



Australian Government

Aged Care Quality and
Safety Commission



Workforce

Flip Guides have been designed as supplementary supports for the learning modules. The Guides include key messages and insights for your continued reflection.

Need to Know: Workforce

The aged care sector is currently undergoing major reforms aimed at driving change and enabling an aged care sector that all Australians can have confidence in, with a stronger focus on consumer-centred care.

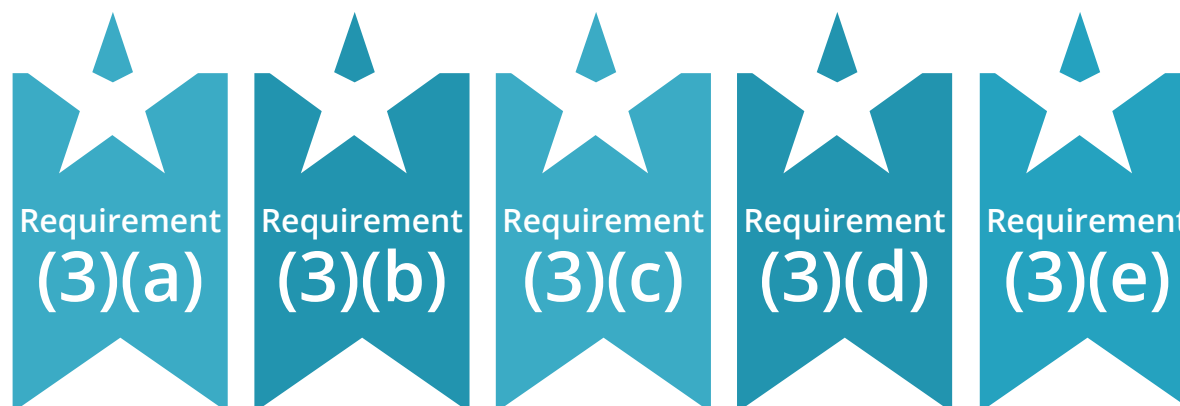
As outlined in the Aged Care Act 1997, subordinate legislation and the Aged Care Quality Standards - Standard 7 Human Resources, if the sector is going to successfully make these shifts, it will need to be supported by a capable, sustainable and consumer-centred workforce.

Role of governing body and executives: Workforce

Governing bodies and executive leaders will need to place greater emphasis on:

- Their workforce's understanding of regulatory and legislative requirements
- The identification and strategic development of skills and capabilities required of their workforce
- Understanding the needs and preferences of consumers receiving care and services and the broader community now and into the future
- Enabling their workforce to support consumer-centred care.

The Aged Care Quality Standards - Standard 7 Human Resources indicate the core requirements for provider workforces to support the reform. They are:



CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Need to Know: Workforce (continued)



Requirement (3)(a):

The workforce is planned to enable, and the number and mix of members of the workforce deployed enables, the delivery and management of safe and quality care and services.



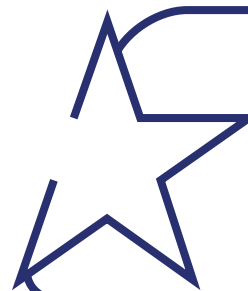
Requirement (3)(d):

The workforce is recruited, trained, equipped and supported to deliver the outcomes required by these standards.



Requirement (3)(b):

Workforce interactions with consumers are kind, caring and respectful of each consumer's identity, culture and diversity.



Requirement (3)(e):

Regular assessment, monitoring and review of the performance of each member of the workforce.



Requirement (3)(c):

The workforce is competent, and members of the workforce have the qualifications and knowledge to effectively perform their roles.

Need to Know: Workforce (continued)

As outlined in the Workforce learning module, to support the continued delivery of safe and high quality care, governing bodies and executives will need to focus on:



CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Need to Know: Workforce (continued)



01 Customer-centred care

A workforce that can support consumer-centred care

Shifting the dial from traditional organisational and top-down approaches towards service delivery approaches that are informed, designed, planned and implemented around the needs of each consumer.



02 Regulatory & legislative requirements

Workforce regulatory and legislative requirements

There are several regulatory and legislative arrangements that apply to the aged care workforce that need to be understood by governing bodies of aged care providers. Click through this Flip Guide to find further information, links and resources.



03 Skilled workforce

An appropriately skilled workforce

Governing bodies and executive leaders are responsible for ensuring their aged care provider organisation has:

- A sustainable workforce
- A workforce that has the competency, knowledge and skills to perform their roles in line with the Aged Care Quality Standards
- Appropriate systems in place to effectively review and monitor provider performance and identify areas where continuous improvement is required
- Developed a strategic recruitment and retention plan to ensure the organisation has a workforce with the appropriate skills mix to deliver high quality care outcomes to consumers.

The link between consumer-centred care and workforce

As outlined in the Consumers at the Centre of Care core module:

Consumer-centred care is care and services designed around an individual's needs, preferences and background. It includes a partnership between consumers and providers.

For governing bodies to build a culture that supports the delivery of consumer-centred care, the workforce design and skill mix, behaviours and practices of the workforce and models and tools utilised by their aged care provider organisation must also be centred around the consumer.

Have you ever asked your workforce and others...

- ☒ Management can describe the different ways the organisation involves consumers in developing, delivering and managing care and services in the spirit of co-design and can also describe how it has made a difference to their approach
- ☒ Staff can demonstrate they understand the organisation's commitment to and processes for involving consumers such as workforce recruitment and selection, retention and on-going training and performance monitoring and review.
- ☒ Staff can provide examples of how the organisation uses the results of consumer feedback to improve how they deliver care and services
- ☒ Workforce orientation, training or other records show how the workforce is supported to involve consumers and the ways members of the workforce can help consumers to be involved.

Governing bodies can work towards embedding this by focusing on:



Workforce
Skills Mix



Models and
Tools



Behaviours
and Practises

→ *Read about these focus points on the following pages.*

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

The link between consumer-centred care and workforce

Workforce Skills Mix



Governing bodies should be focusing on their organisation's future horizons and the workforce skills and capabilities required to deliver care aligned to the needs of consumers.

Governing bodies can ask of themselves:

- Have our approaches to consumer-led care flowed into our strategic workforce planning?
- If not, how can we implement this at our next governing body meeting?

Models and Tools



There are several emerging aged care models and tools that centre the workforce skill-mix, practises, and behaviours around the needs of the consumer. These include but are not limited to:

- Eden Alternative Model
- Green House Project
- The Butterfly and Dragonfly Approaches
- Namaste Care Model
- Total Resident Aged and Restorative Care Staffing and Skills Mix Model

Governing bodies can ask of themselves:

- Can some of the existing models and tools be adopted by our provider?
- What are our first steps in exploring this option?

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

The link between consumer-centred care and workforce



Behaviours and Practises

To enable a truly consumer-centred workforce, providers need to assess their organisation's current landscape and determine whether a shift is required.

Governing bodies can ask of themselves:

- Do we have clearly communicated values that place older Australians at the centre of care and services? These values are demonstrated prominently throughout the organisation and championed by leadership and staff.
- Do we have sufficient clinical and care staff to ensure quality and safe care consistent with the Aged Care Quality Standards?
- Do we have a universal, shared understanding of what high quality care looks like? Staff work to this level of care and hold colleagues (executives and staff) to account.
- Do governing body members and executives proactively engage with staff and consumers to identify potential areas of improvement to ensure older Australians continue to be placed at the centre of operations and receive high quality care?
- Are innovative ideas from consumers and workforce discussed at a governing body level?
- Are our staff and clinicians supported in proactively seeking and implementing initiatives to improve outcomes for older Australians?
- Have our leaders fostered an environment in which staff feel comfortable delivering feedback regarding continuous improvement and incident management and don't fear any adverse effects?
- Do we have easily accessible and clearly articulated policies in place?

Regulatory and Legislative Requirements: Workforce

Many workforce obligations and requirements have both **operational** and **strategic** components. Leadership and staff will have day-to-day management responsibility and accountability for these areas, and the governing body and executives will play an **oversight** role.



Reflection:

While you may be aware of your regulatory and legislative requirements at a governing body and executive leadership level, how are you as a governing body ensuring your workforce is aware and meeting their requirements both legislated and to consumers?

What initial steps could you take to implement organisation-wide awareness of regulatory and legislative requirements?

→ *Learn about the requirements on the following pages*

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Regulatory and Legislative Requirements: Workforce

01

1. Aged Care Act 1997

- a. This sets out the requirement for approved providers to comply with the Aged Care Quality Standards and the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission Act and Rules.

b. **24/7 registered nurse responsibility**

From 1 July 2023, providers must have at least one registered nurse (RN) on-site and on duty 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, at each residential facility they operate.

The **24/7 RN responsibility** reduces the risk of resident harm by ensuring qualified and experienced care staff are always available to identify and address potential risks.

The responsibility also gives residents better access to care in facilities, and:

- allows RNs to manage some issues as first responders
- improves resident safety
- prevents unnecessary trips to hospital emergency rooms.

An **exemption** from this responsibility may be granted for up to 12 months, provided the residential facility:

- is located in a Modified Monash Model (MMI) 5, 6, or 7 area
- has 30 or fewer operational places
- has appropriate clinical care

arrangements in place.

c. **The Code of Conduct for Aged Care**

Providers have responsibilities under the Aged Care Act 1997 to comply with the Code of Conduct for Aged Care (the Code) and take reasonable steps to ensure that aged care workers and governing persons comply with the Code.

The **Code of Conduct for Aged Care: Guidance for aged care workers and governing persons** describes those responsibilities, the types of conduct covered by the Code and information about what the Code means in practice.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Regulatory and Legislative Requirements: Workforce

02

2. Aged Care Quality Standards - Standard 7 Human resources

- a. Approved providers are required to meet the Aged Care Quality Standards. Standard 7 of the Aged Care Quality Standards requires an organisation to have and use a skilled and qualified workforce sufficient to deliver and manage safe, respectful, quality care and services that meet the Quality Standards.

03

3. National Registration and Accreditation Scheme

- a. This sets out registration requirements for some segments of the workforce, i.e. nursing and allied health.
- b. This also sets out requirements of notification if 'bad practise' is identified.

04

4. Fair Work Act 2009

- a. This legislation, along with any associated Modern Awards and Enterprise Agreements, set the remuneration and conditions of employment which must be met at a minimum in the workplace.

Developing a skilled and qualified workforce

Governing bodies and executive leaders are responsible for identifying and ensuring their organisation has a workforce with the skills and qualifications required to support their strategic outcomes and ultimately deliver safe and high quality care and services.

Continual assessment of the training and development needs of the workforce is required to ensure they have the **competency, knowledge and skills** needed to **perform their role**.



Some workforce risk factors for governing body members to keep an eye out for include:

- ☒ High turnover
- ☒ High rates of absenteeism
- ☒ Inability to fill shifts
- ☒ Over-reliance on overtime and agency staff
- ☒ High incidence of individual performance management issues
- ☒ Consumer or staff complaints
- ☒ Insufficient ability to recruit and retain registered nurses to meet legislative requirements

Developing a skilled and qualified workforce (continued)

A Sustainable Workforce

Take a moment to reflect on the following questions

Contemporary skills and capabilities

Recruitment, retention and succession planning

Performance monitoring and review practices are embedded to ensure ongoing quality and safety

Consider suitability of key personnel

Requirement (3)(a) under [Aged Care Quality Standard 7](#) includes a range of complex considerations which blend strategic and operational decision making and short- and longer-term considerations.

Things for governing body members to consider when developing a strategic workforce plan include:

- Workforce supply within your provider's region or area
- Workforce turnover and retirement trends in the workplace
- Management of leave and training
- Employment models and skill mix
- Management of workforce shortages in an emergency.
- Workforce issues such as: travel to the workplace, access to transport, accommodation, flexible rostering arrangements.

Developing a skilled and qualified workforce (continued)

A Sustainable Workforce

Take a moment to reflect on the following questions

Contemporary skills and capabilities

Recruitment, retention and succession planning

Performance monitoring and review practices are embedded to ensure ongoing quality and safety

Consider suitability of key personnel

- Do we have a strategic workforce plan?
- Is our organisation's workforce plan aligned to our strategic objectives and goals?
- Has it been aligned to the upcoming changes in the sector? If not, how can it be shifted?
- As a governing body, do we regularly reassess factors that affect attraction and retention of the workforce?



Developing a skilled and qualified workforce (continued)

A Sustainable Workforce

Take a moment to reflect on the following questions

Contemporary skills and capabilities

Recruitment, retention and succession planning

Performance monitoring and review practices are embedded to ensure ongoing quality and safety

Consider suitability of key personnel

Governing bodies and executive leaders should engage in skills gap analysis and continual assessment of their workforce's training and development needs to ensure they have the necessary competency, knowledge and skills needed to perform their role and deliver safe and high quality care and services.

The Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety highlighted several contemporary skilling areas that need to be demonstrated by the aged care workforce, including:

- Dementia care
- Palliative care
- Trauma-informed care
- Cultural safety
- Wound care
- Mental health
- Quality of life and wellbeing.

Please take a moment to reflect on the below:

- As a governing body member, I am aware of the skills required of our workforce to provide quality and safe care to our consumers.
- I can articulate the steps being taken to ensure our workforce has the required skills and capabilities to support the ongoing aged care reform.
- I regularly receive insights from management regarding the current skills, experience and performance of our workforce to enable myself and my governing body to make more informed decisions regarding workforce planning.
- My governing body members are aware of the different workforce segments within our organisation and their specific mandatory and contemporary training requirements.

Developing a skilled and qualified workforce (continued)

A Sustainable Workforce

Take a moment to reflect on the following questions

Contemporary skills and capabilities

Recruitment, retention and succession planning

Performance monitoring and review practices are embedded to ensure ongoing quality and safety

Consider suitability of key personnel

Recruitment, retention and succession planning are critical strategies to get right for providers. Providers should ensure that contemporary approaches are applied to attract, retain and ensure the sustainability of the workforce, which is required to provide quality and safe care to consumers.

At your next governing body meeting, please take a moment to reflect upon the below questions.

Take a moment to reflect on the below questions:

- Does our organisation have an active retention plan to retain skilled employees?

- Do we regularly discuss a targeted recruitment strategy, and can we identify and forecast the skills and workforce level required to deliver quality and safe care?
- Do we regularly review the workforce plan and recruitment plan to assess their effectiveness and be ready to adjust those plans to meet changing needs in the changing aged care environment?
- Do we have effective strategies in place to attract and retain new and existing nurses to our organisation and ensure we meet requirements to have 24/7 RNs on duty in our residential aged care service/s?

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Developing a skilled and qualified workforce (continued)

A Sustainable Workforce

Take a moment to reflect on the following questions

Contemporary skills and capabilities

Recruitment, retention and succession planning

Performance monitoring and review practices are embedded to ensure ongoing quality and safety

Consider suitability of key personnel

Performance monitoring and review is about ensuring that the mechanisms (such as systems, policies, and practice) are in place at a provider level to provide assurance that the provider is delivering care and services that meet their consumers' needs and preferences.

Take a moment to reflect on the below questions:

- Do we regularly receive insights into our organisation's performance measurement approach? Does it match and support our strategic values and culture?
- Do we have the correct feedback structure to enable our governing body members to make informed and effective decisions?

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Developing a skilled and qualified workforce (continued)

A Sustainable Workforce

Take a moment to reflect on the following questions

Contemporary skills and capabilities

Recruitment, retention and succession planning

Performance monitoring and review practices are embedded to ensure ongoing quality and safety

Consider suitability of key personnel ▶

Key personnel play a vital role in an aged care organisation and ensure the delivery of safe, quality care and services. Governing bodies must apply due diligence in gathering information and the assessment of their staff's initial and ongoing suitability. From 1 December 2022, existing providers are required to assess the suitability of their key personnel at least once a year.

Please view the [Consider suitability of key personnel - fact sheet](#) for further information about your new obligations.

Take a moment to reflect on the below questions:

- Do we keep records regarding how we consider information on suitability matters?
- What processes do we have in place to ensure new key personnel are included in the cycle of review?



Australian Government

Aged Care Quality and
Safety Commission



Additional Resources

