

Integrated Health and Aged Care Services Module

The Integrated Health and Aged Care Services (IHACS) Module replaces the *Multi-Purpose Services Aged Care Module* upon implementation of the *Aged Care Act 2024*. It is anticipated that the *Aged Care Act 2024* will come into effect on 1 November 2025.

Integrated health and aged care services provide both health and aged care services, generally from or on the same physical site. This includes aged care services delivered under the Commonwealth's Multi-Purpose Services Program (MPSP).

Purpose of the IHACS Module

Organisations delivering acute, emergency and sub-acute health services must meet the National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards. Organisations delivering funded aged care services must comply with the Aged Care Quality Standards (ACQ Standards). The NSQHS Standards and ACQ Standards support organisations delivering better care. To support a streamlined assessment process against both sets of standards, the IHACS Module describes the expectations of aged care services from the ACQ Standards that are not covered by the NSQHS Standards.

Eligible organisations will undergo a single assessment process against the NSQHS Standards plus the IHACS Module under the Australian Health Service Safety and Quality Accreditation (AHSSQA) Scheme. The IHACS Module has been developed for approved Commonwealth-funded integrated health and aged care services.

At the time of publication the IHACS Module applies to organisations delivering aged care services under the MPSP. Should additional aged care programs be included in the scope of the IHACS Module this will be reflected on the websites of the Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing and the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission.

New regulatory model for aged care

New aged care legislation, including a new regulatory model and new safety and quality standards, is effective from 1 November 2025 under the *Aged Care Act 2024* (the Act). All organisations providing funded aged care services must comply with the Act, including the requirement to be registered with the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (Aged Care Commission). As the aged care regulator, the Aged Care Commission has strengthened powers under the Act to check and ensure that providers are meeting their legislated obligations.

Registration obligations include (but are not limited to) compliance with the ACQ Standards. For eligible organisations, meeting the requirements of the NSQHS Standards plus the IHACS Module can be considered compliance with the ACQ Standards for the purposes of registration with the Aged Care Commission. The outcomes of assessment, as well as any risks identified during assessment, will be communicated to the Aged Care Commission as part of the registration or re-registration process.

Development of the IHACS Module

The IHACS Module was developed to align with the new ACQ Standards. The ACQ Standards specify the expected level of safe, high-quality care that providers of residential and community-based aged care services are to meet. Outcome statements in the ACQ Standards were mapped against the NSQHS Standards (second edition) to identify elements unique to the ACQ Standards. These elements are consolidated into 14 Module Items under the following themes.

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| 1. Person-centred care | 6. Emergency and disaster management | 11. Environment |
| 2. Dignity, respect and privacy | 7. Assessment and planning | 12. Infection prevention and control |
| 3. Choice, independence and quality of life | 8. Delivering comprehensive care and services | 13. Food and nutrition |
| 4. Agreements, fees, pricing, invoicing and statements | 9. Clinical safety | 14. Palliative and end-of-life care. |
| 5. Workforce and human resource management | 10. Care coordination and transition | |

Assessment to the IHACS Module

When preparing for assessment of its aged care services against the IHACS Module, the service provider must consider both:

- How to ensure that relevant NSQHS Standards actions are extended from the health service into the aged care service
- How to fulfil additional requirements from the ACQ Standards that are specific to the aged care service.

The Commission has developed a User Guide for the IHACS Module (the User Guide) and a monitoring tool to support implementation.

AHSSQA Scheme requirements

The Commission has developed a [flow chart](#) that provides an overview of the assessment cycle, accrediting agencies' reporting obligations and post-assessment actions by regulators and the Commission. Items within the IHACS Module are rated using the same scale as the NSQHS Standards (see [Fact Sheet 4](#): Rating scale for assessment) and assessments occur on a short-notice basis (see [Fact Sheet 17](#)).

Organisations assessed to the IHACS Module must comply with information provision to accrediting agencies that is in line with the relevant advisory on significant risks, complaints, investigations and major safety and quality incidents or reviews (for example, see Advisory [AS18/06](#) - Accreditation assessment requirements of health service organisations post significant clinical or governance review).

A yearly requirement under the AHSSQA Scheme is the governing body attestation statements which, for organisations assessed to the IHACS Module, must apply to its aged care services (see [Fact Sheet 7](#): Governing body attestation sheet).

Reporting on the outcomes of assessment

The outcomes of assessment to the IHACS Module will be communicated:

- By accrediting agencies to the Commission, including recognition of exemplar practice (see [Fact Sheet 5](#))
- By accrediting agencies to the Aged Care Commission to inform decisions about registration of the organisation to provide funded aged care services
- By the Commission to the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing to inform administration of Commonwealth-funded aged care programs.

Assessment results will be made publicly available on the Commission's website, alongside assessment results to the NSQHS Standards.

Contact with the regulators

The regulators related to the IHACS Module include the state and territory health care regulators and the Aged Care Commission. There are three circumstances where accrediting agencies are to communicate with the Commission and alert the regulators:

- Where any significant risks are identified during any stage of assessment (see [AS18/09](#) – Notification of significant risk)
- Where mandatory re-assessment or remediation is required (see [Fact sheet 3](#): Mandatory reassessment of health service organisations)
- Where an appeals process is lodged (see [Accreditation Assessment Outcome: Appeals Process](#)).

Further information

For more information on the IHACS Module you can [visit the Commission's website](#) or contact the Safety and Quality Advice Centre:

Telephone: 1800 304 056

Website: www.safetyandquality.gov.au/AdviceCentre

Email: AdviceCentre@safetyandquality.gov.au



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