



Strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards

Standard 4: The environment

Provider fact sheet



Older people statement



**I feel safe and supported
where I live.**

Worker statement



**I create a safe and
supportive environment.**

Strengthened Quality Standard 4 is about people receiving care and services in an environment that is safe, supportive and meets their needs. It applies to providers in Categories 4, 5 and 6.

Good infection prevention and control (IPC) practices are a key part of service delivery to protect people in care, their family, carers and staff.

You need to understand how to identify infection related risks and options to keep providing care that meets people's needs.

There are 2 outcomes and 6 actions in Standard 4. In this Standard, there are no new concepts or expectations.

All 6 actions are in line with or clarify the current Quality Standards or other existing provider responsibilities.



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To prepare for the strengthened Quality Standards, we recommend you:

- 1 get to know the key concepts or themes in each of the Standards.
- 2 think about how you apply these concepts now.

What are the key concepts in strengthened Quality Standard 4?

Strengthened Quality Standard 4 includes **key concepts** that mean you need to:

- support people receiving care to feel safe in their home environment by identifying and reducing environmental risks
- provide a well-maintained service environment
- design a service environment that allows people to move freely
- use high-quality IPC processes.

This Standard has a **strong focus** on:

- environmental risk assessment
- IPC.



You can find the key concepts in the **Standard 4 guidance**

<https://www.agedcarequality.gov.au/resource-library/draft-provider-guidance-standard-4>



How can you demonstrate conformance with strengthened Quality Standard 4?

To show that you conform with the strengthened Quality Standards, you should review your service's systems and processes. Then look at how these are put into practice.

This means you should:

- make sure you have clearly documented systems and processes
- use monitoring tools to show how staff are following these processes and find opportunities for improvement
- work with people receiving care to understand their experience and care outcomes
- observe how your service provides care
- ask for feedback from your governing body, managers, workers, people you care for and others involved in the delivery of care and services.
- use feedback to improve your care and services.

Examples of areas you should consider for strengthened Quality Standard 4 include how your service:

- applies strategies that make sure the environment is safe for people receiving care and staff. You can show this with your organisation's risk management system to reduce risk and improve the person's care environment
- applies inventory management systems and maintenance plans. This makes sure people receiving care and staff know who is responsible for maintaining equipment and aids
- trains and guides staff on how to maintain and clean equipment. You should do this to make sure workers have the knowledge and ability to maintain the services equipment.



Reflective questions for providers

- How do you make sure this Standard's key concepts are shown in the care and services you provide to people receiving care?
- How do you work with people receiving care to design the environment where they receive their care and services?
- How do you ask for feedback from people receiving care to make sure they feel safe and the environment meets their needs?

What can you do to show that:

- you make sure you provide care in a safe, clean and comfortable environment that meets people's needs and improves their sense of belonging?
- you make sure you use appropriate equipment that meets the needs of each person, it is well maintained, clean and staff know how to use it?
- you support staff by creating an environment that is safe, supportive and meets the needs of the people receiving care?
- you have an IPC system in place and your staff have received training and skill assessments?
- staff can and identify and reduce any safety risks?
- staff are delivering care consistent with your policies and procedures?



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Resources



Draft strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards guidance

www.agedcarequality.gov.au/get-involved/consultation-and-engagement-hub/standards-guidance-consultation



Draft evidence mapping framework

www.agedcarequality.gov.au/resource-library/draft-evidence-mapping-framework



Final draft strengthened Quality Standards

www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/the-strengthened-aged-care-quality-standards-final-draft?language=en



Strengthened Quality Standards Framework Analysis

www.agedcarequality.gov.au/resources/strengthened-quality-standards-framework-analysis

The strengthened Quality Standards will come into effect in line with the commencement of the new Aged Care Act. The information in this fact sheet should be considered draft only as it is dependent on the finalisation of the draft legislation.

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The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission acknowledges the Traditional Owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

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