



# Consumer advisory body

**Get ready** – applies to existing providers from 1 December 2023 or on the day of approval for new providers



**Effective governance and leadership are vital to ensure the safety and quality of aged care and positive consumer experiences.**

The *Aged Care Act 1997* has been amended to strengthen the governance arrangements of approved providers. These introduce specific changes aimed at:

- improving leadership and culture
- increasing transparency and accountability.



The new responsibilities align to Standard 8; organisational governance and elements of Standard 6; feedback and complaints of the Quality Standards.



They apply to approved providers of residential, home and flexible care, including short-term restorative care.

This new responsibility doesn't apply to approved providers that:

- operate under a grant agreement
- are a state or territory
- are a state or territory authority
- are a local government authority.

## The new responsibility

A consumer advisory body provides valuable feedback to the governing body and gives consumers a voice. Even if you already have a consumer advisory body or bodies, you must formally approach your consumers at least every 12 months to offer to revise/improve the current advisory body arrangements. This ensures that any changes in the care and services provided, or the advisory body membership or needs of members, are considered and addressed at least annually. Your invitation must:

- be in writing
- be extended to consumers and their representatives
- give information about the consumer advisory body and how to join.

When a consumer advisory body(s) is established, your governing body needs to consider all feedback they give about the quality of care and services your organisation provides. Your governing body must also write to the consumer advisory body(s) explaining how their feedback was used/considered.

## The consumer advisory body(s):

✓	can be any size or constitution to suit your organisation's needs
✓	can include current and past consumers and their representatives
✓	should include mostly current consumers and representatives
✓	must reflect your consumers' diverse backgrounds and support consumers with barriers to participate
✓	must have opportunities to give feedback to the governing body on the quality of aged care provided
✓	should have representatives from the different services and care you offer.

You may already have consumer bodies in your organisation. You can use existing bodies for this new responsibility if they meet the requirements.

## How

To encourage membership:

- produce clear and easy to understand information
- put up notices and posters at your service
- hold meetings about how to join and what membership involves

- approach consumers who may be interested
- educate workers about the consumer advisory body
- engage representatives
- inform consumers and their representatives about the value they provide as a member of the body.

If consumers choose not to establish or participate in an advisory body, find out why, so you can remove barriers and ensure accessibility.

## Record keeping

You must keep:

- a copy of each written offer made to establish a consumer advisory body
- the date the offers were made
- feedback from your consumer advisory body(s)
- all written advice from the governing body to the consumer advisory body(s) about how the governing body has considered their feedback
- location, dates and minutes of all meetings.

## Key information

- [Governing for Reform in Aged Care Program](#)
- [Provider responsibilities relating to governance: Guidance for approved providers](#)

November 2023



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### Write

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