



Australian Government

Aged Care Quality and
Safety Commission



Data-Driven Decision Making

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: Data Driven Decision Making

Governing bodies and executive leaders in the aged care sector are subjected to incredible quantities of data, both qualitative and quantitative covering a large range of topics, including fiscal performance, clinical matters, incident management, risks, consumer feedback and many more.



When this data is utilised effectively, it can assist aged care providers in supporting:

- Consumers to make informed choices about their care
- Services to provide safe, high quality and dignified care
- Government to administer and evaluate the aged care system
- Secondary users of data (such as academic researchers) to study the aged care system.

Ineffective Data Driven Decision Making.

Organisations within and external to the aged care sector regularly utilise data ineffectively, gathering it and analysing it to no particular end, under the assumption the data itself will present the required course of action. As a consequence, when data or data insights are presented to governing body members, they may find it hard to cut through the noise and identify the important data points and therefore be unable to make effective and informed strategic decisions. Ultimately, this can negatively impact the consumer experience.

As such, it is important that aged care providers capture and analyse data, and governing bodies and executives know how to interrogate this data further, allowing for more effective oversight of day-to-day operations and progression measured against the organisation's strategic plan contributing to the provision of safe, high-quality care to consumers.

Obligations and Accountabilities: Data Collection and Usage

Whilst data can and should be used to inform decision making in the aged care sector, providers, governing bodies and executives are held to legislative requirements around the collection and usage of data. Additionally, data has been identified as essential in supporting providers in achieving the requirements of the Aged Care Quality Standards, particularly Standard 6 and Standard 8.

There are also requirements under the [National Aged Care Mandatory Quality Indicator Program \(QI Program\)](#), [Serious Incident Response Scheme \(SIRS\)](#), [Star Ratings system](#) and [clinical governance](#) responsibilities.

Legislative Requirements:

Aged care providers are held to requirements under the [Aged Care Act 1997](#), [Records Principles 2014](#) and the [Privacy Act 1988](#). Please find below a brief summary of requirements under each document.



Aged Care
Act 1997



Records
Principles 2014



Aged Care
Quality Standard
6: Feedback
and complaints



Aged Care Quality
Standard 8:
Organisational
governance



Privacy Act
1988

➔ [Read more about these requirements on the following pages](#)

Obligations and Accountabilities: Data Collection and Usage (continued)



Aged Care Act 1997

- The Act includes a requirement that providers only use personal information about a consumer for a purpose connected with the provision of care to the consumer.
- It further notes that providers must keep records in line with the requirements of the Records Principles 2014 and must comply with the User Rights Principles 2014 (which in turn give effect to the Charter of Aged Care Rights).

Protected Information

- Under the Act, there are specific definitions of protected information. These include information that was acquired under or for the purposes of the Act and:
 - Is personal information, as defined in the Privacy Act 1988
 - Relates to the affairs of an approved provider
- Any unauthorised release or misuse of protected information is a breach of the Act and can result in personal penalties of up to 2 years imprisonment.

Obligations and Accountabilities: Data Collection and Usage



Records Principles 2014

Providers must record certain information, including records about:

- Consumers
- Allegations or suspicions of reportable incidents
- The Charter of Aged Care Rights being provided to care recipients
- Service staff influenza vaccinations
- Staff members and volunteers
- Service staff.

Full record keeping requirements can be found in the [Records Principles 2014](#).



Aged Care Quality Standard 6: Feedback and complaints

[Aged Care Quality Standard 6](#), Requirement (3)(d) requires that feedback and complaints are reviewed and used to improve the quality of care and services.

This is best done through the regular review of feedback and complaints data in order to better understand trends and root causes.

Obligations and Accountabilities: Data Collection and Usage



Aged Care Quality Standard 8: Organisational governance

Aged Care Quality Standard 8,
Requirement (3)(d) requires
effective risk management systems
and practices in the management
and prevention of incidents.

These systems and processes
need to capture and allow efficient
analysis of incident and risk data
to enable a deeper understanding
of the incidents that have occurred
and inform decisions on how to
learn and improve from these in
order to deliver better outcomes
for consumers.

Obligations and Accountabilities: Data Collection and Usage



Privacy Act 1988

The [Privacy Act 1988](#) sets out the requirements and reasonable steps an organisation must take to protect personal information. There are **13 Australian Privacy Principles** (APPs) within the *Privacy Act 1988*, which all providers must meet in addition to any other state or territory privacy laws that apply.

Broadly, the APPs include requirements relating to:

- Managing personal information in a way which is open and transparent
- Maintaining anonymity and pseudonymity
- Collecting and managing solicited and unsolicited personal information
- Notification of the collection of personal information
- Using and disclosing personal information collected (including for direct marketing purposes)
- Ensuring quality of personal information (accurate, up to date and complete)
- Using government identifiers
- Maintaining the security of personal information (protection from misuse, interference, loss, unauthorised access, modification or disclosure)
- Providing access to and correction of information.

View the [Australian Privacy Principles quick reference](#) for more information on these APPs.

Please take the time to review each document in full to ensure you are aware of all provider obligations and accountabilities. More details can be found in the [Information Management online module](#).

Role of the Governing Body

There is an expectation that governing bodies not only effectively utilise data gathered by their provider to drive decision making, but also provide clear strategic guidance as to how and what data is collected by their provider. Below are a few elements for governing body members to consider.

Setting the tone

→ *How can I clearly articulate the importance of using data to provide oversight, track progress and inform deep dives into specific issues within my provider?*

→ *What is an initial step I can take to ensure my workforce understands how and is empowered to collect and utilise data effectively?*

Setting clear expectations

→ *Are my organisation's policies and procedures aligned with our strategic data collection and usage requirements?*

→ *What steps can I or my governing body take to ensure these policies are aligned and being followed at an organisational level?*

Maintaining 'natural curiosity' and 'healthy scepticism'

→ *What can I do to ensure my governing body members and I continuously maintain a healthy scepticism and curiosity of data received to ensure we can identify and delve deeper into important areas as required?*

Being mindful of overreacting to poor data results

→ *Does my governing body regularly react positively to data trends and look for opportunities for improvement?*

→ *How can we ensure our governing body's responses to poor results are measured and don't cause a shift in strategic direction for the organisation when not required?*

Using insights to inform further data capture

→ *How can we better use data analysis in governing body meetings to inform future data collection and data driven decision making?*

How to Use Data to Drive Decision Making

For a governing body to use data to drive decision making effectively, it needs to be accurate, relevant and timely.



To help with ensuring data meets the three criteria above, governing bodies should be able to answer the questions in the below cycle of data driven decision making.

→ *Read about each of each of the steps on the following pages.*



How to Use Data to Drive Decision Making (continued)

Identify:



As a governing body, identify the questions that you'd like the data to answer, for example:

- Why are we collecting this data?
- What are we trying to achieve with this data i.e. risk management, compliance, continuous improvement, consumer insights?
- What data point should we access to in order to better support our goal?

Source:



As a governing body determine the source of the data that you need, for example:

- Can it be obtained through consumer records, or is the data publicly available?
- Is our management aware of the data we require, and can they assist in sourcing the data?
- Who could we speak with to enrich the data further?

Example data sources:

- Clinical and consumer records
- Support worker records
- Registry of qualifications, skills and accreditations for support workers
- Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT) assessment interview notes
- Other external sources
- Incident and risk management reporting

How to Use Data to Drive Decision Making (continued)

Collect:



As a governing body discuss how you will collect the data that you need, for example:

- Do we only need this data once, or do we need it regularly over a period of time?
- Can any of this collection be automated?
- Do we have this data already?
- Are we allowed to ask for this data?

Manage:



Once the data has been collected, you need to ensure that you manage the data in line with your obligations and accountabilities. For example:

- How can we keep this data private and secure?
- Who should have access to this data?
- Who does this data need to be shared with?

How to Use Data to Drive Decision Making (continued)

Analyse:



As a governing body discuss:

- How you can effectively analyse the data to support your intended purpose (this may depend on the audience receiving the analysis)
- Whether the analysis has provided insights that support strategic decision making
- Whether insights suggest that ongoing data collection should occur.

Additional Resources

