



## Strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards

# Strengthened Quality Standard 4: The environment

### Provider fact sheet



#### Older person statement



**I feel safe and supported  
where I live.**

#### Worker statement



**I create a safe and  
supportive environment.**

Strengthened Quality Standard 4 is about older people receiving funded aged care services in an environment that is safe, supportive and meets their needs. It applies to registered providers in Categories 4, 5 and 6.

Strengthened Quality Standard 4 recognises the importance of clean, safe and comfortable environments that allow older people to move around freely. It prioritises good infection prevention and control (IPC) practices, which are a key part of service delivery to protect older people in care, their supporters, family, carers and staff.

You need to understand how to identify infection-related risks and options to keep providing care that meets people's needs.

In this Standard, there are no new topics or expectations.



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To understand the strengthened Quality Standards, we recommend you:

- 1 get to know the key topics in each of the strengthened Quality Standards.
- 2 think about how you apply these topics now.



You can find the key topics in the **Strengthened Quality Standards – Provider guidance**

<https://www.agedcarequality.gov.au/strengthened-quality-standards>

## What are the key topics in strengthened Quality Standard 4?

Strengthened Quality Standard 4 includes **key topics** that can be demonstrated by:

- supporting older people receiving care to feel safe in their home by identifying and reducing environmental risks relevant to services
- equipment used in the delivery of services must be safe, used for its intended purposes and meet the needs of the older person
- providing a well-maintained service environment
- designing a service environment that allows older people to move freely
- using high-quality IPC processes.

This Standard has a **strong focus** on:

- environmental risk assessment
- infection prevention and control.





## How can you demonstrate conformance with strengthened Quality Standard 4?

To show that you conform with the strengthened Quality Standards, you should review your service's systems and processes. Then look at how these are put into practice.

### **This means you should:**

- make sure you have clearly documented systems and processes
- use monitoring tools to show how workers are following these processes and find opportunities for improvement
- work with older people receiving care to understand their experience and care outcomes
- ask for feedback from your governing body, managers, aged care workers, older people you care for and others involved in the delivery of care and services.
- use feedback to improve your care and services.

### **Examples of areas you should consider for strengthened Quality Standard 4 include how your service:**

- applies strategies that make sure the environment is safe for older people receiving care and workers. You can show this within your organisation's risk management system to reduce risk and improve the person's care environment
- applies inventory management systems and maintenance plans. This makes sure older people receiving care and workers know who is responsible for maintaining equipment and aids
- trains and guides workers on how to maintain and clean equipment. You should do this to make sure workers have the knowledge and ability to maintain the services equipment.



## Reflective questions for providers

- How do you make sure this Standard's key topics are shown in the care and services you provide to older people receiving care?
- How do you work with older people receiving care to design the environment where they receive their care and services?
- How do you ask for feedback from older people receiving care to make sure they feel safe and the environment meets their needs?

### **What can you do to show that:**

- you make sure you provide care in a safe, clean and comfortable service environment that meets older people's needs and improves their sense of belonging?
- you make sure you use appropriate equipment that meets the needs of each person, it is well maintained, clean and workers know how to use it?
- you support workers by creating a service environment that is safe, supportive and meets the needs of the older people receiving care?
- you have an IPC system in place and your workers have received training and skill assessments?
- workers can identify and reduce any safety risks?
- workers are delivering care consistent with your policies and procedures?



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## Resources



Strengthened Quality Standards resources

[www.agedcarequality.gov.au/providers/quality-standards/strengthened-quality-standards](http://www.agedcarequality.gov.au/providers/quality-standards/strengthened-quality-standards)



Strengthened Quality Standards Resource Centre

[www.agedcarequality.gov.au/quality-standards-resource-centre](http://www.agedcarequality.gov.au/quality-standards-resource-centre)

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*The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission acknowledges the Traditional Owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.*

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