



# Strengthened Quality Standards Pilot Project

30 March 2023

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### Strengthening the Standards

The Aged Care Quality Standards (the [Standards](#)) are at the heart of safe and quality aged care for older Australians.

The Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety recommended a review of the Standards. In response, the Australian Government, through the Department of Health and Aged Care, [drafted a set of strengthened Quality Standards](#). This followed consultations with older people, their families and aged care providers. These strengthened standards are in line with the new In-Home Aged Care Program, currently proposed from 1 July 2024.

The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission is contributing to the revision of the Standards in our role as the national regulator of aged care services.

### The Commission's Pilot Project

The Standards provide a shared understanding of what is expected in aged care and are a valuable resource for older Australians, their families, aged care providers and people working in the sector.

The Standards should be measurable, relevant and foster a culture of continuous improvement.

The Standards also need to be practical and work across different aged care settings. To test this, a new audit methodology will be developed and piloted.

This pilot will inform:

- how we will adjust the way we assess provider performance under the strengthened Standards
- how the introduction of graded assessment outcomes can drive performance
- the support providers will need to understand and meet the strengthened Standards
- how to best support older Australians to understand the strengthened Standards and what they mean for the delivery of safe and quality aged care
- feedback to the Department regarding application of the strengthened Standards.

To assist in the implementation of the pilot project, the Commission has engaged Ernst and Young Partnership Australia (EY Australia).

## Participating in the pilot project

The pilot will involve a sample of 40 providers. These will be representative of the aged care sector, with consideration given to service type, size, location and the people receiving aged care.

The Commission invited providers to nominate to participate in the pilot. Nominations closed 17 March 2023.

EY Australia has commenced shortlisting. Providers selected to participate will be contacted by EY Australia directly throughout March and April 2023.

Providers who nominated for the pilot but were not selected to take part will be notified by the Commission. These providers will be contacted once the audit schedule is finalised.

The diagram on the right provides an overview of the pilot approach and indicative time commitment for participating providers.

It is important to note that the pilot audits are not considered regulatory activities under current legislation and will not be the basis of any compliance or accreditation decision.

However, any concerns about consumer safety or care provision identified during the pilot audits will be referred for further action by the Commission.

## Pilot outcomes

The Commission will share the outcomes of the pilot with providers. The outcomes will inform the final design of the audit methodology and development of guidance.





## Engagement with the aged care sector

Consultation and codesign will be an integral part of the development of resources for the strengthened Standards. The Commission is committed to developing resources that support the aged care sector to be prepared and confident to implement the strengthened Standards.

The pilot is the first in a series of engagement opportunities. The Commission will also be hosting webinars, workshops and other forums.

All providers, including those who nominated for the pilot but were not selected, will have plenty of other opportunities to get involved.

Providers are encouraged to regularly review our website for updates and subscribe to our social media platforms for updates and invitations to take part in consultation activities.

## Support and resource development

The Commission is committed to making sure providers understand what to expect from the Commission in its role as the national regulator.

A key part of this is ensuring access to the right tools to help providers understand their obligations and how to best evidence performance against the strengthened Standards. The Commission will work to

develop resources that will support providers to make sure they and their staff are confident in how the service will be assessed.

The Commission will consult with the sector in the development of resources including guidance documents, fact sheets and other support materials.

Feedback, suggestions and questions are encouraged and should be emailed to: [agedcarereform@agedcarequality.gov.au](mailto:agedcarereform@agedcarequality.gov.au)

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