



Consumers at the Centre of Care



Australian Government
Aged Care Quality and
Safety Commission



Flip Guides have been designed as supplementary supports for the learning modules. The Guides include key messages and insights for your continued reflection.

Need to Know: Consumer-Centred Care

Consumer-centred care is care and services designed around an individual's needs, preferences and background. It includes a partnership between consumers and providers, where consumers are front and centre of care and service design, delivery and seeing the consumer as a person and not just a recipient of care or services.

When consumers are effectively engaged in decisions about their care, benefits include:

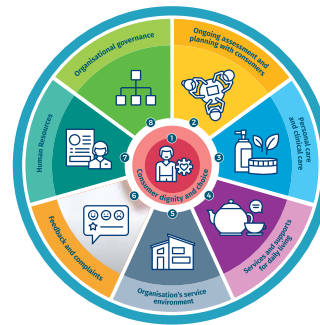


To achieve this goal, providers must deepen engagement and develop a mutual and open partnerships with consumers in all aspects of the planning, delivery and evaluation of care and services.

Obligations for Consumer-Centred Care

Older Australian's deserve an aged care sector that they can have confidence in, with a stronger focus on the quality and safety of care a person receives. Under the Aged Care Act 1997 and subordinate legislation, aged care providers have a range of requirements in relation to placing consumers at the centre of care.

Read more about the key enablers on this page and the following page.



The Aged Care Quality Standards

Strong and authentic consumer engagement is a foundation of the **Aged Care Quality Standards**. Providers are required to demonstrate how consumers are involved in the planning, delivery and review of their care and services under the Standards.



Charter of Aged Care Rights

The **Charter of Aged Care Rights** is grounded in Human Rights and focuses on empowering consumers to play an active role in understanding and exercising their right to express their needs and direct their care. Providers are required to support consumers to

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Obligations for Consumer-Centred Care



Restrictive Practices

From 1 July 2021, aged care providers have specific responsibilities under the [Aged Care Act 1997](#) and the [Quality of Care Principles 2014](#) relating to the use of restrictive practices in residential aged care or short-term restorative care in a residential care setting.

These requirements ensure that restrictive practices are only used as a last resort and if used, are done so in the appropriate manner with assessment, regular monitoring, review and evaluation.

The [Quality of Care Amendment \(Restrictive Practices\) Principles 2022](#) sets out a temporary hierarchy of persons or authorised bodies who can give informed consent where restrictive practices are necessary and a consumer is unable to provide consent or where a restrictive practices substitute decision-maker has not already been appointed. These changes will give certainty to consent arrangements in states and territories that do not have arrangements permitting another person to provide consent for restrictive practices use on a consumer's behalf.

Tips for Fostering Consumer-Centred Care

Read the tips on the following pages

Embed the consumer voice in governing body meetings

Engage with Consumers

Implement and monitor systems and processes

Ensure that organisational policies and procedures have a consumer focus

Monitor that services and care align with consumer needs and preference

Embed the consumer voice in governing body meetings

- Establish a Consumer Advisory Body to provide coordinated consumer (and representative) input into all aspects of the organisation. Aged care providers must offer to establish a Consumer Advisory Body in their service at least once every 12 months.
- Invite consumer representatives to assist in setting the agenda for each governing body meeting – Starting every meeting with a consumer story.
- Circulate a summary of meeting outcomes to all consumers and their representatives.
- Invite consumers to strategic planning days and working with them to prepare for the day, including communicating the day's events, the agenda and what is required from them.

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Engage with Consumers

Consumers and their representatives should be given the opportunity to establish a Consumer Advisory Committee to engage with them on their views of care and services received. The governing body must consider all committee feedback and tell them in writing how they have considered it.

They should also ask questions and obtain assurance from management as to how consumers are engaged in making decisions about all aspects of their care and services. This can be achieved by:

- Understanding how management currently engages with consumers and where changes may be needed.
- Identifying how management plans consumer engagement activities and how these are implemented in a sustainable and ongoing way (in the context of broader governance and risk management systems).
- Understanding how management encourages the workforce at all levels to improve consumer engagement.
- Continually monitoring and evaluating consumer engagement through reporting and conversations with management.

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Implement and monitor systems and processes

Ask questions and obtain assurance from management as to the relevant systems and processes in place to support better practice consumer-centred approaches, including:

- Provide education and training practices for the workforce to promote learning and skills development, care understanding and autonomy for consumers.
- Embed a culture that encourages consumers and their families to provide feedback and complaints.
- Establish systems and processes to capture the consumer voice, including complaints, at all stages of.

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- Table key organisational documents such as commitment statements, strategic plans, and policies in governing body meetings to demonstrate commitment to consumer-centred care.

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- Ask questions and obtain assurance from management as to how the services and care provided in the organisation align with the needs and preferences of consumers
- Actively review trends in relation to consumer feedback, complaints, and experience. Use this information to inform decision making and make improvements as to how care and services are delivered.

Is your governing body placing consumers at the centre of care?

Consider the following check list.

Does this apply in your organisation? What actions could be taken to ensure that the governing body and



Have you ever asked your consumers to describe...

- how the organisation supports and encourages them to be involved in designing and improving care and services. They can also describe how this has made a difference to the quality of care they receive?
- a range of ways they can take part in influencing how care and services are developed, delivered, and evaluated. They also say how these meet their diverse needs.



Have you ever asked your workforce and others...

- can management describe the different ways the organisation involves consumers in developing, delivering and managing care and services? They can also describe how it has made a difference to their approach.
- can staff demonstrate they understand the organisation's commitment to and processes for involving consumers?
- can staff provide examples of how the organisation uses the results of consumer feedback to improve how they deliver care and services?
- workforce orientation, training or other records show how the workforce is supported to involve consumers and the ways members of the workforce can help consumers to be involved?

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Does our Organisation's...

- records show the organisation involves consumers in the development, delivery and evaluation of care and services?
- planning or budget documents identify effective times and places to engage with consumers?
- evidence shows groups responsible for directing development and redesign projects include consumer representatives who can reflect what consumers want and need?
- records of meetings, consultations or forums with consumers and their community about issues important to them? (This could cover any issues such as the cultural safety of care and service programs, quality of meals or the arrangement of the service environment).
- evidence and examples of how the organisation shows, monitors, and reports how it has performed against this Standard? Examples of continuous improvement against this requirement.



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Additional Resources

