

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: IQ24-000160

Embedding principles of diversity and inclusion

Written

Senator: Marielle Smith

Question:

What is being done to embed principles of diversity and inclusion within the Bill

Answer:

The Aged Care Bill embeds diversity and inclusion across the aged care sector through the Statement of Rights, the concept of high quality care, and by embedding the consideration of diversity in the functions of the System Governor.

Following feedback obtained through the Department's consultation, the Statement of Rights was updated to recognise an individual's need for funded aged care services to be assessed, reassessed and delivered in a manner which:

- supports and values their identity, culture, spirituality, and diversity;
- is culturally safe, culturally appropriate, trauma aware and healing informed;
- is accessible and suitable for individuals living with dementia or other cognitive impairment; and
- is delivered by workers who have appropriate qualifications, skills and experience.

The Bill also includes the principle of high-quality care as a key concept. High quality care includes the prioritisation of:

- adopting policy, practices and environments to ensure that services are culturally appropriate for the diverse life experience of older people; and
- engaging lived experience of diversity in the organisation's workforce and decision-making.

The Bill places consultation with individuals of diverse background in the development of policy as a central function of the System Governor.

Making this a legislated function of the System Governor will ensure that the voices of persons of diverse backgrounds and with diverse characteristics are heard by the Department.