

# Newsletter - March 2019

Read the latest issue of the *Aged Care Quality Bulletin*, the Commission's monthly newsletter for Australian aged care providers.



## Issue #3, March 2019

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## Commissioner message

As Australia's aged care regulator, the Commission has statutory powers to accredit, assess and monitor aged care services and to resolve complaints about these services.

Another important Commission role is providing education and information updates relating to our functions and reforms being pursued that promote the provision of quality aged care and services, and the best possible consumer experiences and outcomes.

Minister Wyatt recently announced a new Charter of Aged Care Rights which will cover 14 fundamental protections that range across safe, quality care to independence, information, personal privacy, control, fairness and choice.

The Charter from 1 July 2019 will replace and strengthen four previous charters on aged care. It will also complement the new Aged Care Quality Standards.

There will be a requirement for providers to give a signed copy of this Charter to people receiving their aged care services. I encourage you to read more about it in this edition.

To support the transition to the new Standards, the Commission will be convening nearly 60 additional workshops nation-wide to assist providers to become familiar with the new requirements. Workshops are selling out quickly, and you can view locations and dates on our [website](#).

I also urge all providers to familiarise yourselves with the guidance material we have developed to help providers to get ready to be assessed against the new Aged Care Quality Standards. This very useful resource is available on our [website](#)

Hopefully of similar value to providers is the information published in this Bulletin about transitional arrangements for services in the lead-up to the introduction of the new Standards.

The next few months promise to be busy for everyone. I trust that this Bulletin will assist all providers to develop your own critical path from here to the beginning of July, to ensure that your service is fully compliant with the Quality Standards.

**Ms Janet Anderson PSM**  
**Commissioner**

## Single Charter of Aged Care Rights



*Image: The Minister for Senior Australians and Aged Care with residents of the new Southern Plus aged care centre in East Fremantle, WA, where he launched the new Charter of Aged Care Rights.*

The Charter of Aged Care Rights recently launched by the Minister for Aged Care and Senior Australians, the Hon Ken Wyatt AM MP, covers 14 fundamental protections that range across safe, quality care to independence, information, personal privacy, control, fairness and choice.

Replacing and strengthening four previous charters on aged care, the new single Charter will underpin the new Aged Care Quality Standards.

From 1 July 2019, providers will be expected to give a personally signed copy of the Charter to every one of their residents and aged care recipients. At the same time they must give them or their authorised representative or family member the opportunity to co-sign the document.

“The co-signing makes providers’ commitments and obligations under the Charter clear to clients, and ensures that clients are aware of their rights,” Minister Wyatt said.

Residential aged care services will have until 30 September 2019 to provide the signed Charter to their residents. Home care providers will have until 31 December 2019.

“Both the Standards and the Charter will further empower the new Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission as it works with the aged care sector to protect senior Australians,” Minister Wyatt said.

“Being treated with dignity and living without abuse and neglect are amongst the top tiers of the new Charter.”



The Charter was developed in 2018 by the Department of Health through broad consumer and aged care service provider sector consultation. More than 550 public submissions were received.

The new Charter of Aged Care Rights will be available in a variety of languages.

**For a copy of the Charter see [the Department of Health website](#).**

**The Charter is also available to download on the Commission's website [resource library](#).**

## Don't miss out on workshops for the new Standards



An additional 59 workshops will be held across Australia to support both residential and home aged care services as they transition to the Quality Standards that come into effect from 1 July 2019.

Commission Director of Education, Alison Brown said there was "significant interest" in the six initial "Preparing for the Standards" events.

"The feedback we received was generally positive and generated high demand for us to create standalone workshops," she said.

"The additional workshops now being scheduled will begin in early April. Overall, we are expecting more than 1200 people to attend from across Australia.

"Depending on demand, more workshops may be offered, particularly in regional and remote areas."

Participants will have the opportunity to practise applying the new Standards to individual consumer and service circumstances, while most importantly, considering the consumer as central to their approach.

"These activity-based workshops will support knowledge and skills sharing and give service managers and staff practical experience to prepare their service for quality assessment against the new Standards," Ms Brown said.

"Outcomes will include:

- Understanding the consumer focus of the Standards
- Understanding the structure and approach of the Guidance and Resources
- Providing leadership and direction to information and advice to help your organisation meet the Standards, and
- Recognising areas where your organisation needs to change policies and practices to align with the consumer outcome focus of the Standards."

Attendees at the "Preparing for the new Standards" events found it a great opportunity to network, learn and reflect outside of their busy workplaces.

"Attendees are encouraged to take the key messages back to their service and to share these more broadly with their staff," Ms Brown said.

Interest in the standalone workshops has been high. Many sessions are now sold out, however places are still available in some of the regional sessions.

**You can [register for the new workshops on the Commission's website](#).**

## New Standards video production

Aged Care Quality Standards - Trailer





A new video education program for service providers focusing on the new Aged Care Quality Standards is being produced in a collaboration between the Commission and [Altura Learning](#).

The video explores each of the eight new aged care Standards, providing information about how they apply in practice to both residential and home care services.

CEO of Altura Learning, Yvie Webley said: “We have a strong commitment to improving people’s lives through a well-trained and engaged workforce, and we are proud to be working with the Commission on such an important project.

“All aged care services in residential and home care are encouraged to access this new program and incorporate it in their plans for supporting and educating staff.”

Commission Executive Director, Industry Engagement and Communications, Pam Christie said: “We have worked with Altura Learning to create a resource that will support providers to understand and engage with the new Standards.

“Our Education and Engagement team has been heavily involved in shaping the script for the program, along with Director Amy Carley from the Altura Learning production team.

The program is due to be released on 24 April, and will be available from both the Commission and Altura Learning websites. Providers are strongly encouraged to access this valuable learning resource.

## Consumer Experience Reports testing in home care moving ahead



For the first time, from July 2019, Consumer Experience Reports (CERs) for home and community-based care aged care services will be available for consumers to complete.

The aged care sector is now familiar with the use of CERs in residential aged care, with more than 1,780 CERs having been completed by residents and published since 2017. They show how consumers experience the quality of care and services in residential facilities using a standardised set of questions on areas such as safety, staff and food.

The Commission is now working closely with La Trobe University's Australian Institute of Primary Care and Ageing to develop the CER survey questions for home and community-based care recipients.

Lead researcher Professor Yvonne Wells said: "Phase One pilot testing of CERs for home care services showed promising results. These results will be used to help shape Phase Two pilot testing of the standardised home care CER questions commencing in April.

"Phase Two will test collection methodology, and we will be inviting consumers to participate by paper, telephone or online survey."

**For further information see our [CER home care](#) page.**

## Providers encouraged to use Commission resources to prepare for the new Standards

There are just three months to go until some 4,000 Australian aged care services transition to new Aged Care Quality Standards on 1 July 2019.

Commission Executive Director, Regulatory Policy and Performance, Christina Bolger encouraged providers to continue positive steps to help staff and consumers understand more about the new Standards.

"While each organisation can choose their own method of preparing staff for the new Standards, there are some essentials for providers," she said.

"Resources on the Commission website provide guidance on the intent of the standards and what is expected from 1 July 2019 this year.

"There is also a self-assessment tool for services to reflect on their readiness, identify areas for improvement and prioritise action."

A short video animation is also available to support key messages to aged care staff. Providers are encouraged to access these resources, and get everyone involved as they prepare.

Information about the transition is available on the [Commission website](#) providing clarity about the arrangements that apply to each service.

You can email your queries to the Commission at [regulatorypolicy@agedcarequality.gov.au](mailto:regulatorypolicy@agedcarequality.gov.au) or call 1800 951 822 to speak with your regional office.

**[View new Aged Care Quality Standards.](#)**

## Get involved: Advance Care Planning

This year's National Advance Care Planning Week from 1-5 April is timely for aged care service providers to review how they are supporting advance care planning.

The week encourages Australians to make their future health care preferences known.

[Department of Health research](#) suggests that 82 per cent of Australians feel that talking about their death and dying wishes is important. However, most people do not feel comfortable having a conversation about their wishes.

Commission Executive Director, Regulatory Policy and Performance, Christina Bolger said: "Providers can play an important role in helping to start these conversations, including by connecting consumers with their family and suitable health professionals to allow these conversations to happen."



“Under the new Aged Care Quality Standards (Standard 2), the emphasis is on planning in partnership with the consumer.

“If the consumer wishes, this joint planning should encompass advance care planning and end of life planning, focusing on the consumer’s needs, goals and preferences and how the service can best support these”.

“This means listening to and understanding what is important to the consumer and working out how their goals and preferences can be met,” she said.

Providers are encouraged to review the Standards Guidance on the [Commission’s website](#) in relation to their responsibilities.

The [National Advance Care Planning website](#) includes support material specific to residential aged care facilities, and the important role and legal requirements of aged care services in relation to their consumers’ advance care planning.

## New Plans to ensure inclusive aged care

The release of new Aged Care Diversity Action Plans to ensure communities receive high quality, culturally appropriate aged care has been announced by the Minister for Senior Australians and Aged Care, the Hon Ken Wyatt AM MP.

The diversity action plans will help providers deliver inclusive and culturally safe services to people of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds, culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and/or who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex.

More than one in 10 senior Australians has diverse sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex characteristics. About one-third of Australians aged 65 years and over were born in a non-English speaking country.

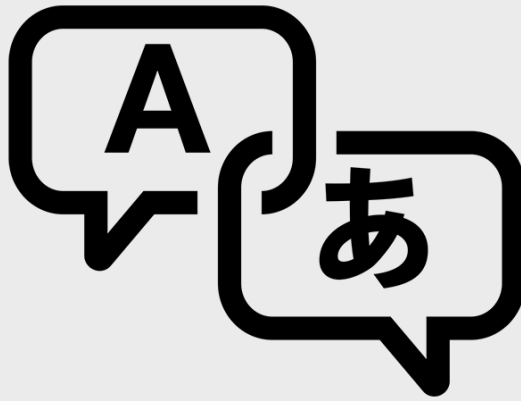
Minister Wyatt said the new plans “will help guide aged care recipients and their families, while assisting providers to ensure their services are inclusive and culturally safe for all consumers in their care.”

The plans include targeted information for both providers and consumers, with links to resources to help consumers and their families express their needs when communicating with providers.

The plans were informed by a broad consultation process with consumers, carers, providers and peak bodies.

**Access the plans on the [Department of Health website](#).**

## Commission complaints resources now available in 24 languages



The Commission has received nearly 200,000 requests for copies of complaints resources since its inception on 1 January 2019.

Commission Executive Director, Complaints Resolution, Shona Reid said that within the Commission's first three months, orders for the resources have reached the same number as were ordered for all of calendar year 2018.

"The most requested resource, with almost 95,000 orders, is the Do you have a concern? brochure," she said.

"This has been translated into 24 languages.

"It is important for us to ensure that people receiving aged care services can obtain information that is culturally appropriate and sensitive to their requirements."

"There has been incredible use of our website, and downloading of our support material since the launch of the new Commission," Ms Reid said.

"We have translated three of our most popular resources for consumers, and they are available for order right now.

“We are working hard to make more resources available in translated languages by April. I encourage everyone to get onto our website and download our resources in languages that are suitable to their audience.”

**Providers can view our Resources Library or order print resources from the Order Resources.**

**Changed:** Monday, 15 April 2019 - 3:29pm