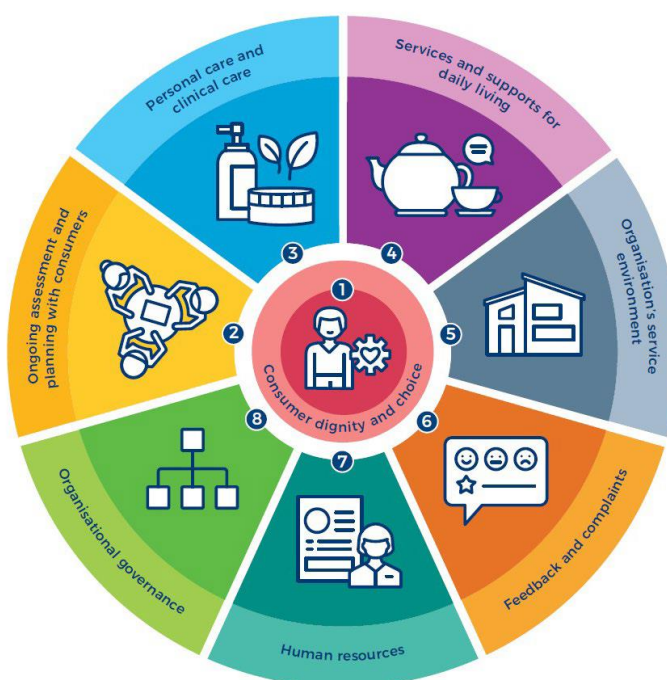


## Medication Safety and the Aged Care Quality Standards: What you need to know.

The new Aged Care Quality Standards went live on the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2019. These Standards are designed to support aged care providers to put consumers at the centre of the service delivery model.

Medication use is ubiquitous in aged care and plays a significant role in the quality of care of consumers. Whilst medications can be beneficial in treating many conditions, they can also cause harm. Medications have potential for pervasive impacts on a consumer's quality of life including sleep quality, appetite, cognition and physical functioning. A cornerstone of good quality medication management is to maximise the benefits of medications whilst minimising harms, with the goal of optimal health and well-being for consumers.

Therefore, managing medication in aged care involves ensuring consumers are at the centre of choosing which medications they take and the types of medication management services they receive. Several principles described throughout the standards are applicable to medication management services in aged-care. There are eight standards, two of which directly address medication safety (Standard 3 and Standard 8 in image below – courtesy of the Aged Care Quality Commission).



## Medication Management services in aged care

- **Standard 1:** Consumer dignity and choice. Consumers should be supported to make decisions with respect to their medications. This includes timely provision of accurate information to support decision-making.
- **Standard 2:** Ongoing Assessment and planning with consumers. Medication management services should provide safe and effective care which meets the changing needs of each consumer (including end of life planning).
- **Standard 3:** Personal care and clinical care. Medication management services should provide medication management which is best practice, tailored to a consumer's needs and optimises health and well-being outcomes. This includes identification and management of high-risk treatments (medications) which may not be appropriate and promotion of appropriate antibiotic prescribing.
- **Standard 4 and 5:** Not applicable to medication management.
- **Standard 6:** Feedback and complaints. Medication management services should be provided within an organisational framework that enables consumer feedback and complaints.
- **Standard 7:** Human resources: Medication management services should be provided by suitably qualified pharmacists in a kind, caring and respectful manner. There should be an organisational framework supporting pharmacists to regularly review their performance.
- **Standard 8:** Organisational governance: Medication management services should be accountable for the quality of the services they provide. Medication management services should assist providers to develop evidence-based clinical governance frameworks for high-risk practices such as antibiotic use and use of restraint.

### Spotlight on Standard 3: Personal and clinical care

This standard focuses on ensuring consumers receive personal and clinical care which is in accordance with their needs, goals and preferences with the goal of optimising health and well-being outcomes. There is a focus in this standard on antimicrobial stewardship.

Medications play a significant role in the clinical care of consumers in aged care. On average, each aged-care resident takes 12 regular medications every day, many of which may be considered high-risk or inappropriate. Medication management services can support aged care providers to comply with Standard 3 by:

- Provision of best practice and timely medication reviews by appropriately qualified pharmacists. Medication reviews should be conducted in consultation with the consumer and family/carer (when possible) and involve collaboration with all prescribers. Medication reviews should focus on the safe and appropriate use of

medications using evidence-based resources as well as tailoring each consumer's medication regimen to their individual health care goals.

- Provision of education and tools to assist with organisational antimicrobial stewardship. Best practice models of antimicrobial stewardship include: audit and feedback of antimicrobial prescribing, education of staff and prescribers and ongoing monitoring of use of antimicrobials.

***Go to: Medication Safety and Quality Toolkit and click on Antimicrobial Stewardship for more resources to assist with complying with Standard 3.***

### **Spotlight on Standard 8: Organisational governance.**

Standard 8 focuses on the ensuring that providers are accountable for the services they provide including managing high-risk practices. Medication management services can support providers to comply with Standard 8 by:

- Providing services which are governed by quality principles including information management, continuous improvement, regulatory compliance and workforce governance.
- Providing leadership on the development and implementation of appropriate risk management strategies and programs for addressing the use of high-risk medications.
- Providing leadership on the development and implementation of clinical governance frameworks for antimicrobial stewardship and minimising the use of restraint.

***Go to: Medication Safety and Quality Toolkit and click on Managing Mental Health for more resources to assist with complying with Standard 8.***

References available on request.