

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Health and Aged Care

Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs Legislation Committee

Inquiry into the Aged Care Bill 2024 (Provisions)

03 October 2024

PDR Number: IQ24-000152

The Bill and high quality care

Written

Senator: Marielle Smith

Question:

How does the Bill define high quality care? How will it inform evidence-based best practice in aged care

Answer:

High quality care has a principles-based definition that focuses on the characteristics of aged care, rather than specific outcomes. It is designed to meet the particular needs, aspirations, and preferences of the individuals accessing funded aged care services.

Embedding the concept of high-quality care in the Bill sends a strong message that we want providers and workers to aim higher and not just comply with minimum requirements or minimum performance measures.

This will enable the concept of high quality care to grow and mature over time in response to community expectations, and be differentiated from the standard delivery of funded aged care services in line with specific legislative requirements – for example, the strengthened Quality Standards.

Implementing evidence-based practice is a key part of improving outcomes for older Australians receiving aged care.

However, it is acknowledged that no single measure will achieve high quality care by itself. Instead, implementing an integrated suite of measures, including a new regulatory model and ongoing effective governance and stewardship of the new aged care system, are required.

Providers in specified registration categories will also be required to demonstrate a capability and commitment to continuous improvement towards the delivery of high quality care. This will help to grow a culture in the sector that places the needs of older people at the heart of service delivery.

Innovation and continuous improvement by aged care providers contributes to the delivery of high-quality care in practice. This is measured by providers demonstrating their service delivery is compatible with the Statement of Rights, and continuous improvement is part of a provider's ongoing practice.

High quality care is also realised in worker performance and can be evidenced.

Multiple methods can be used to evidence these outcomes through measures, including through ongoing monitoring of providers against the strengthened Quality Standards by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission, and seeking advice from individuals receiving funded aged care services that the care provided is meeting their needs and preferences.