

NEW AGED CARE REFORMS: 6 THINGS TO KNOW

Australia's aged care system is undergoing a major overhaul following the 2021 Royal Commission, with new laws designed to improve quality, transparency, and accountability across the sector. From 1 November 2025, it is crucial that your business is up to date with these changes to improve client experiences and comply with the law. The new Aged Care Act 2024 is designed to:

- improve the quality and safety of care for older Australians;
- enhance transparency and accountability within the industry; and
- empower individuals receiving care.

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1. STRENGTHENED QUALITY STANDARDS



- Quality Standards now focus more on individual needs and the core values that underpin care outcomes.
- Expectations are higher; care recipients should feel listened to, safe, and supported by competent providers.
- Providers are expected to foster active participation from care recipients in improving care and services.

Tip: Review and refresh your policies and staff training to align with these new standards, focusing on client needs.

4. SUPPORT AT HOME PROGRAM



- Replaces existing in-home care schemes to focus on wellness, reablement and support for diverse needs.
- The Commonwealth Home Support Programme will transition to the new program by 1 July 2027 at the earliest.
- New service agreements will be required to reflect pricing and structural changes.

Tip: Familiarise yourself with the [Support at Home program manual](#) and start integrating its values into daily practice.

2. ACCOUNTABILITY AND GOVERNANCE



- Boards and key personnel face stricter due diligence duties and possible penalties for non-compliance.
- There is an increased focus on transparency and responsibility at organisational leadership levels.

Tip: Restructure internal governance frameworks, reporting and controls to meet these higher standards. Ensure all staff understand their individual responsibilities.

5. IMPROVED WORKFORCE STANDARDS



- Mandatory minimum training, clearer career pathways, and ongoing professional development aim to make aged care a respected profession.

Tip: Invest in training and development programs to build a skilled, motivated workforce. Consider partnering with educational institutions.

3. INFORMATION SHARING



- A national aged care data system will provide better insights into the quality and safety of different providers.
- Care recipients will have easier access to transparent information, enabling them to compare services and make informed decisions.

Tip: Implement reliable systems for data collection and reporting to meet new transparency requirements.

6. REGULATION OF RESTRICTIVE PRACTICES



- Stricter controls for physical or chemical restraint use have been introduced.
- Restrictive practices are only allowed as a last resort, with authorisation and regular reviews to avoid encroaching on a person's liberty.

Tip: Develop robust policies for restrictive practices, including assessments, documentation, and ongoing monitoring.