



Dear Approved Provider

I am writing to ensure that you are aware of important changes to aged care regulations that come into effect from 1 July 2019.

It is strongly recommended that you bring this letter to the attention of your executive and board or governing body so that they are aware of the changes and their responsibilities.

Specifically, this letter addresses provider preparations for the new Aged Care Quality Standards, the Commission's approach to assessment against the new standards and a new Charter of Aged Care Rights.

### **New Aged Care Quality Standards**

The new Aged Care Quality Standards (Quality Standards) take effect from 1 July 2019. They will apply to all aged care services including residential care, home care, short-term restorative care, the Commonwealth Home Support Program and the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Flexible Aged Care Program.

All approved providers must comply with the new Quality Standards from 1 July 2019. The Commission's assessment and monitoring against these standards will also commence from this date.

Close attention will be required to manage your successful transition to the Quality Standards. From 1 July, providers are expected to have undertaken a self-assessment against the Quality Standards and have developed a documented plan for continuous improvement for their service/s.

I encourage all providers to conduct a self-assessment as early as possible. This will help to identify and address areas for improvement and will better position you to meet the new Quality Standards from 1 July 2019. To assist, a new **self-assessment tool** is available on the Commission's website.

The Commission has also developed information about transition arrangements for re-accreditation site audits and other quality assessments. This includes information about the approach to regulatory processes that may have already commenced but have not yet been completed by 1 July 2019.

For information and resources to support transition for your service, visit the **Transitioning to the new Aged Care Quality Standards** page on the Commission website.

## Quality Assessment

The new Quality Standards' stronger focus on outcomes for consumers will inform the Commission's approach to assessing compliance from 1 July 2019.

For each requirement outlined in the Quality Standards, the Commission's assessment teams will be expecting the service to demonstrate that they:

- understand the requirement
- apply the requirement, and this is clear in the way they provide care and services
- monitor how they are applying the requirement and the outcomes they achieve, and
- review outcomes and adjust their practices based on these reviews to keep improving.

The Commission's assessment teams will consider evidence primarily collected through observations, interviews with consumers and staff, and review of documents during a site visit. They will also consider information from sources such as your self-assessment, consumers, complaints and relevant authorities.

## Charter of Aged Care Rights

From 1 July 2019, a new single Charter of Aged Care Rights (the Charter) will replace previous Aged Care Rights Charters. Under the User Rights Amendment (Charter of Aged Care Rights) Principles 2019, providers are responsible for helping consumers to understand the new Charter.

Providers must give consumers a copy, signed by the provider, of the new Charter. They must ensure that the consumer or their authorised person has been given a reasonable opportunity to sign a copy of the Charter. As an approved provider, you must keep a record of the copy of the Charter of Aged Care Rights given to each consumer.

For more information including transition arrangements, visit the **Charter of Aged Care Rights** page on the Commission website.

## Closing comments

I also refer you to the **Department of Health's** website to keep up to date on other important aged care reforms which come into effect from 1 July 2019 and complement the new Quality Standards and Charter of Aged Care Rights.

I strongly encourage every provider to closely consider the opportunities these important reforms bring to deliver person-centred care that delivers improved outcomes for consumers.

If each of us - provider and regulator - in our respective roles, gives the necessary time and effort to ensuring successful implementation of these significant reforms, we will not only deliver better experiences and outcomes for aged care consumers but also boost the trust and confidence that older Australians are entitled to have in the quality and safety of their aged care services.

Yours sincerely

*J. M. Anderson*

Janet Anderson PSM  
Commissioner  
16 April 2019