



Dear Approved Provider

I am writing about your responsibilities to prepare for emergency events, and to underscore the importance of planning to reduce the impact of these events and to enable you to respond quickly and decisively when they occur.

Emergency events are likely to present high risks for aged care services, particularly when accompanied by:

- a requirement for short notice evacuation of services
- staff shortages if staff are unable to travel to work due to impassable roads and/or their own personal circumstances
- critical infrastructure issues including power outages and information and communication system failures
- restricted access to essential supplies.

Preparing and planning for emergency events can lessen the impact on consumers and staff, especially in geographical areas that are prone to natural disasters. All approved providers of aged care services must have effective plans to manage emergency events. This is particularly critical for providers of residential aged care services as consumers are likely to have higher care needs. Consumers of home services living alone in the community may also be more vulnerable. Providers are encouraged to consider the continuity of care and support for these individuals.

The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission continues regulatory surveillance of approved providers' preparation for emergency events through our assessment and monitoring processes. The Aged Care Quality Standards require approved providers to demonstrate effective risk management systems and practices including the management of high-impact risk associated with the care of consumers (Standard 3 and Standard 8).

The [Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care](#) has published several resources to assist service continuity and provide guidance to approved providers in preparing for emergencies, including links to Bureau of Meteorology advice and state and territory emergency services specifications.

As we move towards summer and the holiday season, I encourage all approved providers to familiarise yourselves with relevant state or territory and local government emergency management arrangements as part of your preparation.

The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), in partnership with the Department of Health and Aged Care and the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission, is hosting an important briefing on the seasonal outlook, risks and preparedness relevant to aged care homes and flexible aged care services.

The webinar will be held on **Friday 28 October 2022 from 1:00pm – 3:00pm AEDT.**

The webinar will be held via MS Teams. If you are interested, please record the date and time in your calendar.

To join from a personal device or computer:

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 486 260 362 859

Passcode: MU8HGD

[Download Teams | Join on the web](#)

To join by phone (audio only):

Call +61 2 7208 4914 (Australia, Sydney)

Phone Conference ID: 638 850 425#

[Find a local number | Reset PIN](#)

[Learn More | Meeting options](#)

Please ensure you dial in 5-10 minutes early.

Please also draw on the additional resources available to you through the Australian Government [National Emergency Management Agency](#), and ensure that your service(s) are fully prepared and well-drilled to respond effectively in the event of an emergency.

Yours sincerely

J. M. Anderson

Janet Anderson PSM

Commissioner

24 October 2022