

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: IQ24-000121

Allied health care delivery in aged care

Written

Senator: Marielle Smith

Question:

Why is allied health not included in care minute targets, and what is the government doing to support allied health care delivery in aged care

Answer:

While the Royal Commission recommended care minute targets for direct care, for allied health their recommendation was to include a level of allied health care appropriate to each person's individual care needs. Therefore, no care minutes targets have been specified for allied health under the care minutes requirements.

Residential aged care providers are required to provide allied health services to residents in accordance with their obligations under the *Aged Care Act 1997* (the Aged Care Act) and the associated *Quality of Care Principles 2014* (Quality of Care Principles). Specifically, they are required to design and provide a tailored program of allied health therapy services designed to maintain or improve a resident's ability to undertake activities of daily living.

The provision of allied health services to residents is funded under the Australian National – Aged Care Classification (AN-ACC) funding model and monitored via the Quarterly Financial Report.

The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission is responsible for ensuring care is delivered in line with what is required under the Quality of Care Principles.

From February 2024, allied health spending for each aged care home has been published on My Aged Care to allow residents and their family members to compare allied health care delivery.

In addition, the strengthened Quality Standards will be implemented along with the new Aged Care Bill. These strengthened Quality Standards create clear expectations around the role of multidisciplinary teams, including allied health professionals, in the provision of coordinated and comprehensive clinical and personal care which supports reablement and maintenance of functional capacities for residents.

The Government is also expanding the Quality Indicator (QI) program by July 2025 to include a range of staffing measures, including allied health, to recognise the importance of these staff in supporting and improving quality in residential aged care.