Quality Domains for the Development of a Consumer Experience Report on Quality of Residential Aged Care

A Rapid Review Consultancy to the Australian Aged Care Quality Agency

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Quality of residential aged care services has long been of great interest to the Australian public. The landscape of aged care is changing rapidly, as are consumer expectations of what aged care has to offer, how it is offered and by whom. Terms such as ‘quality care’, ‘quality of life’, ‘quality staff’, and ‘quality of care home’ are at the forefront of almost every government, industry and consumer organisation policy documents. Instigated by the Productivity Commission’s *Caring for Older Australians* Report 2011, major changes have been introduced by the Commonwealth Government, including the development of systematic processes for a consumer centric quality evaluation in the aged care sector. However, concerns about inadequacies of systems and processes for how such ‘quality’ is captured and conveyed in a meaningful way to all stakeholders, especially from the consumers’ perspectives, have yet to be resolved.

The Australian Aged Care Quality Agency (Quality Agency) has recently proposed to expand consumer input to quality reporting through a new Consumer Experience Report (CER). The CER will in turn complement the current processes for assessing the quality of care and services in residential aged care homes and support consumers in making an informed choice, with a CER published as part of each residential site audit report. In response to the project brief provided by the Quality Agency, and building on their recent paper *Let’s Talk About Quality*, this review investigates and reports on consumer views of quality care within the Australian aged care context, and points to approaches for more systematic collection and analysis of such information.

To identify the drivers of choice, we first examine the aspects of quality and information sources that consumers draw on *prior to entry* to residential care to guide their choice of homes. Second, to identify the aspects of care that are most important in shaping consumer experiences of quality of residential care *after admission*, we investigate a range of material including surveys of consumer satisfaction and in-depth studies of experience and outcomes. A rapid narrative review methodology was chosen to produce the evidence for developing a practical solution and decision-making, consistent with current policy, in a timely manner. The scope of this review was limited to Australian grey and academic literature published between 2006 and 2016. A total of 47 papers, 41 research papers and 6 reports, were included in the review.

This Rapid Review, conducted for the Australian Aged Care Quality Agency, has identified and made recommendations for a set of quality domains for the residential aged care sector.

For Drivers for choice of residential aged care home the following domains are recommended:

- Physical environment
- Location
- Maintaining identity
• Keeping independence
• Maintaining continuity
• Staff capability and care with respect and dignity
• Availability of care and health services at all times
• Trusting management

For key domains of quality for residential aged care home the following domains are recommended:

• Choice
• Respect and dignity
• Physical environment
• Social environment
• Functional environment
• Staff actions and interactions
• Organisational environment and resources
• Clinical and personal care

This work is a first step towards developing meaningful processes to better understand consumers’ experiences of residential aged care and the implications of the consumer experiences in determining ‘quality’ of care and services for the consumers, which in turn will help staff, service providers and policy makers further improve ‘quality’. The review also provides methodological considerations (sampling and question development) for the CER, to facilitate better and more comprehensive ways of capturing quality of care and services from consumers’ perspectives.

Suggested citation