**Performance**

**Report**

**1800 951 822**

Agedcarequality.gov.au

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name: | Northern Health |
| Commission ID: | 300150 |
| Address: | 1231 Plenty Road, BUNDOORA, Victoria, 3083 |
| Activity type: | Quality Audit |
| Activity date: | 13 March 2024 to 14 March 2024 |
| Performance report date: | 15 April 2024 |

This performance report **is published** on the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission’s (the **Commission**) website under the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission Rules 2018.

# Service included in this assessment

Home Care Packages (**HCP**) included:  
Provider: 642 Northern Health  
Service: 18704 Northern Health Home Care Packages - Level 2  
Service: 18705 Northern Health Home Care Packages - Level 4  
  
Commonwealth Home Support Programme (**CHSP**) included:  
Provider: 8730 Northern Health  
Service: 25895 Northern Health - Community and Home Support

**This performance report**

This performance report for Northern Health (**the service**) has been prepared by P.Frangiosa, delegate of the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commissioner (Commissioner)[[1]](#footnote-1).

This performance report details the Commissioner’s assessment of the provider’s performance, in relation to the service, against the Aged Care Quality Standards (Quality Standards). The Quality Standards and requirements are assessed as either compliant or non-compliant at the Standard and requirement level where applicable.

The report also specifies any areas in which improvements must be made to ensure the Quality Standards are complied with.

# Material relied on

The following information has been considered in preparing the performance report:

* the assessment team’s report for the Quality Audit report was informed by a site assessment, observations at the service, review of documents and interviews with staff, consumers/representatives and others.

The provider did not submit a response to the Quality Audit report.

# Assessment summary for Home Care Packages (HCP)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Standard 1 Consumer dignity and choice | Compliant |
| **Standard 2** Ongoing assessment and planning with consumers | **Compliant** |
| **Standard 3** Personal care and clinical care | **Compliant** |
| **Standard 4** Services and supports for daily living | **Compliant** |
| **Standard 5** Organisation’s service environment | **Compliant** |
| **Standard 6** Feedback and complaints | **Compliant** |
| **Standard 7** Human resources | **Compliant** |
| **Standard 8** Organisational governance | **Compliant** |

# Assessment summary for Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Standard 1 Consumer dignity and choice | Compliant |
| **Standard 2** Ongoing assessment and planning with consumers | **Compliant** |
| **Standard 3** Personal care and clinical care | **Compliant** |
| **Standard 4** Services and supports for daily living | **Compliant** |
| **Standard 5** Organisation’s service environment | **Compliant** |
| **Standard 6** Feedback and complaints | **Compliant** |
| **Standard 7** Human resources | **Compliant** |
| **Standard 8** Organisational governance | **Compliant** |

A detailed assessment is provided later in this report for each assessed Standard.

# Areas for improvement

There are no specific areas identified in which improvements must be made to ensure compliance with the Quality Standards. The provider is required to actively pursue continuous improvement in order to remain compliant with the Quality Standards.

# Standard 1

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Consumer dignity and choice | | HCP | CHSP |
| Requirement 1(3)(a) | Each consumer is treated with dignity and respect, with their identity, culture and diversity valued. | Compliant | Compliant |
| Requirement 1(3)(b) | Care and services are culturally safe | Compliant | Compliant |
| Requirement 1(3)(c) | Each consumer is supported to exercise choice and independence, including to:   1. make decisions about their own care and the way care and services are delivered; and 2. make decisions about when family, friends, carers or others should be involved in their care; and 3. communicate their decisions; and 4. make connections with others and maintain relationships of choice, including intimate relationships. | Compliant | Compliant |
| Requirement 1(3)(d) | Each consumer is supported to take risks to enable them to live the best life they can. | Compliant | Compliant |
| Requirement 1(3)(e) | Information provided to each consumer is current, accurate and timely, and communicated in a way that is clear, easy to understand and enables them to exercise choice. | Compliant | Compliant |
| Requirement 1(3)(f) | Each consumer’s privacy is respected and personal information is kept confidential. | Compliant | Compliant |

Findings

Consumers and representatives stated consumers are treated with respect by staff. Staff described how they treat consumers with dignity and respect, including using culturally appropriate greetings, verbal and non-verbal communication. Documentation showed detailed recognition of consumers’ identity, culture and diversity, with each consumer’s background, social, cultural, language and family composition recorded.

Consumers confirmed care and services are culturally safe, with staff and consumers having similar cultural backgrounds. Staff confirmed they consider the consumer’s cultural background when providing care and services. Management stated that staff are bilingual. Survey results confirmed consumers can access advocacy services. Information such as The Charter of Aged Care Rights is provided to consumers in 18 languages.

Consumers and representatives confirmed the service supports consumers to exercise choice and independence, with staff ensuring the consumer is provided opportunities to decide on services and care provided. Staff described how they support consumers to make day-to-day choices. Management discussed how the service has ongoing discussion with consumers to support consumer choice and independence. Documentation showed the service captures details about whom the consumers wish to be involved in decisions.

Consumers and representatives confirmed consumers feel confident to take risks around mobilising in the community. Staff confirmed they encourage consumers to undertake challenging tasks. Documentation showed the service has a dignity of risk procedure and waiver process for consumers undertaking higher risk activities.

Consumers and representatives confirmed consumers receive information about the care and services provided, and information is provided in English with guidance regarding accessing interpreting services included. Staff described strategies used to assist consumers with communication barriers. Management and Staff discussed how they would adjust the provision of information to people with communication difficulties such as gaining the assistance of representatives or translation services and providing information brochures in particular languages.

Consumers and representatives confirmed staff respect and protect the consumer’s privacy. Staff described how they maintain consumer privacy and confidentiality by not sharing information with others who are not authorised to receive it. Management described the process for sharing personal and sensitive information only with those who require the information. Documentation confirmed the service uses a privacy consent process prior to sharing information with others.

Based on the information summarised above, I find the provider, in relation to the service, compliant with all Requirements in Standard 1, Consumer dignity and choice.

# Standard 2

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Ongoing assessment and planning with consumers | | HCP | CHSP |
| Requirement 2(3)(a) | Assessment and planning, including consideration of risks to the consumer’s health and well-being, informs the delivery of safe and effective care and services. | Compliant | Compliant |
| Requirement 2(3)(b) | Assessment and planning identifies and addresses the consumer’s current needs, goals and preferences, including advance care planning and end of life planning if the consumer wishes. | Compliant | Compliant |
| Requirement 2(3)(c) | The organisation demonstrates that assessment and planning:   1. is based on ongoing partnership with the consumer and others that the consumer wishes to involve in assessment, planning and review of the consumer’s care and services; and 2. includes other organisations, and individuals and providers of other care and services, that are involved in the care of the consumer. | Compliant | Compliant |
| Requirement 2(3)(d) | The outcomes of assessment and planning are effectively communicated to the consumer and documented in a care and services plan that is readily available to the consumer, and where care and services are provided. | Compliant | Compliant |
| Requirement 2(3)(e) | Care and services are reviewed regularly for effectiveness, and when circumstances change or when incidents impact on the needs, goals or preferences of the consumer. | Compliant | Compliant |

Findings

Consumers and representatives confirmed assessment and care planning occurs. Care planning documentation showed assessment and planning considers risks to consumer health and well-being. The service uses validated tools to assess risks to guide the delivery of safe and effective care and services. Risks assessed include falls, pain, wounds and cognition. Staff confirmed they have access to care planning documentation to guide them on the care and services provided.

Consumers and representatives confirmed assessment and planning outcomes are reflective of what is important to the consumer to meet their needs and goals. Staff demonstrated awareness of what is important to each consumer, including the consumer’s needs and preferences for care. Staff and management described how assessment and planning identifies and addresses the consumer’s current needs, goals and preferences, including advance care planning and end of life planning if the consumer wishes. Management explained care planning documentation is updated regularly based on ongoing assessment and planning processes. Documentation showed clear directives for staff to support the consumer based on the consumer’s assessed needs and goals.

Consumers and representatives confirmed they receive assessment and care planning information and documentation, and staff know what they are doing. Staff confirmed they have access to care planning documentation to guide the care and services they provide for consumers. Subcontracted support workers, nurses and allied health clinicians interviewed reported having access to the information they require to provide service, including consumer needs, goals and preferences via an ‘app’ on their mobile telephone. Documentation showed staff at the social support groups have access to clear directives in care plans to support consumers with their interests, likes, dislikes and medical conditions and HCP care plans have clear directives for staff.

Consumers and representatives confirmed the service involves them, and others they wish involved, in the care planning and assessment process. Staff and management demonstrated how assessment and planning occurs in partnership with consumers, the service and other health care professionals where necessary. Documentation showed assessment and planning involves the consumer and others the consumer agrees to be involved, including other organisations, individuals and other providers.

Staff confirmed they receive access to updated care plans when services change with clear directives included. Management described how care is formally reviewed at regular intervals and when circumstances change or when incidents occur. Documentation showed regular reviews are conducted. Management advised they will ensure it is clearly documented new and updated care plans are provided to consumers.

Based on the information summarised above, I find the provider, in relation to the service, compliant with all Requirements in Standard 2, Ongoing assessment and planning with consumers.

# Standard 3

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Personal care and clinical care | | HCP | CHSP |
| Requirement 3(3)(a) | Each consumer gets safe and effective personal care, clinical care, or both personal care and clinical care, that:   1. is best practice; and 2. is tailored to their needs; and 3. optimises their health and well-being. | Compliant | Compliant |
| Requirement 3(3)(b) | Effective management of high impact or high prevalence risks associated with the care of each consumer. | Compliant | Compliant |
| Requirement 3(3)(c) | The needs, goals and preferences of consumers nearing the end of life are recognised and addressed, their comfort maximised and their dignity preserved. | Compliant | Compliant |
| Requirement 3(3)(d) | Deterioration or change of a consumer’s mental health, cognitive or physical function, capacity or condition is recognised and responded to in a timely manner. | Compliant | Compliant |
| Requirement 3(3)(e) | Information about the consumer’s condition, needs and preferences is documented and communicated within the organisation, and with others where responsibility for care is shared. | Compliant | Compliant |
| Requirement 3(3)(f) | Timely and appropriate referrals to individuals, other organisations and providers of other care and services. | Compliant | Compliant |
| Requirement 3(3)(g) | Minimisation of infection related risks through implementing:   1. standard and transmission based precautions to prevent and control infection; and 2. practices to promote appropriate antibiotic prescribing and use to support optimal care and reduce the risk of increasing resistance to antibiotics. | Compliant | Compliant |

Findings

Consumers and representatives confirmed consumers receive quality personal care. Staff were knowledgeable of each consumer’s unique needs and preferences. Management described how personal care is tailored to the needs of the consumer to optimise the consumer’s health and well-being. Documentation showed care directives clearly guide staff in how to provide personal care.

Staff described how they provide care for vulnerable and high need consumers and how they manage risks during service delivery. Management described how high-impact and high-prevalence risks are identified and how staff are provided with directives on how the support those consumers. Documentation showed strategies in place to guide staff in provision of care where high-impact or high-prevalence risks have been identified.

Consumers and representatives expressed satisfaction that the consumer’s condition, needs and preferences are communicated within the service and with others where care is shared. Staff confirmed they have access to the consumer’s care directives through an application on their mobile device. Management discussed how information and recommendations to other health practitioners are received, reviewed and implemented and documented. Documentation showed the service communicates with others to ensure the provision of personal and clinical care for consumers.

Consumers and representatives expressed satisfaction the service will refer the consumer to other organisations and providers when required. Management demonstrated an understanding of referral networks and described internal and external referral processes used by the service. Documentation showed the service makes referrals to other organisations and providers where the need is identified.

Consumers and representatives confirmed discussions about end-of-life planning are held and documented within care plans. Staff and management described strategies for maximising consumer comfort when a consumer is nearing end of life. Documentations showed the service has procedures to prioritise services and onward referrals for consumers nearing end of life.

Consumers and representatives expressed confidence in staff being able to recognise and respond to a change in the consumer’s condition. Staff described how they would identify deterioration and how the service would adjust service delivery to meet the changed needs of the consumer. Management and staff have received training in recognising and responding to deterioration.

Consumers and representatives confirmed staff use personal protective equipment when providing care and services. Staff stated they have completed infection control training to minimise infection. Management advised all staff have completed infection control training and staff have access to personal protective equipment. Documentation showed the service has an emergency management plan inclusive of infection control and outbreak plans.

Based on the information summarised above, I find the provider, in relation to the service, compliant with all Requirements in Standard 3, Personal care and clinical care.

# Standard 4

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Services and supports for daily living | | HCP | CHSP |
| Requirement 4(3)(a) | Each consumer gets safe and effective services and supports for daily living that meet the consumer’s needs, goals and preferences and optimise their independence, health, well-being and quality of life. | Compliant | Compliant |
| Requirement 4(3)(b) | Services and supports for daily living promote each consumer’s emotional, spiritual and psychological well-being. | Compliant | Compliant |
| Requirement 4(3)(c) | Services and supports for daily living assist each consumer to:   1. participate in their community within and outside the organisation’s service environment; and 2. have social and personal relationships; and 3. do the things of interest to them. | Compliant | Compliant |
| Requirement 4(3)(d) | Information about the consumer’s condition, needs and preferences is communicated within the organisation, and with others where responsibility for care is shared. | Compliant | Compliant |
| Requirement 4(3)(e) | Timely and appropriate referrals to individuals, other organisations and providers of other care and services. | Compliant | Compliant |
| Requirement 4(3)(f) | Where meals are provided, they are varied and of suitable quality and quantity. | Compliant | Compliant |
| Requirement 4(3)(g) | Where equipment is provided, it is safe, suitable, clean and well maintained. | Compliant | Compliant |

Findings

Consumers and representatives confirmed the services and supports for daily living the consumers receive support the consumers to optimise their independence and well-being. Staff described how individualised and effective services and supports for daily living meet each consumer’s needs, goals and preferences. Management stated feedback from consumers on activities would be part of the service’s activities calendar. Documentation showed assessments and care plans identify services and supports for daily living which promote individual consumer’s independence and enhanced quality of life.

Consumers and representatives confirmed consumers participate in activities of interest to them in their homes and in the community. Staff stated they access information about consumers on the mobile application to guide them on how to support the consumer in their personal relationships. Management described processes used by the service to meet the social and personal needs of consumers. Documentation showed services and supports for daily living support consumers to participate in the community, do things of interest to them and have social and personal relationships.

Consumers and representatives confirmed the consumer’s needs and preferences are communicated during the assessment process. Staff confirmed they have access to each consumer’s needs and preferences through a mobile application. Management advised consumer care plans are available to staff through a mobile application and to subcontracted services through a service request process. Documentation showed care plans include clear directives about the consumer’s condition, needs and preferences.

Consumers and representatives expressed satisfaction with the supports for daily living received by consumers. Staff described how they recognise and support consumers’ emotional, spiritual and psychological well-being and how services provided meet those needs. Management demonstrated an understanding of supporting consumers in their emotional, spiritual and psychological well-being. Documentation showed evidence of support strategies to meet individual consumer’s emotional, spiritual and psychological well-being, including support workers that speak consumers languages.

Consumers and representatives confirmed the service supports consumers to access other services, including other lifestyle services where appropriate. Staff stated they will document concerns about consumers for management to review and make referrals where necessary. Management discussed processes used to refer consumers for additional care and higher-level packages. Documentation demonstrated the service refers consumers to organisations and providers for additional services and supports when necessary.

Management advised meals are not provided under the home care package, however, if consumers wish to utilise funding to purchase a prepared meal the consumer purchases the meals component and HCP will cover the preparation and delivery only. This is normally a

30% by the consumer and 70% by the package.

Consumers and representatives confirmed consumers have received equipment, which is safe, and suitable. Management described the assessment and ongoing processes to ensure equipment provided is suitable and safe for the consumer. Management stated equipment is checked at reassessment and will be serviced or replaced as necessary. Documentation showed equipment is selected for safety and suitability on the recommendations of allied health professionals.

Based on the information summarised above, I find the provider, in relation to the service, compliant with all Requirements in Standard 4, Services and supports for daily living.

# Standard 5

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Organisation’s service environment | | HCP | CHSP |
| Requirement 5(3)(a) | The service environment is welcoming and easy to understand, and optimises each consumer’s sense of belonging, independence, interaction and function. | Compliant | Compliant |
| Requirement 5(3)(b) | The service environment:   1. is safe, clean, well maintained and comfortable; and 2. enables consumers to move freely, both indoors and outdoors. | Compliant | Compliant |
| Requirement 5(3)(c) | Furniture, fittings and equipment are safe, clean, well maintained and suitable for the consumer. | Compliant | Compliant |

Findings

Consumers confirmed they feel comfortable and welcome in the service environments. Staff described how they support consumers to interact and use the service environment to suit their needs. Management described how they know consumers feel welcome by assessing attendance and participation in activities. Consumers were observed participating in activities in the service environment.

The service environment was observed to be clean, accessible and fit for purpose. Staff stated the environment is rearranged for the needs of consumers on the day and there is a cleaning process in place to ensure the environment is clean and ready for use by the consumers.

Staff and management described the processes for cleaning equipment and escalating issues with furniture. The service environment was observed to be clean and well-maintained.

Based on the information summarised above, I find the provider, in relation to the service, compliant with all Requirements in Standard 5, Organisation’s service environment.

# Standard 6

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Feedback and complaints | | HCP | CHSP |
| Requirement 6(3)(a) | Consumers, their family, friends, carers and others are encouraged and supported to provide feedback and make complaints. | Compliant | Compliant |
| Requirement 6(3)(b) | Consumers are made aware of and have access to advocates, language services and other methods for raising and resolving complaints. | Compliant | Compliant |
| Requirement 6(3)(c) | Appropriate action is taken in response to complaints and an open disclosure process is used when things go wrong. | Compliant | Compliant |
| Requirement 6(3)(d) | Feedback and complaints are reviewed and used to improve the quality of care and services. | Compliant | Compliant |

Findings

Consumers and representatives confirmed they are aware of how to provide feedback and raise complaints and feel safe to do so. Staff stated they seek feedback from consumers during service delivery and emphasise to consumers the importance of making feedback. Management stated the complaint procedure is explained to consumers. Documentation showed complaint mechanisms and procedures are included in consumer agreements and consumer information manuals.

Consumers and representatives confirmed they are aware other methods for raising and resolving complaints, including knowing how to contact the Commission. Management described how the service supports consumers to access advocates and other services and methods for raising and resolving complaints, including supporting consumers with language materials and bilingual staff. Documentation showed the service’s complaints procedure and consumer manuals offer consumers diverse internal and external feedback, complaints and advocacy options, in the consumer’s language of choice. The service employs a number of interpreters to assist with the variety of culturally and linguistically diverse communities and consumers they provide service too.

Consumers and representatives confirmed the service resolved issues or informal complaints they had made. Staff described processes for escalating complaints from consumers. Management described how the service responds to complaints and how it uses open disclosure when issues are identified. Documentation showed the service uses an open disclosure approach to resolve issues, even though the service does not have an open disclosure procedure.

The service’s complaints policy states complaints will be addressed promptly, treated confidentially, and used as an opportunity for improvement. The service’s complaints register is used to trend complaints and improve service, with strategies implemented to avoid the same issues occurring again. Documentation showed complaints are actioned and finalised and, if necessary, improvements to services are implemented.

Based on the information summarised above, I find the provider, in relation to the service, compliant with all Requirements in Standard 6, Feedback and complaints.

# Standard 7

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Human resources | | HCP | CHSP |
| Requirement 7(3)(a) | The workforce is planned to enable, and the number and mix of members of the workforce deployed enables, the delivery and management of safe and quality care and services. | Compliant | Compliant |
| Requirement 7(3)(b) | Workforce interactions with consumers are kind, caring and respectful of each consumer’s identity, culture and diversity. | Compliant | Compliant |
| Requirement 7(3)(c) | The workforce is competent and the members of the workforce have the qualifications and knowledge to effectively perform their roles. | Compliant | Compliant |
| Requirement 7(3)(d) | The workforce is recruited, trained, equipped and supported to deliver the outcomes required by these standards. | Compliant | Compliant |
| Requirement 7(3)(e) | Regular assessment, monitoring and review of the performance of each member of the workforce is undertaken. | Compliant | Compliant |

Findings

Consumers and representatives confirmed consumers feel respected. Staff described how they relate to consumers respectfully. Results from a survey conducted by the service showed consumers feel they are treated with integrity and respect.

Consumers stated staff are competent. Staff described the minimum qualifications required for their roles. Management described the service’s processes for determining staff competency, including for subcontracted staff. Documentation showed evidence of minimum qualifications and knowledge required for each role.

Staff confirmed they receive induction training and ongoing mandatory training. Management explained the service uses an online training system for staff. Documentation showed the service maintains up-to-date training and competency records for staff.

Support staff confirmed they undergo regular informal performance appraisal processes with management. Management confirmed support staff undergo regular informal performance appraisal processes with office staff undergoing formal annual appraisal processes. Management stated a review of performance appraisal processes will be undertaken. Documentation showed evidence of performance reviews being completed for office staff.

Based on the information summarised above, I find the provider, in relation to the service, compliant with all Requirements in Standard 7, Human resources.

# Standard 8

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Organisational governance | | HCP | CHSP |
| Requirement 8(3)(a) | Consumers are engaged in the development, delivery and evaluation of care and services and are supported in that engagement. | Compliant | Compliant |
| Requirement 8(3)(b) | The organisation’s governing body promotes a culture of safe, inclusive and quality care and services and is accountable for their delivery. | Compliant | Compliant |
| Requirement 8(3)(c) | Effective organisation wide governance systems relating to the following:   1. information management; 2. continuous improvement; 3. financial governance; 4. workforce governance, including the assignment of clear responsibilities and accountabilities; 5. regulatory compliance; 6. feedback and complaints. | Compliant | Compliant |
| Requirement 8(3)(d) | Effective risk management systems and practices, including but not limited to the following:   1. managing high impact or high prevalence risks associated with the care of consumers; 2. identifying and responding to abuse and neglect of consumers; 3. supporting consumers to live the best life they can 4. managing and preventing incidents, including the use of an incident management system. | Compliant | Compliant |
| Requirement 8(3)(e) | Where clinical care is provided—a clinical governance framework, including but not limited to the following:   1. antimicrobial stewardship; 2. minimising the use of restraint; 3. open disclosure. | Compliant | Compliant |

Findings

The organisation has an HCP advisory committee and a CHSP consumer sits on quality and risk management committee that meets monthly, which reports to the Board subcommittee. The service seeks feedback from consumers through an annual satisfaction survey and through group sessions to understand the needs of consumers. Consumers are provided newsletters to keep them informed. Staff stated the service supports consumers to be engaged in service delivery and development.

The organisation is governed by a Board of Management who have nine members with relevant backgrounds and experiences to guide the service. Management explained the governing body meets regularly and considers operational reports presented by management. Feedback, complaints, incidents and deterioration reporting are part of monitoring, with reporting on subcontractors to be incorporated into the monthly governing body reporting processes.

Interviews with consumers, staff and management and documentation showed there are effective organisation wide governance systems in place to support information management, continuous improvement, financial governance, workforce governance, regulatory compliance and feedback and complaints.

The organisation has a risk management framework inclusive of a risk register and risk management procedure and matrix. This ensures effective management of high-impact and high-prevalence risks, effective identification and response to abuse and neglect, support for consumers to live their best life and management and prevention of incidents through an incident management system.

The organisation has a clinical governance framework and clinical management procedure that is managed and monitored by the quality and safety team. The organisation has an infection control plan and outbreak plans and all staff have received infection control training and refresher training. Training on restrictive practices is provided. Open disclosure is used when things go wrong.

Based on the information summarised above, I find the provider, in relation to the service, compliant with all Requirements in Standard 8, Organisational governance.

1. The preparation of the performance report is in accordance with section 57 of the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission Rules 2018. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)