



Australian Government

Department of Health

Australian Aged Care Quality Agency

**Regulator Performance Framework
Self-Assessment Report 2017-18**

CEO Foreword

This regulatory performance assessment outlines how the Australian Aged Care Quality Agency operates under the six outcomes-based key performance indicators covering reducing regulatory burden, communications, risk-based and proportionate approaches, efficient and coordinated monitoring, transparency, and continuous improvement.

As we seek to optimise the way in which we perform as a regulator we base our actions on the relevant legislation. We also respect that many of decisions are subject to administrative appeal. We value feedback from providers and do this at a number of levels working with industry peak bodies, consumer groups and other key stakeholders. We are also proud to be accredited by the International Society for Quality in Health care (ISQua) as a contemporary, internationally recognised best practice accreditation organisation.

Following significant failures in care uncovered at the Makk and Mcleay residential aged care facilities in Oakden South Australia, I commissioned the Nous External Independent Advice (July 2017). The Quality Agency accepted all of the recommendations made in this advice. This report along with the government's broader Review of National Aged Care Regulatory Processes (October 2017), informed improvements to our regulatory approach and are reflected in our 2017-18 self-assessment of performance.

Introduction

The Australian Aged Care Quality Agency (the Quality Agency) is a statutory agency established under the *Australian Aged Care Quality Agency Act 2013* (the Act). The Quality Agency accredits residential aged care services and conducts quality review of other aged care services such as home care services.

Under section 12 of the Act, the functions of the Quality Agency include:

- to accredit residential care services in accordance with the Quality Agency Principles, and the Accreditation Standards made under the *Aged Care Act 1997*;
- from 1 July 2014, to conduct the quality review of home care services in accordance with the Quality Agency Principles, and the Home Care Standards made under the *Aged Care Act 1997*;
- to register quality assessors of residential and home care services in accordance with the Quality Agency Principles;
- to advise the Secretary about aged care services that do not meet the Accreditation Standards or the Home Care Standards;
- to promote high quality care, innovation in quality management and continuous improvement amongst approved providers of aged care;
- to provide information, education and training to approved providers of aged care in accordance with the Quality Agency Principles.

The strategic objectives of the Quality Agency are to:

- ensure that our regulatory approach prioritises safety and quality outcomes for consumers of aged care;
- together, with our co-regulators and other stakeholders, we ensure consistent, holistic outcomes for consumers of aged care;
- inform consumer choice in the aged care sector;
- build our workforce and corporate capabilities.

Rating scale

Met	Substantially met	Not met
Strong performance against <i>all</i> of the measures under the KPI	Strong performance against <i>most</i> of the measures under the KPI	Poor performance against <i>all</i> of the measures under the KPI

2017-18 Performance Reporting

KPI 1 - Regulators do not unnecessarily impede the efficient operation of regulated entities									
KPIs/Measures/Metrics	Evidence (Performance in 2017-18)								
<p>Measure 1.1 We demonstrate an understanding of the operating environment of the industry or the organisation, or the circumstances of individuals and the current and emerging issues that affect the sector.</p> <p>1.1.1 A stakeholder engagement strategy is in place.</p> <p>1.1.2 Regular Quality Agency Liaison Group (ALG) stakeholder consultation meetings held in each State and Territory.</p> <p>1.1.3 Percentage of industry association conferences attended and contributed to.</p> <p>1.1.4 Participation rates in Quality Agency Better Practice conference program creating opportunity for sharing understandings about aged care services.</p>	<p>1.1.1 A Strategic Communications & Engagement Strategy 2018 was put in place in early 2018. Citing nine specific actions, the Strategy details the Agency's communication with key stakeholders.</p> <p>The Quality Agency external website has been revised and sector communications of the latest news now highlighted on the home page.</p> <p>Significant engagement through aged care provider roundtables commenced in 2017-18. The aged care provider roundtable report is evidence of the work the Agency has done to engage effectively seek feedback from the sector to better understand performance. Key findings and recommendations are outlined in the report on the Quality Agency's website. https://www.aacqa.gov.au/about-us/Workingtogetherforqualityagedcarestakeholderroundtablereport.pdf</p> <p>Several initiatives from the Communication Strategy (such as the Quality Agency internal intranet website release by 1 July 2018 and weekly messages from the CEO to Quality Agency staff including trends and issues) are supporting staff to understand our regulatory environment and issues affecting the sector.</p> <p>1.1.2 The Quality Agency's stakeholder forum, the Quality Agency Liaison Group (QALG), operated during 2017-18 with four meetings held. The QALG 2017-18 meeting dates and locations were:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>28-Jul-17</td> <td>Sydney airport</td> </tr> <tr> <td>10-Nov-17</td> <td>Sydney airport</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2-Mar-18</td> <td>Sydney airport</td> </tr> <tr> <td>25-May-18</td> <td>Melbourne airport.</td> </tr> </table> <p>1.1.3 Quality Agency staff presented to and participated in numerous aged care sector relevant conferences and workshops. For example, CEO, Nick Ryan presented a plenary session to the Health Metrics World Conference in 2018. Executive members participated in a range of sector events. These included the LASA national congress, the ISQua conference, the Aged Care Guild Board meeting, Alzheimer's Australia conference and the COTA Aged Care Reform conference.</p> <p>1.1.4 The Better Practice Conferences in the latter half</p>	28-Jul-17	Sydney airport	10-Nov-17	Sydney airport	2-Mar-18	Sydney airport	25-May-18	Melbourne airport.
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KPI 1 - Regulators do not unnecessarily impede the efficient operation of regulated entities

KPIs/Measures/Metrics	Evidence (Performance in 2017-18)
	<p>of 2017 were held in four locations across Australia (Adelaide, Sydney, Perth and Brisbane). There were approximately 950 delegates in total at those conferences. Positive feedback was received from attendees from the 2017 conferences, with 93% of feedback results indicating that these programs continue to address themes and issues relevant to the aged care industry. The 2018 Better Practice conference planning took place for a single, national conference held in Sydney in August 2018.</p>
<p>Measure 1.2 We take actions to minimise the potential for unintended negative impacts of regulatory activities on regulated entities or affected supplier industries and supply chains.</p> <p><i>1.2.1 Feedback questionnaire responses show low impact on service provision.</i></p> <p><i>1.2.2 Any negative feedback and feedback suggesting improvement is acted upon promptly.</i></p> <p><i>1.2.3 Accessible complaints process is maintained and responses are prompt.</i></p>	<p>1.2.1 At the conclusion of every site visit to a residential aged care service, quality assessors leave a hardcopy questionnaire for each approved provider to give feedback relating to our conduct of the visit. One of the questions on the feedback form asks for responses to the question “Please rate the performance of the team in terms of allowing care staff to continue their duties during the visit”. In 2017-18, 98% of responses from services that had received a visit rated our performance on that measure as either ‘excellent’, ‘very good’ or ‘good’.</p> <p>A similar questionnaire conducted with Home Care approved providers via an online survey asked services to rate and comment on the Quality Agency’s site performance following a quality review. In 2017-18, 94% of responses that had responded to the question relating to the minimal impact on service provision rated it as ‘excellent’, ‘very good’ or ‘good’.</p> <p>1.2.2 As described (See 1.2.1), residential aged care services are provided with a questionnaire for each approved provider to give feedback relating to the Quality Agency’s conduct of visits. Approved provider feedback from these site visit questionnaires is assessed according to the nature of the feedback and is responded to accordingly.</p> <p>As described (See 1.2.1), the Home Care Questionnaire is an online survey that the Quality Agency provides to approved providers of home care services. Of those that responded with free text feedback, over half (55%) provided positive feedback on the performance of the Quality Agency. Of the negative feedback and suggestions (43% of responses), that information was fed into future processes for Quality Reviews.</p> <p>1.2.3 A revised complaints policy was implemented</p>

KPI 1 - Regulators do not unnecessarily impede the efficient operation of regulated entities	
KPIs/Measures/Metrics	Evidence (Performance in 2017-18)
	<p>and published onto the Quality Agency website in 2017-18. During 2017-18, there were 33 complaints received by the Quality Agency, with 14 complaints received in 2016-17. The Quality Agency is committed to finalising complaints with a written response within 28 days. During 2017-18, 24 complaints were closed. The complaints process is under regular review and refinement.</p>
<p>Measure 1.3 We implement continuous improvement strategies to reduce the costs of compliance for those we regulate.</p> <p><i>1.3.1 Maintain contact with internationally recognised organisations through involvement with ISQua.</i></p> <p><i>1.3.2 Complaints process used to identify areas for improvement.</i></p> <p><i>1.3.3 Visit feedback questionnaire provides opportunity for services to identify improvement areas.</i></p> <p><i>1.3.4 Review of policies and procedures includes consideration of reducing compliance cost. (Number of changes to reduce compliance burden).</i></p> <p><i>1.3.5 Use of the SA Innovation Hub – evaluation results – to assess options to reduce compliance costs.¹</i></p>	<p>1.3.1 The Quality Agency continues to be accredited through The International Society for Quality in Health Care (ISQua). This is formal recognition that our performance as an accrediting body has been assessed by peer reviewers against international standards and that we meet international best practice requirements.</p> <p>1.3.2 The Quality Agency updated its complaints policy in December 2017 and updated its website with the new policy outlining expectations for those who engage in the complaints process, and a new complaints form to assist complainants. The collation of complaints data is routinely analysed to identify trends and areas for improvement for the Quality Agency. Identified issues informed training topics for quality assessor continuing professional development events.</p> <p>1.3.3 As described above (See 1.2.2), approved providers have an opportunity to feedback to the Quality Agency by providing input into areas for improvement via the site questionnaires. During 2017-18, 790 responses were collated and considered from the feedback component of the questionnaires. Examples of areas for improvement are providing plain language correspondence to consumers and ensuring that the appropriate aged care service staff are consulted for various aspects of standards assessments.</p> <p>1.3.4 Serious Risk, Infection Control and Outbreak Management came into the spotlight following critical incidents in aged care services in August 2017. The Quality Agency worked with infection control experts</p>

¹ This activity is no longer current for the 2017-18 reporting period.

KPI 1 - Regulators do not unnecessarily impede the efficient operation of regulated entities

KPIs/Measures/Metrics	Evidence (Performance in 2017-18)
	<p>to offer update sessions to the sector to promote evidence based best practice infection control and outbreak management. Quality Agency staff presented information on the legislative function in relation to the consideration of Serious Risk where there is failure. The information session for approved providers and Quality Surveyors held during 2017-18 was recorded and made available online. Sessions were also offered with all states and territories.</p> <p>The Serious Risk Policy was updated and a Regulatory Bulletin outlined the Quality Agency’s approach. There was also an information campaign with providers regarding the changes.</p> <p>The Quality Agency launched the Regulatory Bulletin in August 2017. The Regulatory Bulletin is a targeted communication to assist providers to understand how specific requirements and processes fit into the overarching aged care regulatory framework – articulating expectations and underlying reasons for our approach. The first bulletin covered the Quality Agency’s process and responsibilities relating to findings of serious risk.</p> <p>Under the policy stock-take the Quality Agency developed new policies on the <i>Conflict of Interest for Quality Assessors</i> and <i>Risk assessment decisions for new HC approved providers</i> and are continuing to ‘review’ all policies such as the <i>Assessment Contact Policy</i>. Regulatory Bulletins will continue to be released.</p> <p>The Department of Health led the amendments to the Quality Principles to provide for the Government’s decision to introduce unannounced re-accreditation audits for residential aged care services. To support the sector to prepare for this change, the Quality Agency provided a range of information and resources. Information sessions were offered nationally with 21 sessions in total, attended by 850 participants. A webinar was also offered that attracted 600 registrations and the recording was made available online.</p>
Self-assessed rating:	Met

KPI 2 - Communication with regulated entities is clear, targeted and effective

KPIs/Measures/Metrics	Evidence (Performance in 2017-18)
<p>Measure 2.1 We provide guidance and information that is up to date, clear, accessible and concise through media appropriate to the target audience.</p> <p><i>2.1.1 Percentage of website information that complies with government accessibility guidelines.</i></p> <p><i>2.1.2 Number of education/information sessions on accreditation and quality review arrangements.</i></p> <p><i>2.1.3 Information and education offered through a range of media suitable for the mix of services/ stakeholders.</i></p> <p><i>2.1.4 Percentage of feedback about education sessions that is positive.</i></p>	<p>2.1.1 Ensuring the Quality Agency’s website content was compliant with government accessibility guidelines was an ongoing focus for the Quality Agency. The Quality Agency continued to refine web content to ensure greater clarity for the website users.</p> <p>2.1.2 The Quality Agency, nationally, held 87 training courses on accreditation and quality review during 2017-18.</p> <p>The Quality Agency conducted, nationally, 190 compliance education sessions for aged care services that require support to improve performance against the Standards. Of those, 111 were directly related to the regulatory case management activities; these are the services that are directly experiencing compliance issues.</p> <p>Compliance assistance topics included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aged care and Quality Agency overview - Getting to know the Standards - Continuous Improvement - Consumer dignity and choice - Understanding risk - Using consumer feedback - <p>The Quality Agency also offered these education resources and information online via the external website.</p> <p>In addition, the Quality Agency was working on the development of a new suite of educational programs to support the sector with the transition to the new aged care quality standards. This work is ongoing and includes videos, fact sheets, info-graphics, webinars and face-to-face training sessions.</p> <p>2.1.3 Quality Standard electronic newsletter is a key communication with the sector (see for example https://www.aacqa.gov.au/providers/education/the-standard/august-2018/working-together-for-quality-aged-care)</p> <p>The Quality Agency used multiple platforms for reaching approved providers of aged care services. Information about the Quality Agency was available through our website, targeted email correspondence, a regular industry e-newsletter, education and training events, and Better Practice conferences.</p>

KPI 2 - Communication with regulated entities is clear, targeted and effective

KPIs/Measures/Metrics	Evidence (Performance in 2017-18)
	<p>Regulatory Bulletins were launched this year to provide clear communication on regulatory practices. These are published on the Quality Agency Website.</p> <p>2.1.4 The feedback received about education sessions is voluntary. Of those participants that responded to education sessions evaluation, 99% of participants indicated positive responses to the evaluation questions relating to administration processes, education content and delivery.</p>
<p>Measure 2.2 We consider the impact on regulated entities and engage with industry groups and representatives of the affected stakeholders before changing policies, practices or service standards.</p> <p><i>2.2.1 Regular newsletter, Quality Standard provides regular information about practices and issues and invites comment.</i></p> <p><i>2.2.2 Number of meetings of Quality Agency Liaison Groups to communicate about and discuss changes in practice.</i></p>	<p>2.2.1 The Quality Agency’s “Quality Standard” newsletter was issued 11 times during 2017-18 and contained information on latest news relating to the quality agency and the aged care sector. Topics included transitioning to the new aged care quality standards, consumer experience reports, the Aged Care Diversity Framework and information about complaints in aged care.</p> <p>2.2.2 The Quality Agency Liaison Group (QALG) met four times during the financial year 2017-18 to engage with the sector about changes occurring within the Quality Agency and changes that impact the sector. Agenda topics included items such as the implementation of unannounced re-accreditation audits, the implementation of the new aged care quality standards, infection control and the Quality Agency’s risk based approach.</p>
<p>Measure 2.3 Our decisions and advice are provided in a timely manner, clearly articulating expectations and the underlying reasons for decisions.</p> <p><i>2.3.1 Percentage of decisions made within set timeframes.</i></p> <p><i>2.3.2 All accreditation and quality review report decisions include reasons for decisions.</i></p>	<p>2.3.1 Policies and procedures held by the Quality Agency supported decision-makers to consistently meet legislated and internal decision-making timeframes. Any decisions made were captured in the Quality Agency information management systems and were subject to investigation to inform future improvement activities.</p> <p>2.3.2 Reasons for decisions were provided by the standardised assessment report template for accreditation and quality reviews. This incorporated a clear and consistent approach to communicating decisions to approved providers of aged care services.</p> <p>The Nous Group external independent advice recommendation (3) was “strengthen capability in risk-based approaches and provide clinical or specialist support for quality surveyors and decision makers in the assessment of quality of care and services”. The Quality Agency has addressed this recommendation within the scope of the current</p>

KPI 2 - Communication with regulated entities is clear, targeted and effective

KPIs/Measures/Metrics	Evidence (Performance in 2017-18)
	<p>legislative authority by enhancements to the Computer Assisted Audit Tool (CAAT), training and support for Quality Surveyors. Legislative change with the introduction of unannounced audits from 1 July 2018 will further deliver on the intent for clarity and procedural fairness of audit outcomes into 2018-19.</p>
<p>Measure 2.4 Our advice is consistent and supports predictable outcomes.</p> <p><i>2.4.1 Approved procedures for communicating with providers of aged care services are used by staff and are controlled by business process management systems.</i></p> <p><i>2.4.2 Intensive initial training for quality surveyors; continuing professional development program is maintained.</i></p> <p><i>2.4.3 Resources to guide assessments and greater detail about how providers may meet expected outcomes are available publicly.</i></p>	<p>2.4.1 The Quality Agency Quality Assessor Handbook detailed the approved protocols for how communication occurs with approved providers of aged care services. This Handbook was controlled by internal document management systems and ensured that quality assessors had the most up to date version for their work program.</p> <p>2.4.2 The Quality Agency conducted five Quality Surveyor Training Programs, that is, the initial training program approved by the CEO under the Quality Agency Principles to register Quality Assessors during 2017-18. In addition, 25 continuing professional development sessions were offered to registered Quality Assessors across Australia.</p> <p>2.4.3 The Serious Risk information on the Quality Agency website was updated during 2017-18. In addition, resources and information for approved providers was made available via the Quality Agency external website provider portal, detailing various types of visits and contacts, their purpose and format.</p>
Self-assessed rating:	Substantially met

KPI 3 - Actions undertaken by regulators are proportionate to the regulatory risk being managed

KPIs/Measures/Metrics	Evidence (Performance in 2017-18)
<p>Measure 3.1 We apply a risk-based, proportionate approach to compliance obligations, engagement and regulatory certainty or impact.</p> <p><i>3.1.1 Risk and case management policies and procedures are available and followed by staff.</i></p> <p><i>3.1.2 Our risk and case management approach is publicly available.</i></p> <p><i>3.1.3 We make use of a range of actions proportionate to the extent, seriousness and/or risk of poor compliance performance and risk to care recipients.</i></p> <p><i>3.1.4 We provide time to remedy poor performance except where there is serious risk to care recipients.</i></p>	<p>3.1.1 The risk and case management policies implemented by the Quality Agency are available via internal documentation management systems (Q-Pulse). The risk management policy guides prioritisation of assessments by the Quality Agency. The case management approach used by the Quality Agency incorporates an assessment of the risk of an aged care service. This assessment determined the types of improvement actions required, and the type, scope and frequency of visits by the Quality Agency.</p> <p>The Nous Group external independent advice recommendation (4) was “support and recognise the significant role of decision makers in determining audit outcomes in setting the expectations of quality surveyors”. The case management process was improved in 2017-18 to better support the decision making functions for accreditation of high-risk services. Decision-making training was developed and will be implemented in 2018-19 for delegated decision makers.</p> <p>3.1.2 The risk management framework was published on the Quality Agency external website during 2017-18. https://www.aacqa.gov.au/about-us/The-way-we-manage-quality-and-safety-strengthening-risk.pdf The case management approach was detailed in the Quality Surveyor Handbook, Quality Agency Annual Reports and in other resources available on the Quality Agency external website.</p> <p>The Quality Agency was involved in the Carnell-Paterson Review of National Aged Care Quality Regulatory Processes during 2017-18. By way of providing submissions to the Review and cooperating with it, the Quality Agency also received the output of the review and took into consideration the recommendations to Government in the regulatory approach.</p> <p>The Quality Agency has a Memoranda of understanding with both the Aged Care Complaints Commissioner and the Department of Health which is published on the Quality Agency website. These arrangements support a coordinated and risk based approach. https://www.aacqa.gov.au/about-us/MOU-Complaints-Commissioner-and-Quality-Agency-June-2018.pdf</p> <p>In 2017-18, a set of risk based questions (published on the Agency’s website) were added to compliance monitoring through assessment contacts. Compliance detection rates are improved across all activities in 2017-18 compared to the previous year. For example, of 1,090 re-accreditation site audits during 2017-18, 6% detected new non-compliance compared with 3% of site audits during 2016-17. Our compliance monitoring is focusing in areas</p>

KPI 3 - Actions undertaken by regulators are proportionate to the regulatory risk being managed

KPIs/Measures/Metrics	Evidence (Performance in 2017-18)
	<p>of greatest risk.</p> <p>3.1.3 The Quality Agency responded to the Nous External independent advice report by accepting their recommendations for risk-based regulation. The Nous Group external independent advice recommendation (1) was to “embed risk-based practices to better direct compliance monitoring and approaches to high risk and complex services”. The existing risk framework has been revised and case management strengthened. Also, the Quality Agency is working with the Department of Health on the Budget Measures with respect to risk profiling to better analyse and segment sector risk and also towards performance differentiation under the aged care quality framework.</p> <p>The Quality Agency has received increased referrals in 2017-18 In 2017-18 there were 1,954 referrals from the Department of Health and the Aged Care Complaints Commissioner. We also received 1,888 intelligence reports from state government public health units. We also received 964 other information referrals including concerns raised by the public. The Agency has made better use of this risk information to target areas of possible non-compliance. Referrals and case source information are informing a focus on risk.</p> <p>In 2017-18, a set of risk based questions (published on the Agency’s website) were added to compliance monitoring through assessment contacts. Compliance detection rates are improved across all activities in 2017-18 compared to the previous year. For example, for assessment contacts during 2017-18 the rate of new non-compliance was 3% compared with 1% during 2016-17. Our compliance monitoring is focusing in areas of greatest risk.</p> <p>The Quality Agency has employed a range of regulatory approaches proportionate to the risk being managed and the capacity and commitment of the service provider to improve.</p> <p>Reaccreditation decisions consider the site audit report, the provider’s response to the site audit report and a broad range of factors specified in the Quality Agency Principles, 2013 when determining whether to reaccredit a service and the period of accreditation.</p> <p>Compliance monitoring has a focus on continuous improvement and holding providers to account for notified improvements.</p> <p>Compliance assistance (reported under 2.1.2) was provided to the sector in 2017-18 and a range of education programs were offered to support continuous improvement and promote better practice.</p>

KPI 3 - Actions undertaken by regulators are proportionate to the regulatory risk being managed

KPIs/Measures/Metrics	Evidence (Performance in 2017-18)
	<p>Following assessment processes there are opportunities to remedy poor performance by providing a timeframe by which a service must improve their systems, processes and outcomes for their consumers. The Quality Agency had 278 services placed on Timetables for Improvement (TFIs) during 2017-18 and of those, the majority (70%) were resolved during the period, returning the services to compliance.</p> <p>A review audit is used when there are reasonable grounds to believe that the standards are not being met. Of the 72 review audits conducted during 2017-18, there were 22 ‘Not to revoke’ decisions, 38 ‘Vary’ decisions, and 12 ‘Revoke’ decisions.</p> <p>The Agency considers the possible impact and risk of failure to meet the standards on individual care recipients. The Department of Health is notified when a failure to meet the standards is determined to have placed or may place a care recipient’s safety health or wellbeing at serious risks. This ensures that sanctions determined by the Department are focussed on areas of greatest risk.</p> <p>3.1.4 The Timetable for Improvement program allows approved providers of aged care services time to remedy poor performance, unless serious risk to the health and safety of consumers is identified.</p>
<p>Measure 3.2 Our preferred approach to regulatory risk is regularly reassessed. Strategies, activities and enforcement actions are amended to reflect changing priorities that result from new and evolving regulatory threats, without diminishing regulatory certainty or impact.</p> <p><i>3.2.1 Assessment program management provides for adjustment to respond to changes in regulatory threats and risks (e.g. pandemic, natural disasters).</i></p> <p><i>3.2.2 We take a thematic approach to assessment as appropriate to address emerging risks or issues.</i></p>	<p>3.2.1 The policy relating to risk and visit prioritisation details appropriate assessment program management to enable adjustments for changes in regulatory threats and risks. For example, approved providers closed for an illness outbreak will have their assessment visits rescheduled. Further, certain days notified to the Quality Agency e.g. for religious observances are excluded from the visit program by the Quality Agency.</p> <p>The Quality Agency’s case management decisions took into account a range of information, including information from the public or the media, referrals from the Department of Health and the Aged Care Complaints Commissioner (ACCC); and awareness of changes that had the potential to affect an approved provider’s performance.</p> <p>The Nous Group external independent advice recommendation (2) was “pre-planning of audits to allow a service’s characteristics, history and risks to inform conduct of the audit and ensure the allocation and composition of assessment teams”. The Quality Agency has strengthened pre-planning by using information about a service’s characteristics and compliance history. The policy to introduce unannounced audits was developed and is being implemented from 1 July 2018.</p>

KPI 3 - Actions undertaken by regulators are proportionate to the regulatory risk being managed	
KPIs/Measures/Metrics	Evidence (Performance in 2017-18)
	<p>3.2.2 The 2017-18 assessment program focused on performance assessment against the top five not met expected outcomes of the Age Care Standards.</p> <p>The Serious Risk policy was updated during 2017-18 and a Regulatory Bulletin on the topic published on the Quality Agency website. During 2017-18, there were 61 serious risk findings for residential aged care services up from 22 the previous financial year.</p> <p>The Quality Agency completed a thematic survey of Infection Control practices of approved providers of residential aged care. This was undertaken as an Assessment contact with all providers to understand practices following the influenza outbreak in 2017.</p>
<p>Measure 3.3 We recognise the compliance record of regulated entities, including using earned autonomy where this is appropriate. All available and relevant data on compliance, including evidence of external verification is considered.</p> <p><i>3.3.1 100% of decisions about assessments include consideration of compliance record consistent with policy.</i></p> <p><i>3.3.2 Participation with the SA Innovation Hub and evaluation to inform future earned autonomy approach(es).²</i></p>	<p>3.3.1 The Quality Agency business systems maintain a historical record of all the services that are regulated, including referrals obtained from the Department of Health and the ACCC as well as from regulatory activities. Quality assessment of an approved provider of aged care services and the historical data kept are used to inform accreditation decisions, the frequency of visits to a service and the scope of compliance monitoring activities.</p> <p>Reaccreditation decisions consider the site audit report, the provider’s response to the site audit report, the services compliance performance and a broad range of factors specified in the Quality Agency Principles, 2013 when determining whether to reaccredit a service and the period of accreditation.</p> <p>Of the reviewable decisions, the relevant approved provider can ask for a reconsideration under the Quality Agency Principles, 2013. In 2017-18, the Quality Agency made 1,084 reviewable decisions and were asked to reconsider 21 decisions by the relevant approved providers. This compares with 545 reviewable decisions in 2016-17, of which requests for reconsideration of six decisions were made.</p> <p>The Computer Assisted Audit Tool (CAAT) continued to be used by quality assessors to compile comprehensive and objective information and evidence on a residential aged care services’ performance. The CAAT has undergone improvements to ensure better identification of at-risk services and to improve compliance monitoring.</p>

² This activity is no longer current for the 2017-18 reporting period.

KPI 3 - Actions undertaken by regulators are proportionate to the regulatory risk being managed

KPIs/Measures/Metrics	Evidence (Performance in 2017-18)
	The Quality Agency began working with the Department of Health to implement the 2017-18 budget measure to design and implement a risk profiling system to identify risks to aged care consumers.
Self-assessed rating:	Substantially Met

KPI 4 - Compliance and monitoring approaches are streamlined and co-ordinated

KPIs/Measures/Metrics	Evidence (Performance in 2017-18)
<p>Measure 4.1 Our information requests are tailored and only made when necessary to secure regulatory objectives, and only then in a way that minimises impact.</p> <p><i>4.1.1 Evidence of collected information being acted upon, stored and re-used, where appropriate.</i></p> <p><i>4.1.2 Information requests are limited to explicit legislated requirements, case management decisions or to enable assessment of performance against legislated standards.</i></p> <p><i>4.1.3 Feedback from services shows minimal impact on service delivery.</i></p>	<p>4.1.1 The Quality Agency collects information and data from the aged care sector including approved providers of aged care services, the public, the media and the relevant government departments (Department of Health and the ACCC).</p> <p>4.1.2 The Quality Agency’s two key information requests from approved providers are the application for accreditation for residential aged care services (which forms part of the legislated accreditation process) and the service details form for home care services. The service details form is an operational request to confirm the details of the service including contact details and key personnel to ensure we are able to plan effectively for quality review visits and to confirm communication preferences in way to minimise impact to the service and inform our ongoing activities.</p> <p>The Quality Agency completed a survey of Infection Control for approved providers of residential aged care. Of the providers invited to complete the survey, 96.5% responded with their infection control practices. The outputs from this piece of work form a baseline from which the infection control regulatory objectives can be better met.</p> <p>4.1.3 Following each visit to a residential aged care service, the Quality Agency offers the service the opportunity to complete a post-visit feedback form. One of the questions on the feedback form asks for responses to the question “Please rate the performance of the team in terms of allowing care staff to continue their duties during the visit”. In 2017-18, 98% of responses from services that had received a visit rated our performance on that measure as either ‘excellent’, ‘very good’ or ‘good’.</p> <p>Following a Quality Review of a Home Care approved provider, an online questionnaire asks providers to rate that the “information requested by the Quality Agency is specific and has minimal impact on service delivery”. In 2017-18, 94% of responses received indicated a rating against this measure as either ‘excellent’, ‘very good’ or ‘good’.</p>

KPI 4 - Compliance and monitoring approaches are streamlined and co-ordinated

KPIs/Measures/Metrics	Evidence (Performance in 2017-18)
<p>Measure 4.2 Our frequency of information collection is minimised and coordinated with similar processes including those of other regulators so that, as far as possible, information is only requested once.</p> <p><i>4.2.1 Information provided by department and other sources is systematically recorded and used in lieu of independent information collection where practicable.</i></p>	<p>4.2.1 Under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Department of Health, the Quality Agency receives aged care sector data routinely. This data collection minimised the amount of information collection that the Quality Agency was required to do, as departmental data was already available.</p> <p>During 2017-18, the MOU with the Department of Health was being re-developed to ensure the Data Schedule agreement was up to date and accurate. This work program continued into 2018-19.</p> <p>During 2017-18, the Quality Agency updated its MOU with the Aged Care Complaints Commissioner (ACCC) enabling timely information sharing of complaints about the sector or specific services, the outcomes of related investigations or compliance monitoring activities by the Quality Agency.</p>
<p>Measure 4.3 We utilise existing information to limit the reliance on requests from regulated entities and share the information among other regulators, where possible.</p> <p><i>4.3.1 Transparency of assessment demonstrated in information available publicly about assessment processes, standards and considerations.</i></p> <p><i>4.3.2 Number of assessments co-ordinated with similar regulators.</i></p> <p><i>4.3.3 Information provided by department and other sources is systematically recorded and used in lieu of independent information collection where practicable.</i></p>	<p>4.3.1 The Quality Agency website includes information about the types of assessment contacts and visits that can be conducted with approved providers of aged care services. Also, guidance about the relevant standards are included on the Quality Agency website for the aged care sector and consumers to better understand how the standards relate to the expected outcomes of care and service provision.</p> <p>4.3.2 The Quality Agency, where possible, coordinated assessments with similar regulators (e.g. the Department of Health, state regulators) and also used other regulator information to inform the timing of assessments and compliance monitoring. For example, the Quality Agency worked with its co-regulator (the Public Health Units) regarding infection control and outbreak management to minimise interruptions to aged care services.</p> <p>4.3.3 The exchange of information requests between co-regulators is a way that the potential for duplication of information requests and unnecessary impost on approved providers was minimised. This is evidenced by the data exchange arrangements that were in place under the Quality Agency's published MOUs with the Department of Health and the ACCC.</p>

KPI 4 - Compliance and monitoring approaches are streamlined and co-ordinated

KPIs/Measures/Metrics	Evidence (Performance in 2017-18)
<p>Measure 4.4 We base monitoring and inspection approaches on risk and, where possible, take into account the circumstances and operational needs of the regulated entity.</p> <p><i>4.4.1 Operational needs and circumstances of services are taken into account in determining when to and when not to conduct unannounced assessments.</i></p> <p><i>4.4.2 100% of decisions to visit services are based on all information available and reasons recorded.</i></p> <p><i>4.4.3 We apply risk-based case- management approach to timing and scope of all assessments.</i></p>	<p>4.4.1 The Quality Agency conducts at least one unannounced visit to a residential aged care service per year. During 2017-18, the Quality Agency conducted 3,099 unannounced assessment contacts or review audits and the count of residential aged care services as at 30 June 2018 was 2,704. The unannounced visits program was targeted based on regulatory intelligence about the aged care service and the organisation that operated it. No notice of any kind was given for those visits. Note that the scheduling of unannounced visits considered the expiry date of a residential aged care services' accreditation period and aimed that the services did not have an unannounced visit within two to three months of their planned site audit.</p> <p>4.4.2 Regulatory intelligence held by the Quality Agency consisted of information received from the Department of Health, the ACCC and other sources (e.g. advocacy organisations, other stakeholders and the media). This intelligence informed the prioritisation of the compliance monitoring assessment program. The case management approach model that the Quality Agency used ensured that risk to the health and safety of consumers was considered paramount in determining which aged care services were prioritised for visits.</p> <p>4.4.3 The risk-based case management approach model that the Quality Agency applied during 2017-18 is documented in internal policy documentation for staff. During the last and current (2018-19) financial years, the Quality Agency has been developing a risk management strategy with a view to strengthening the risk management model for input into compliance monitoring. The strategy has already identified and shaped the Quality Agency's response to two types of risk: systemic risk (risks likely to exist across the sector) and regulated entity risk (the risks an individual approved provider presents based on their structure, governance, organisation, processes and actions). Furthermore, during 2017-18, the Quality Agency began working with the Department of Health to implement the 2018-19 budget measure to design and implement a risk profiling system to identify risks to aged care consumers.</p>
<p>Self-assessed rating:</p>	<p>Substantially met</p>

KPI 5 - Regulators are open and transparent in their dealing with regulated entities

KPIs/Measures/Metrics	Evidence (Performance in 2017-18)
<p>Measure 5.1 Our risk based frameworks are publicly available in a format which is clear, understandable and accessible.</p> <p><i>5.1.1 Our risk and case management policies are publicly available.</i></p> <p><i>5.1.2 Details of assessment processes including assessor resources available publicly on our website.</i></p>	<p>5.1.1 The risk framework documentation of the Quality Agency was revised during 2017-18. This risk framework was then published on the Quality Agency website.</p> <p>The Agency’s case management approach is described in the Quality Surveyor Handbook, Quality Agency Annual Reports, in regulatory Bulletins and in other resources available on the Quality Agency external website. The case management policy is not publicly available.</p> <p>In early 2017-18, the Serious Risk policy was published online to the Quality Agency website, as well as an additional Regulatory Bulletin on the topic (published August 2017).</p> <p>5.1.2 Throughout 2017-18 and ongoing, the Quality Agency website included details of the assessment processes and quality assessor resources such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Application form for re-accreditation for residential aged care services and similar resources for home care. - Self-assessment tools for approved providers of residential aged care services and other aged care services (e.g. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flexible program and Short-Term Restorative care program). - Plan for Continuous Improvement templates for approved providers to complete and submit to the Quality Agency supporting continuous improvement in the aged care sector. - The regular e-newsletter, the “Quality Standard” included detailed information about changes impacting the aged care sector and supportive information to assist approved providers to meet the standards. - Plain English Fact Sheets and Pocket Guide explaining the Accreditation and Home Care Standards and the quality assessment and quality review process. - Guidance material for the Aged Care Standards including new (draft) guidance material for the draft, new Single Quality Framework Aged Care Quality Standards. - Guidance material for the quality assessors including the Quality Surveyor Handbook, Report Writing Handbook, and the Results and Processes Guide. While these resources are principally for use by quality assessors, the can be accessed by approved providers to support their understanding of how the

KPI 5 - Regulators are open and transparent in their dealing with regulated entities

KPIs/Measures/Metrics	Evidence (Performance in 2017-18)
	Quality Agency conducts assessments and quality reviews against the applicable standards.
<p>Measure 5.2 We are open and responsive to requests from regulated entities regarding the operation of the regulatory framework, and approaches implemented by regulators.</p> <p><i>5.2.1 Information and education sessions about assessment programs are available.</i></p> <p><i>5.2.2 Information about assessment programs is available on our website.</i></p> <p><i>5.2.3 Feedback and complaints mechanisms are in place to inform continuous improvement; complaints and feedback responded to promptly.</i></p>	<p>5.2.1 The Quality Agency offered courses and workshops about accreditation and quality reviews during 2017-18. The education and information sessions were developed by qualified staff with industry experience in the development of course and workshop materials.</p> <p>The flagships ‘Understanding Accreditation’, ‘Managing Accreditation Performance’, ‘Understanding Quality Review’ courses were run throughout the financial year.</p> <p>During 2017-18, the Quality Agency delivered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 50 ‘Understanding Accreditation’ courses attended by 689 participants - 18 ‘Managing Accreditation Performance’ attended by 290 participants - 19 ‘Understanding Quality Review’ courses attended by 227 participants. <p>In addition, the following workshops were offered during the 2017-18 financial year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Making the most of complaints - Consumer directed care and the home care standards (in partnership with Home Care Today) - Focus on diversity (in partnership with the Centre for Cultural Diversity in Ageing). <p>During the financial year, there were 9 of these workshops, attended by 82 participants.</p> <p>5.2.2 The Quality Agency external website events portal contains timetables for courses, workshops and conferences on various topics to support the industry.</p> <p>5.2.3 The Quality Agency encourages feedback about its performance via formal channels (provider questionnaires and complaints) and informal sources (referrals and via email). Complaints and feedback are actioned according to their severity and the risk to the health and safety of consumers. The Quality Agency addressed complaints as soon as was practical taking into account procedural fairness requirements. The complaints policy supports the regular analysis of complaint data for continuous improvement.</p>

KPI 5 - Regulators are open and transparent in their dealing with regulated entities

KPIs/Measures/Metrics	Evidence (Performance in 2017-18)
<p>Measure 5.3 Our performance measurement results are published in a timely manner to ensure accountability to the public.</p> <p><i>5.3.1 Performance measurement results are published on time.</i></p>	<p>5.3.1 The Quality Agency Annual Report is published on the external website according to the timeframes set out in the <i>Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013</i>. The Quality Agency Annual 2016-17 Report was published on 30 September 2017 and the 2017-18 Annual Report on 19 October 2018.</p> <p>The Quality Agency Regulator Performance Framework Self-Assessment 2016-17 was published in June 2018, in accordance with the timeframes set out by the Department of Health.</p>
<p>Self-assessed rating:</p>	<p>Substantially met</p>

KPI 6 - Regulators actively contribute to the continuous improvement of regulatory frameworks

KPIs/Measures/Metrics	Evidence (Performance in 2017-18)
<p>Measure 6.1 We establish cooperative collaborative relationships with stakeholders to promote trust and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the regulatory framework.</p> <p>6.1.1 <i>Participation in the SA Innovation Hub.³</i></p> <p>6.1.2 <i>Regular Quality Agency Liaison Group meetings held.</i></p> <p>6.1.3 <i>Comprehensive education programs to assist providers and service staff to meet Standards and participate efficiently in assessment process; number of participants in education programs.</i></p> <p>6.1.4 <i>Collaboration with Aged Care Channel maintained.³</i></p> <p>6.1.5 <i>Annual Better Practice conferences – participation rates.</i></p> <p>6.1.6 <i>Feedback mechanisms are available and made known to all stakeholders.</i></p> <p>6.1.7 <i>Collaboration with industry and other associations in the delivery of education sessions.</i></p>	<p>6.1.2 The Quality Agency Liaison Group (QALG) met four times during 2017-18, and met the aim of at least three meetings per year. The QALG facilitated collaboration between the Quality Agency and key representatives of aged care peak bodies, consumer advocacy bodies and industry based unions and professional bodies. Feedback was sought from the group on issues including consumer experience reports, Serious Risk policy, the risk based approach and implementation of the new Aged Care Quality Standards.</p> <p>6.1.3 Sector participation in the Quality Agency education programs in 2017-18 was very positive. Over 4,400 participants attended these sessions nationally.</p> <p>The Quality Agency supported the drafting of legislation for amendments to the Quality Agency Principles to enable the introduction of unannounced audits. In conjunction with this, the Quality Agency conducted sector education and support around the unannounced audit program.</p> <p>6.1.5 The 2017-18 Better Practice conference was a sold out event. There were around 1,000 delegates to the four prior events held in the second half of 2017.</p> <p>6.1.6 The Quality Agency sought feedback via an email address (feedback@aacqa.gov.au), a telephone hotline, and via questionnaires about our services and education events.</p> <p>6.1.7 The Quality Agency was engaged with the industry sector via its leadership of provider roundtables, and education presentations such as to the COTA Australia Aged Care events and other industry conferences (e.g. International Dementia conference, Health Metrics World conference).</p>

³ This activity is no longer current for the 2017-18 reporting period.

KPI 6 - Regulators actively contribute to the continuous improvement of regulatory frameworks	
KPIs/Measures/Metrics	Evidence (Performance in 2017-18)
<p>Measure 6.2 We engage stakeholders in the development of options to reduce compliance costs. This could include industry self-regulation, changes to the overarching regulatory framework, or other strategies to streamline monitoring and compliance approaches.</p> <p><i>6.2.1 Participation in the SA Innovation Hub and evaluation.⁴</i></p> <p><i>6.2.2 Liaison and co-ordination with similar state government regulators to reduce regulatory events.</i></p> <p><i>6.2.3 Application for accreditation simplified and provision of self-assessment report removed.⁵</i></p>	<p>6.2.2 With the planned introduction of the new aged care quality standards, the Quality Agency has worked with approved providers of aged care services and consumers to develop a range of guidance and education support to accompany the implementation of the new standards.</p> <p>Throughout the year there was regular identification of implementation issues and weekly meetings held with Department of Health and the Aged Care Complaints Commission to improve the operation of the regulatory framework. Also, the Quality Agency had active participation in the Department of Health Technical Advisory Group (TAG) for the development of new aged care standards.</p> <p>The Quality Agency held several engagement meetings with the Department of Health and the ACCC to prepare for the implementation of the aged care Budget Measures of the Government.</p>
<p>Measure 6.3 We regularly share feedback from stakeholders and performance information (including from inspections) with policy departments to improve the operation of the regulatory framework and administrative processes.</p> <p><i>6.3.1 Maintenance and release of a national data set occurs.</i></p> <p><i>6.3.2 Information about performance of services is provided to the Department (100% of assessments, on time).</i></p>	<p>6.3.1 Information from the sector (through State based Agency Liaison meetings and National Quality Agency Liaison meetings) is regularly shared with the department of Health as the policy department. Executive from the Quality Agency meet weekly via teleconference, with the Department of Health to communicate issues and provide input to improve the operation of the regulatory framework.</p> <p>Significant input was submitted from the Quality Agency into the public Carnell-Paterson review into the national aged care regulatory processes which took place during 2017-18.</p> <p>In 2017-18, The Quality Agency submitted responses to the Senate Inquiry into 'Effectiveness of the Aged Care Quality Assessment and accreditation framework for protecting residents from abuse and poor practices and ensuring proper clinical and medical care standards are maintained and practised'. The Agency provided evidence at the Inquiry's public hearings.</p>

⁴ This activity is no longer current for the 2017-18 reporting period.

⁵ This metric is not applicable for the current reporting period. The removal of the requirement to attach the self-assessment report with the accreditation application has been in place for a number of years.

KPI 6 - Regulators actively contribute to the continuous improvement of regulatory frameworks

KPIs/Measures/Metrics	Evidence (Performance in 2017-18)
	<p>The Quality Agency also completed a submission to the 'Inquiry into the Quality of Care in Residential Aged Care Facilities in Australia', initiated by the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Health, Aged Care and Sport.</p> <p>The Quality Agency provided input to the department to respond to the 'Elder Abuse – A National Legal Response' report. The Commonwealth Quality Reform Budget Measures have since committed to explore options to implement a Serious Incident Reporting Scheme.</p> <p>The Quality Agency provides a national data set report each quarter that is reported to internal agency stakeholders, agency liaison group meetings as well as meetings with the Department of Health and the ACCC. This information shared is used to inform other regulatory processes from various other stakeholders.</p> <p>During 2017-18, development of a quarterly regulatory bulletin was underway, with an expectation of also releasing a Quality Agency national dataset onto a public format (www.data.gov.au).</p> <p>6.3.2 As a requirement under the <i>Quality Agency Reporting Principles 2013</i>, information about compliance decisions and findings of serious risk to consumers is provided in writing to the Department as soon as possible.</p>
Self-assessed rating:	Met

Concluding remarks

Summary of self-assessment results

Regulator Performance Framework KPIs	Ratings for 2017-18
1. Regulators do not unnecessarily impede the efficient operation of regulated entities.	Met
2. Communication with regulated entities is clear, targeted and effective	Substantially met
3. Actions undertaken by regulators are proportionate to the regulatory risk being managed.	Substantially met
4. Compliance and monitoring approaches are streamlined and coordinated.	Substantially met
5. Regulators are open and transparent in their dealings with regulated entities.	Substantially met
6. Regulators actively contribute to the continuous improvement of regulatory frameworks.	Met