



Stronger Standards, Better Aged Care Program

Implementing and regulating the strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards

The government is introducing a new regulatory model for aged care. The new model will ensure older people in Australia at the front and centre of regulation. It will increase protections for older people and empower them to exercise their rights. It will also better support continuous improvement in the sector.

The Aged Care Quality Standards are being strengthened as part of the proposed new regulatory model.

To help prepare providers to be ready for the strengthened Standards, we are implementing the Stronger Standards, Better Aged Care Program.

Through the program, we will help providers to understand:

- the changes in the Aged Care Quality Standards and other regulatory obligations
- how to prepare for the changes
- how the Commission will assess performance under the strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards.

Pilot project

Changes to the strengthened Standards mean we will need to change the way we assess provider performance. We are developing a revised audit methodology to assess compliance of the strengthened Standards.

As part of the program, we are piloting the revised audit methodology with 40 providers to understand how the strengthened Standards, performance assessments and audits will work in practice.

The pilot will also help us to identify the support and guidance that providers will need.

Providers participating in the pilot are representative of different care and organisation types, locations and diversity in the needs of people receiving care.

A briefing pack and further information is available on our [website](#).

When we have evaluated our learnings from the pilot we will share them with the sector.

Standards comparison

To support providers to understand the changes, we compared the draft strengthened Standards to the current Standards.

We assessed each of the 152 actions that sit under each of 7 strengthened Standards and classified these into 4 categories:

1. existing requirements are unchanged
2. obligations that currently sit elsewhere in the regulatory framework and have been moved into the strengthened Standards
3. more clarity and added detail to content of the current Standards
4. actions that are new or enhanced

Our [Strengthened Quality Standards Framework Analysis](#) report provides detailed information on our findings.

Program outline

We are committed to preparing everyone for the introduction of the strengthened Standards on 1 July 2024 and keeping that support going as needed.

The timeline on the right provides a summary of the program timeframes.

The existing Standards continue to apply until the strengthened standards are implemented.



Program timeframes - indicative

December 2022



Public consultation - strengthened Quality Standards

Consultation activities by Department



Draft strengthened Quality Standards release

Draft Standards available to ACQSC to design implementation



Design & test a new audit method

Design new audit methodology and run a pilot program with providers



Public consultation – New Regulatory Framework

Consultation activities by Department



Feedback on pilot outcomes

Feedback to Sector and Department on pilot outcomes



Design the change support

Design the transition steps and change support



New Aged Care Act

New Act passed. Final strengthened Quality Standards published



Readiness test

End to end testing of method, processes and support materials to confirm readiness



Release of guidance materials

Final guidance materials and learning resources released



Go live

Strengthened Quality Standards in place



Continued support and resources

Provide intensive support to stakeholders to embed practices



Monitor & reflect

Assess ways of working and adjust where required

October 2024



Resources

- Stronger Standards, Better Aged Care Program - agedcarequality.gov.au/about-us/stronger-standards-better-aged-care-program
- Draft strengthened Quality Standards - health.gov.au/resources/publications/strengthened-aged-care-quality-standards-pilot-program
- Strengthened Quality Standards Framework Analysis - agedcarequality.gov.au/resources/strengthened-quality-standards-framework-analysis

Your feedback and questions are welcome

We value your questions, suggestions or any feedback. You can submit them to

Email agedcarereform@agedcarequality.gov.au

Phone 1800 951 822

Post Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission, GPO Box 9819, in your capital city

Stay up to date:

Website

agedcarequality.gov.au/about-us/stronger-standards-better-aged-care-program

LinkedIn

linkedin.com/company/agedcarequality

YouTube

youtube.com/AgedCareQuality

Facebook

@AgedCareQuality

Twitter

@AgedCareQuality



agedcarequality.gov.au/about-us/stronger-standards-better-aged-care-program



Phone
1800 951 822



Web
agedcarequality.gov.au



Write
Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission
GPO Box 9819, in your capital city