

Regulatory Strategy

2025-26

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Australian Government
Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission

Engage
Empower
Safeguard



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Commissioner's Foreword

It is a privilege to present the Regulatory Strategy 2025–26 (Regulatory Strategy). It is the first we have issued since I was appointed as Commissioner, and the first under the *Aged Care Act 2024* (new Act).

This Regulatory Strategy explains what older people and their families and supporters, aged care providers and aged care workers can expect from the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission as a regulator, and what we expect of the sector we regulate. At its heart it is a commitment to be consistent, open and honest in all areas of our work.

This Strategy builds on the strong foundations of the Regulatory Strategy 2024–25. It explains how we will safeguard the rights, safety, health and wellbeing of older people while supporting providers and workers to deliver safe, high-quality and person-centred care under the new legislative framework.

The new Act is a once-in-a-generation reform that strengthens the rights of older people. It sets clear expectations for providers and the Commission as the independent regulator. It defines the rights of older people and sets clearer obligations for providers and responsible persons.

At the centre of the new Act is a Statement of Rights for older people receiving aged care that we will promote and uphold as we regulate. We will support these rights in all aspects of our work, from education and engagement to complaints, monitoring and compliance. We will keep promoting these rights so that older people, their families, workers and providers understand what they mean in practice.

I recognise that reforms of this scale bring significant change for the aged care sector. For many providers, the new Act introduces new or changed requirements for how they deliver funded aged care services. This fact was acknowledged by the Minister for Aged Care and Seniors the Hon. Sam Rae MP, in his [Statement of Expectations](#) of the Commission.

As I wrote in my [Statement of Intent](#), we will always put the rights, safety and wellbeing of older people at the centre of our decision-making and actions. If providers, responsible persons and aged care workers are using their best efforts and are committed to



complying with their obligations, and risks to older people are being effectively managed, we will support them to improve. We will work with the sector to promote best practice, and provide clear guidance, education and practical support to help providers and workers understand and meet their obligations under the new Act.

We recognise that lasting change is built on trusted partnerships. This Regulatory Strategy shows our commitment to developing these partnerships – working with providers, workers and older people to encourage trust, accountability and improvement across the sector. Critically, we are committed to building stronger partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, communities and older people.

As we move forward under the new Act, building on the progress we have made since we were established, we do so with shared purpose, commitment and confidence in a stronger, safer aged care sector.

Together, we will continue to learn, adapt and improve, and make sure that older people’s rights, dignity and wellbeing stay at the heart of aged care in Australia.



Liz Hefren-Webb
Aged Care Quality and
Safety Commissioner



Complaints Commissioner's Foreword

In the Final Report of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, the Royal Commissioners recommended the statutory appointment of a Complaints Commissioner within the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (the Commission) to provide dedicated, person-centred oversight of complaints and concerns in relation to aged care services. The Royal Commissioners acknowledged the important work of the Commission in ensuring aged care providers comply with their obligations, but identified that complaints handling should have a different focus – the older person – and the primacy of this purpose would be supported by an independent Complaints Commissioner.

The Aged Care Act 2024 (the Act) has established an independent Complaints Commissioner as a statutory appointment within the Commission, and I am privileged to be writing to you as the inaugural appointee. My role, as envisaged by the Royal Commissioners, is to uphold the rights of older people by making sure their concerns and feedback are heard, understood, and responded to in a way that is meaningful and restorative for the older person, their family, carer or kin.

The way the Commission manages and responds to complaints has evolved since the Royal Commission made their recommendations, and I intend to continue to build our capability to achieve meaningful outcomes for older people with concerns or issues relating to their aged care services. We will also work to build the capability of registered providers to develop a culture that uses complaints to support learning and innovation, and drives improvements to service delivery.

Even acknowledging the good work done to date, older people continue to tell us about the issues they face in accessing quality, safe and respectful care. In residential settings, these include issues relating to medication, falls prevention, staffing and hygiene care. In the home and community, the top issues we hear about from older people are related to poor communication, fees and charges, care coordination/case management, and the management of people's finances.

The establishment of a Statement of Rights for aged care presents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to change the way the Commonwealth aged care system operates. The



Statement of Rights sets out what older people can expect when accessing aged care, and recognises that every older person has the right to be safe, to live with dignity and respect, to have their voices heard, and to participate in decisions about their care and services.

The new Act also introduces some changes to the way complaints are dealt with by the Commission. This includes:

- expanding the Commission’s role to deal directly with complaints about workers
- providing the Commission with new powers to resolve complaints
- requiring the Commission to seek feedback on the way complaints are managed
- whistle-blower protections for people who raise concerns with us
- legislated timeframes for dealing with complaints, and
- requiring that our processes promote the use of restorative practices where appropriate.

These changes will strengthen our ability to resolve complaints and reach meaningful outcomes for those involved, as well as support genuine partnerships between older people and their families, carers or kin, providers and workers. By prioritising confidentiality, restorative engagement and openness in our complaints processes, we will increasingly resolve issues in ways that rebuild trust and repair relationships, support continuous improvement and deliver lasting outcomes.

Much has been achieved since the Royal Commission, and there is still much more to do. By building a culture in aged care that uses complaints to drive continuous improvement across the sector, we can deliver on the promise of the new Act to put older people first and empower them to live active, self-determined and meaningful lives. I look forward to contributing to this transformation; one that restores trust, improves care, and truly places older people at the centre of the aged care system.



Treasure Jennings
Aged Care Complaints
Commissioner



1. Our regulatory purpose

1.1. Governance of the aged care system

The Australian Government-funded aged care system is jointly governed by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commissioner (Commissioner), the Complaints Commissioner, and the Secretary of the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing (Department). The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (Commission) assists the Commissioner and Complaints Commissioner to perform their functions.

The Department and Commission govern the aged care system in collaboration, to support a transparent and sustainable aged care system which delivers high quality care and services for older people. To understand and support the sector, we use consultative forums to listen to older people and their supporters, providers, workers, peak and sector bodies. We ask for feedback and discuss emerging issues, including how we respond to non-compliance.

A [Memorandum of Understanding](#) supports our relationship with the Department. It explains our commitment to working together through joint stewardship and how we share information to uphold the rights of older people and support the sector.

Where appropriate we coordinate and align our regulatory approach with other care and support sectors to support better outcomes for older people. This includes seeking alignment with and cooperation from:

- [NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission](#)
- [Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care](#)
- [Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency](#)
- [Fair Work Ombudsman](#)
- State and Territory Coroners and Police, and
- [State and Territory health complaint entities](#).

As partners in the governance of the aged care system, we remain accountable to the Minister for Aged Care and Seniors, the [Aged Care Quality and Safety Advisory Council](#) and the [Inspector-General of Aged Care](#).



Our legislative and self-initiated reporting informs government about emerging trends, issues or risks relating to the Health, Disability and Ageing portfolio.

1.2. Functions of the Commission

The Commission, Commissioner and Complaints Commissioner all have functions given to them under the [Aged Care Act 2024](#) (the Act). These functions give the Commissioners the authority to regulate the provision of aged care services and deliver government's strategic priorities for the aged care system. The function of the Commission is to assist the Commissioner and Complaints Commissioner in the performance of their respective functions under the Act. The Commissioners' functions include:

- **Safeguarding functions** to uphold the rights of older people and protect and enhance their safety, health, wellbeing and quality of life. We promote continuous improvement to build confidence and trust in the aged care system. We hold providers accountable for meeting their obligations. We deal with disclosures and serious incidents, risk-based monitoring, managing non-compliance and taking enforcement action. We protect continuity of care by monitoring providers' financial viability and sustainability and proactively managing financial risks.
- **Engagement and education functions** to learn from older people and build the capability of the aged care sector. We listen to the experiences of older people, developing and promoting best practice models for how older people, providers and workers engage with each other, and educating providers and workers and keeping older people and others informed on their rights and obligations.
- **Registration of providers functions** to manage who enters the funded aged care market and how they participate in the aged care system. We register providers to deliver aged care, and vary, suspend or revoke registration where providers do not have the capability, commitment or capacity to comply with their obligations and deliver quality and safe care.

The Complaints Commissioner has the **complaints functions**, which include:

- upholding the rights of older people and resolving their complaints or concerns with meaningful, restorative outcomes



- dealing with complaints and feedback about providers and workers
- helping older people and their supporters to make complaints and give feedback (including by working with independent aged care advocates), and
- promoting best-practice complaint handling to build a culture of continuous improvement and open disclosure across the aged care sector.

1.3. Expectations of the Commission

We are a rights-based, risk-led regulator focused on ensuring the safety, dignity and wellbeing of every older person accessing funded aged care services. This means the rights of older people are at the centre of everything we do, focussing our attention on issues that present the most risk to older people.

You can expect the Commission to take an approach to regulation that promotes the development of a sustainable, resilient and trusted aged care system. We want to see providers upholding the rights of older people, being proactive and innovative in the care they provide, and supporting a skilled and caring workforce.

The [Statement of Principles](#) shapes how we perform our functions and regulate an aged care system that puts the safety and quality of care for older people first, recognises their rights and supports them to be autonomous and self-determined. You can expect us to:

- use these principles to guide the performance of our functions by strengthening provider capability, supporting trained and qualified workers, promoting innovation and driving continuous improvement towards high quality care
- listen to older people, providers and workers to understand the realities of delivering funded aged care services and the experience of receiving those services
- use complaints and feedback to drive continuous improvement, and support innovation by identifying best practice models and promoting them across the aged care sector
- be fair, balanced and effective in our actions, and follow best-practice [regulatory principles](#).

We are objective and transparent when we engage with older people, providers and workers and are committed to our [Service Charter](#). You can expect our decisions to be



consistent, outcome-focused and evidence-based, and that we will be timely and proportionate in our responses to the risks faced by older people.

As part of the Australian Government, we are accountable to the Parliament of Australia and the public through the Minister for Aged Care and Seniors. The expectations placed on the Commission by the Minister are clearly laid out in the Minister's [Statement of Expectations](#), and we are held accountable for our performance through ongoing reporting and transparency obligations (see [Chapter 4 – Governance and accountability](#)).

1.4. Expectations of the sector

We expect the aged care sector to use their aged care funding to deliver rights-based, safe, person-centred, quality care through a skilled and sustainable aged care workforce.

Providers must:

- screen, recruit, train, support and retain a skilled and dedicated workforce. We expect them to engage, listen to, educate and learn from their workers
- listen to older people about the care they want and receive and empower them to assert their rights
- show us they are willing and able to comply with their obligations
- continuously aim to deliver high quality care.

When things go wrong, we expect providers to:

- proactively **remedy** non-compliance
- be open with and listen to older people to **restore** their trust in the care they are receiving
- take steps to **prevent** non-compliance from happening again.



Responsible persons must lead their organisations in a way that prioritises the rights and interests of older people and we expect them to understand and proactively control risks relevant to their operations and drive a culture of continuous improvement through effective governance and leadership.

Aged care workers deliver a great care experience when they support older people to maintain their dignity and autonomy. We expect workers to take a person-centred, trauma-informed approach that recognises the diversity and different social, cultural and clinical needs of older people. We expect them to follow the [Code of Conduct](#), deliver rights-based care and speak up when they know providers are not meeting their obligations, or the health and safety of older people is at risk.

Digital platform operators are many people's starting point in the aged care system. We expect them to diligently check providers and workers presented on their platform, to publish transparent and accurate information to help older people make informed choices and comply with their reporting and record-keeping obligations.

1.5. Commitment to the public

Older people deserve an aged care system that:

- they can trust



- upholds their rights
- treats them with dignity and respect
- is sustainable
- is value for money.

Everyone should feel confident that when they need aged care, their rights and needs will be respected, and they will be treated as a unique individual.

Our commitment to the public is that we are working to create an aged care system that people can trust by:

- regulating the aged care sector in a targeted, responsive and proportionate way
- supporting innovation and driving continuous improvement
- building a transparent and sustainable aged care system that puts older people first.

Older people should be confident that every provider we have registered is suitable to deliver aged care. We recognise providers that are getting it right, share knowledge with other providers, and encourage continuous improvement towards high quality care. We will supervise and support providers when they need to improve how they deliver safe and quality care. When they cannot show us they are suitable to deliver funded aged care services, we will remove them from the sector.

Older people should feel confident that [they will be listened to](#) when they speak up about care that is unsafe or does not meet their needs. When we find care that does not meet our expectations, we:

- work to understand what has caused the issue and how to fix it
- engage with everyone involved to find a meaningful resolution and restore trust.

If providers or workers are not delivering safe and quality care, we will seek assurance beyond our usual monitoring that they are willing and able to meet their obligations. We do not accept significant risks to the health, safety, well-being or quality of life of older people. We will restrict or remove providers, responsible persons or workers from the aged care market if they are unwilling or unable to comply with their obligations, or pose an unacceptable risk to older people.



2. Our regulatory priorities

Our regulatory priorities are to:

- protect older people receiving funded aged care services
- drive continuous improvement in the aged care sector
- build public confidence and trust in the aged care system.

These priorities shape how we meet our regulatory purpose, perform our functions and make our decisions.

2.1. Protecting older people

The aged care system should:

- protect older people at increased risk of harm who cannot advocate for themselves
- support older people in their decisions and to maintain their independence.

We regulate in a way that is led by, and in proportion to, risk to older people. We protect older people through **prevention** and our **response** to risk.

Through **prevention** we use data and regulatory intelligence to identify risks early. We then engage with the sector through regulatory campaigns to address risks or patterns of under-performance across the sector. We can target our campaigns and monitoring to build sector capability and improve providers' performance.

Through **response** we find risks to older people or failures in care during surveillance of providers and workers. We base our response to risk on our [Supervision Model](#) which:

- assesses a provider's ability to manage risk
- adjusts the intensity of our engagement to match the risk.

If a provider cannot show they are effectively managing risks or non-compliance, we increase our monitoring and supervision. We can use our powers to make them change their behaviour and deliver quality and safe care. The Supervision Model allows us to use our influence and legislated powers to achieve better outcomes for older people quickly.



We have a range of regulatory tools to encourage or compel providers or workers to change their behaviour. Usually, we support them to comply with their obligations. But we have a low tolerance for providers or workers that are unwilling to mitigate risk, or respond poorly to our support. If we find serious or systemic failures, we can take enforcement actions, including fines or court orders. If a provider or worker's participation in the aged care system causes ongoing or significant risks to older people, we can take immediate action to remove them from the sector and ban them from delivering funded aged care services.

2.2. Continuous improvement

A successful aged care sector not only protects the safety, health, wellbeing and quality of life of older people, but continuously aims for high quality care. High quality care means putting older people first and upholding their rights under the [Statement of Rights](#). The Commission is committed to continuously improving the way we deal with risks across the sector by listening and learning from older people, their supporters and the regulated community.

All providers have an obligation to show they are committed to continuously improving to provide high quality care. This involves:



- listening to older people as unique individuals with different care needs
- engaging with workers on what a great care experience means
- finding the root cause of serious incidents and complaints and making meaningful changes to prevent them from happening again
- restoring the trust and confidence of people receiving care when things go wrong.

We recognise residential providers who show their commitment to high quality care by awarding them an 'exceeding' audit grade. The exceeding grade celebrates residential care homes that go beyond just complying with their obligations. It encourages them to keep delivering excellent care as an example for the sector. We work with the Department to also recognise these providers through [Star Ratings](#) which are published on [My Aged Care](#).



Commission conformance outcomes

My Aged Care compliance rating

	Exceeding	
	Conforming	
	Minor non-conformance	
	Major non-conformance	

2.3. Public confidence and trust

Public confidence and trust in the aged care system begins with who is allowed to enter and participate in the government-funded aged care market. Through our [registration functions](#), we decide who enters the aged care market, and the conditions under which they enter. We will be rigorous when we register organisations and people by testing their commitment, capability and capacity to deliver funded aged care services.

For older people to have confidence in funded aged care services, they must trust that we will monitor providers and workers. We do this through our safeguarding functions. This includes monitoring providers' and workers' compliance with their obligations, including:

- [Aged Care Code of Conduct](#)
- [Aged Care Quality Standards](#)



- upholding the rights of older people under the Statement of Rights.

We also monitor the financial viability of providers so older people are confident the sector is sustainable and that they will receive continuity of care. We work with providers and the Department to manage financial risk through the [Financial and Prudential Standards](#).

Trust is built through transparent, respectful relationships. All providers have an obligation to have transparent, accessible, and responsive complaints and incident management systems. These systems must include older people and those supporting them in the resolution process, especially when things go wrong. Providers are accountable for these systems and how effective they are. At the same time, we build the trust and confidence of providers in the Commission through being consistent, transparent and fair in our regulatory approach.

Older people, aged care workers and others should feel confident they can raise any issues or concerns with providers. If we find people are victimised or face negative consequences for raising their concerns, this can be a breach of the [whistle-blower protections](#). We will take strong action against those responsible in line with our Managing Whistleblower Disclosures policy.

We build trust and confidence by being transparent and accountable about how we and the sector are performing. We do this by publishing:

- [sector performance and insights reports](#)
- [annual reports](#) on our own performance,
- our [policies and guidance materials](#).

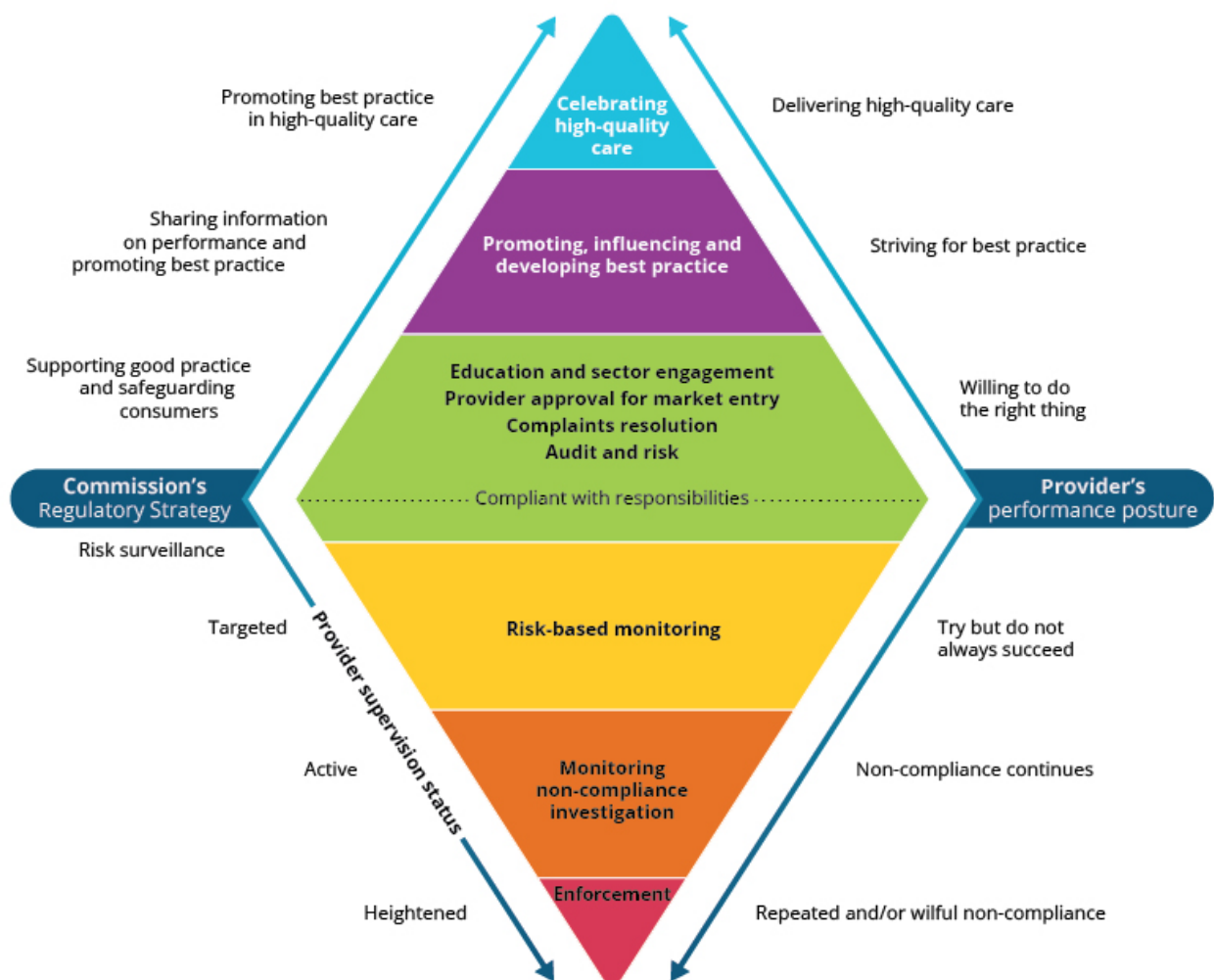


3. Our regulatory approach

Our regulatory approach describes how we will perform our functions and achieve our priorities. Our regulatory approach:

- is rights-based
- is risk-led and proportionate, and
- collaborates and partners with the aged care sector to get better outcomes for older people

Aged care regulatory diamond





The regulatory diamond is a summary of our approach. When providers are willing to do the right thing and strive for best practice, we support them to continuously improve and celebrate the delivery of high-quality care. When providers are not complying with their obligations and are not willing to change, we use our Supervision Model to coordinate monitoring, compliance and enforcement to encourage or compel them to improve. We can also take action against aged care workers if we have evidence they have not complied with their obligations.

3.1. Rights-based

Protecting older people involves recognising that every person is unique, with different aspirations, goals and needs. Older people must be afforded the dignity to take personal risks and make choices for themselves, just like anyone else. This does not reduce or limit their entitlement to quality and safe care, whatever their ability or level of autonomy.

We are careful not to limit older people's autonomy by making assumptions about their ability; where they cannot advocate for themselves, we respect older people's right to express whatever wishes and preferences they can and rely on supported decision-making to fill in any gaps.

The aged care system is designed to uphold the rights of older people under the Statement of Rights. This includes their right to:

- independence, autonomy, empowerment and freedom of choice
- equitable access
- quality and safe funded aged care services
- respect for privacy and information
- person-centred communication and the ability to raise issues without reprisal
- advocates, significant persons and social connections.

Rights are central to how we regulate the aged care sector and shape our approach. But rights mean different things to people as they age and their needs change. We know older people have spent a lifetime planning, organising and managing their own lives. When they start receiving care, we respect their autonomy by listening to them and empowering them to exercise their rights and make their own choices. If they cannot do this on their own, we



will work with their preferred supporters, including facilitating access to an independent aged care advocate.

We expect providers to:

- work in partnership with older people to meet their needs, choices and preferences
- respect older people's identity
- treat older people with dignity across all aspects of their aged care experience
- inform older people and supporters about the Statement of Rights and facilitate access to independent aged care advocates to support complaints resolution processes.

Complaints

Providers' complaints systems need to be based on the principle of restorative engagement. Restorative outcomes achieved through the complaints process may include:

- an apology
- committing to better communication
- fixing the problem, engaging with the complainant and keeping them informed
- reimbursement where fees and charges have been unlawfully applied
- staff education and training to improve staff skills
- improvements in service delivery to older people.

A provider's complaints system also needs to embed open disclosure. Open disclosure is the open discussion that providers have with complainants when something goes wrong that has harmed or had the potential to cause harm to an older person. Open disclosure also requires providers to address any immediate needs or concerns and provide support, apologise and explain the steps the provider has taken to prevent it happening again. Open disclosure may also involve the older person's family, carers, and other support people and representatives when a person would like them to be involved.

When older people are prevented from exercising their rights, we can encourage or compel providers to comply with their obligations. Our focus is always on supporting the rights of older people, protecting the quality and safety of their care and improving their care experience.



Anyone can [make a complaint](#) to the Commission, via a phone call, the form on our website, in writing or in person (for example by discussing concerns when we are on-site at a service). Each complaint is triaged, and a plan is developed to manage the complaint. When we receive a complaint, our aim is to support the older person's choices and prioritise their rights such as independence, autonomy and privacy. We will work with complainants, older people, providers and workers to remedy issues and restore trust and confidence between older people and those delivering care, focused on achieving meaningful and sustainable outcomes.

Resolution of a complaint may involve:

- further discussion with the complainant (and the older person where someone is complaining on the older person's behalf)
- seeking information from the provider and discussions or requests for information or documents
- requiring the provider to resolve any issues and report back to the Commission
- facilitated meetings which seek restorative outcomes for older people
- a site visit to the service, which may be part of an investigation that we have launched based on complaints information and/or other information we gather about services and providers.

By dealing with complaints and feedback in a way that is person-centred, timely, easy to use, and encourages restorative practices and open disclosure, we rebuild trust between complainants, providers and workers.

For more information on the Commission's approach to dealing with complaints, see our [Complaints Handling Policy](#).

3.2. Risk-led and proportionate

We take a risk-led and proportionate approach to regulation. This means we focus on preventing issues that have a high risk of harm and respond where harm has already happened. The regulatory actions we take are in proportion to the level of risk faced by older people.

We have our 'eyes on' all providers and workers through risk surveillance. Every time we engage with older people, providers, people delivering care, independent aged care



advocates and other agencies we develop regulatory intelligence. By analysing regulatory intelligence, we build risk-profiles to help us find providers or workers who require additional oversight. Risk-profiles help us to target our efforts, meaning we are not imposing an additional burden on providers or workers that are doing the right thing.

Daily sources of intelligence give us real-time visibility of risks and issues as they happen. Quarterly and annual sources help us understand themes and trends from providers, and sector-wide or systemic risks. We focus information and data collection to confirm or better understand if a trend signifies provider, worker or sector-wide risks.

Daily

- Enquiries and feedback
- Complaints
- Worker concerns
- Reportable incidents
- Media

Quarterly

- Financial
- Staffing
- Food and nutrition
- Quality Indicators (e.g. pressure injuries, physical restraint, unplanned weight loss, falls and major injury, medication management, activities of daily living, incontinence care, hospitalisation, workforce, consumer experience, quality of life)

Annually

- Financial statements
- Prudential compliance statement
- Consumer experience interviews
- Provider governance and operations information
- Provider governing body statement

As required

- Site audits
- Risk based monitoring
- Material changes
- Referrals from other agencies
- Research and publications



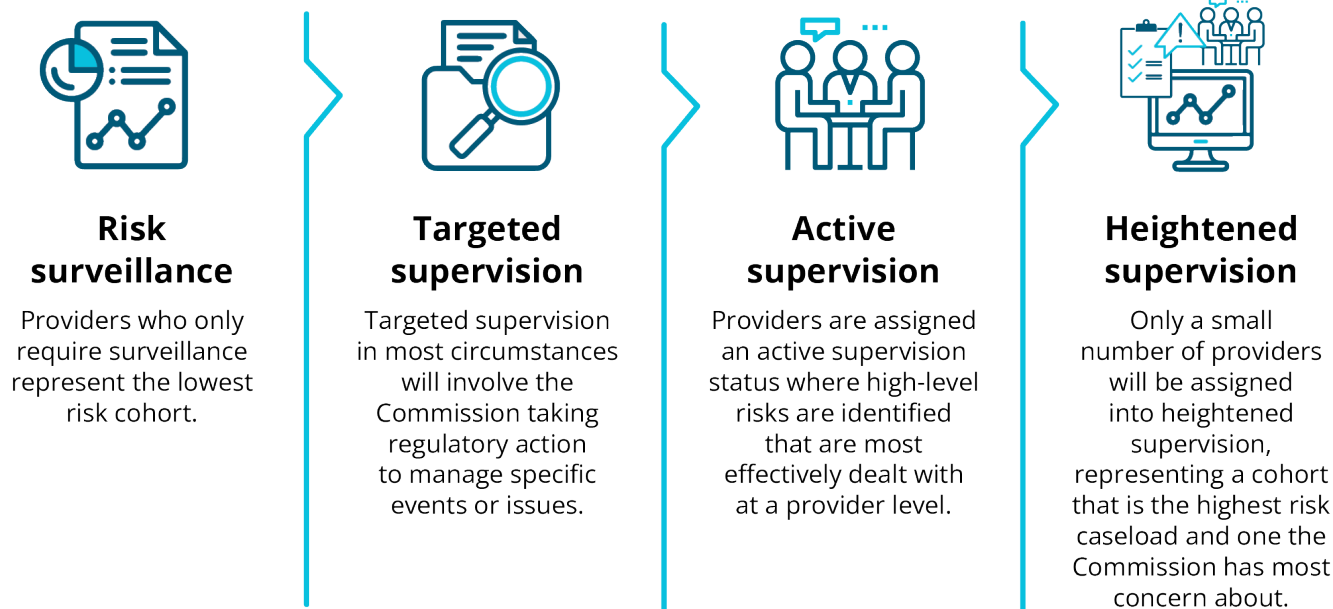
When we find risks, we engage with providers through our Supervision Model. This helps us take a proportionate approach to how we regulate as we can adjust the intensity of our engagement based on the nature of the risk or harms to older people, and how well



providers are managing these risks themselves. As the risk increases, or our confidence in the provider's ability to manage the risks decreases, we assign them a higher supervision status and increase our oversight of their operations.

The 4 levels of increasingly intense supervision are:

- risk surveillance
- targeted supervision
- active supervision
- heightened supervision.



We will tell providers when their level of supervision changes to active or heightened. Supervision status can change at any time based on information we have, the level of risk and the provider's ability and willingness to manage that risk.

Providers are required to ensure their aged care workers are complying with their obligations. If we find risks relating to the behaviour of an aged care worker, we may engage with them directly or engage with their registered provider (or both).



When we respond to a risk or an issue, we have a range of monitoring, compliance and enforcement actions we can take following our [Compliance and Enforcement Policy](#). Our actions depend on the nature of the risk to older people, and how willing and able the provider or worker are to manage the risk themselves. If they are managing the risk well and can demonstrate an ongoing commitment to complying with their obligations, we will support them to improve and manage the risks through ongoing regulatory engagement. If they are repeatedly or wilfully non-compliant or are putting older people at risk, we will compel (force) them to change their behaviour. We may also seek penalties to deter similar behaviour in the future or seek compensation on behalf of affected older people where serious failure in the providers conduct causing serious injury or illness.



Monitoring

- Targeted enquiries
- Inspections
- Reviews
- Investigations



Compliance

- Requirements to take certain specified actions
- Compliance notices
- Enforceable undertaking
- Conditions of registration
- Suspension
- Injunctions



Enforcement

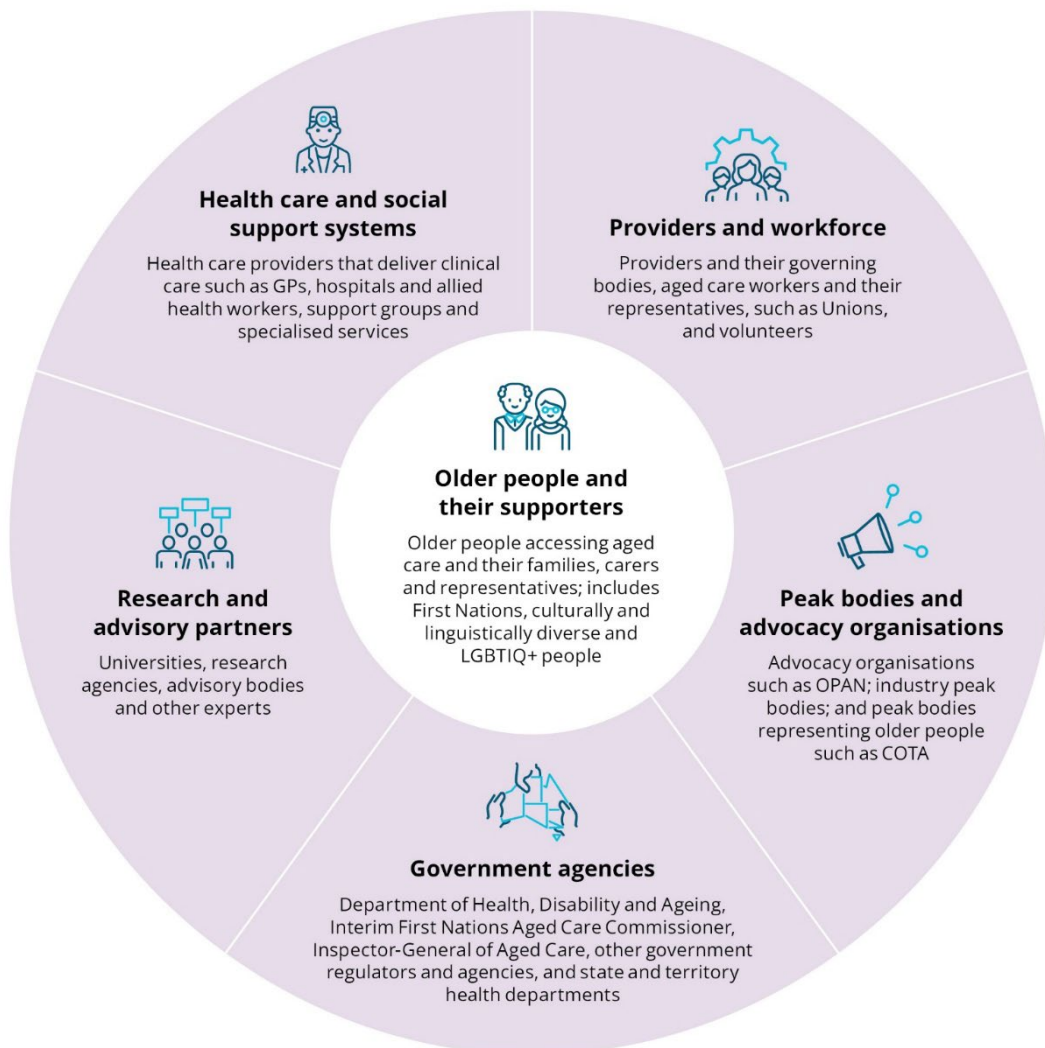
- Infringement notices
- Removing registration categories
- Removing residential care homes
- Court orders including penalties and compensation
- Revocation
- Banning orders



3.3. Collaboration and partnerships

We are a partner in rights-based care and collaborate with stakeholders to safeguard older people and improve the aged care system. A rights-based aged care sector is built on listening, learning and collaboration. It is built on partnerships with older people and their supporters, providers, workers, peak bodies, health care providers, researchers and training organisations. We know everyone involved in receiving and delivering funded aged care services has an important point of view and role in upholding the rights of older people and continuously improving the sector.

Commission stakeholders





Every conversation we have, action we take and decision we make is an opportunity to listen to older people and their supporters. This helps us understand what is important to them, what they need from us and how we can improve their care experience.

We do this when we deal with complaints and as part of our audit, monitoring and compliance activities. We listen to older people and their supporters through our [Consumers and Families Panel](#) and in our engagements with groups that represent older people receiving aged care services and their supporters such as the [Older Persons Advocacy Network](#) and [Council on the Ageing](#). We also consult and collaborate with peak bodies representing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) and LGBTIQ+ communities, and other stakeholders, through our [Commission Consultation Forum](#).

We recognise the important role we can play in making sure that culturally appropriate and safe aged care is delivered to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander older people, and that we need to support First Nations providers to engage with us as the regulator. We partner with a range of First Nations peak bodies and work with our First Nations Reference Group to develop [resources](#) that are meaningful and culturally appropriate, and accessible for everyone.

We partner with providers to support them to deliver rights-based care. Building relationships with leaders and engaging with peak bodies helps us to deliver targeted communication and education products and services. These relationships also assist the Commission and the sector to tackle challenges by sharing knowledge, intelligence and insights and by promoting innovative solutions and better practice where we see it.

We also ask for feedback on our resources and guidance through the [provider engagement register](#).

We engage with aged care workers and their representatives to learn about the quality and safety of care, and issues affecting workers. Ways that workers can engage with us include making a complaint or giving us feedback about a provider or other aged care workers. Our audits of providers always include interviews with a sample of their workers, and we may also engage with workers as part of our other monitoring activities. We also ask for



feedback from workers through our [aged care worker engagement register](#). This gives us valuable insights on our policies, resources and education.

Our partnerships with other government agencies and regulators help us share information and collaboratively manage risks to people experiencing increased vulnerability. These arrangements have been formalised with partners across the care and support sector through [Memoranda of Understanding](#).

We work with the Department to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the regulatory framework. We will use the outcomes of these evaluation processes to drive continuous improvement in the aged care system by identifying opportunities to refine the regulatory framework and building the capability of providers, responsible persons and aged care workers.

Working with our Chief Clinical Advisor, we foster partnerships with universities, state and territory governments, domestic and international research institutes, advisory bodies, government research programs, communities of practice and other experts. We also sit on advisory committees for research projects and boards. This allows the Commission to support innovative, evidence-based developments in policy and best-practice in the aged care sector, driving continuous improvement and better outcomes for older people.

4. Governance and accountability

As a national regulator, we are accountable to the public through the Parliament of Australia for our performance.

We must meet performance, transparency and reporting obligations. These are set out in the [Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013](#) and the Aged Care Act. We report our performance through our [Corporate Plan](#) and [Annual Report](#) to the Minister for Aged Care and Seniors, and to the Minister for Finance.

The Complaints Commissioner also has specific reporting obligations. These include an annual report about their complaints functions, and an in-depth account of complaints operations directly to the Minister.



Integrity is embedded into every aspect of our operations and central to our regulatory culture. Our integrity framework consists of:

- policies and procedures in line with the [Australian Public Service Code of Conduct](#)
- support and guidance for decision-makers
- evidence-based risk identification
- internal review and reconsideration for [providers, workers](#) and [anyone who makes a complaint](#).

We actively ask for feedback and welcome complaints about our operations. They are an opportunity for continuous improvement and to be more transparent and accountable. Anyone can raise a [complaint or offer feedback about our services](#) and the decisions we make. People can also make complaints to the [Commonwealth Ombudsman](#) about administrative actions we make. The Ombudsman can make findings that our actions were wrong, unjust, unlawful, discriminatory or unfair, but cannot unmake or remake our decisions.

We continuously improve our transparency through publishing:

- [annual reports](#)
- [policies](#)
- [sector performance reports](#)
- [compliance management insight reports](#)
- [serious incident response scheme insight reports](#).

We are transparent about how we regulate, what guides our decisions and how we are performing. We build trust and confidence in our role by:

- being open to external scrutiny
- [undertaking quality assurance](#)
- focusing on consistency and fairness in how we make our decisions



Appendix: Key resources

The Commission is continuing to publish more resources about the new regulatory framework under the *Aged Care Act 2024*. Links will be added and updated on this page as new materials are added.

Website resources

- [Code of Conduct for Aged Care resources](#)
- [Consumers and Families Panel](#)
- [First Nations hub](#)
- [Quality Standards Resource Centre](#)
- [Resource library](#)

Website links

- [Sector performance reports](#)
- [SIRS insights reports](#)
- [Regulatory bulletins](#)
- [Quality Bulletins](#)



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