Statement by Janet Anderson on response to COVID-19 situation in Victoria

"The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission is closely monitoring the situation in Victoria and providing support to aged care services in managing the increased risks of a COVID-19 outbreak.

In response to the recent surge in COVID-19 cases in Victoria, the Commission is undertaking the following activities:

- conducting a site visit to any service identified as high risk where concerns are raised (including in the Melbourne metropolitan area)

- standing up a regulatory program to conduct an assessment contact by telephone with all residential aged care service providers operating in Victoria

- planning to engage with all services (residential and home services) operating along the NSW/VIC and SA/VIC borders regarding management of risk and workforce supply

- continuing to manage all complaints received about Victorian aged care services

- continuing to closely monitor all services currently subject to compliance action including those services under sanctions.

Regulatory officials from the Commission will commence telephoning all approved providers of residential services in Victoria from Thursday 9 July 2020.

The regulatory officials will be seeking assurances from providers that COVID response plans have been developed and are ready for immediate activation. This will include confirmation that services have arrangements in place to manage risks to consumers and staffing supply.

The telephone call is not an assessment of performance against the Standards. The call will take approximately 10 minutes and arrangements will be made to call back if the provider is busy at the time of the call.

The Commission acknowledges the ongoing efforts of all approved providers to protect older Australians at this critical time.

If anyone has a concern about an aged care service, complaints can be made via the Commission's website www.agedcarequality.gov.au or by calling 1800 951 822."

Janet Anderson PSM
Commissioner
9 July 2020