the provision of aged care services through the exercise of its functions including through its consumer engagement, education and complaints resolution processes.

7 Organisational governance, financial management and reporting

The ACQSC will fully meet its financial, performance and reporting accountabilities as set out in the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* and uphold and promote Australian Public Service values in the employment of its staff. The ACQSC will report annually under the Government’s Regulatory Performance Framework.

8 Conclusion

The ACQSC is fully committed to fulfilling its important role and functions, and working with Government to implement further reforms, to promote and improve confidence and trust in an Australian aged care system that delivers the best possible quality of care and outcomes for older Australians.