During an accreditation site audit, the Quality Agency uses interviews, observations and a review of documentation to help assess the management practices, systems and processes in homes against the Aged Care Quality Standards.

The Quality Agency interviews a minimum of 10% of residents and their representatives during a site audit visit. Providers must give advance notice of the audit to residents and their representatives, so they have an opportunity to provide their views on the quality of care and services.

Another way consumers can provide their views is through Consumer Experience interviews.

How can consumers be involved in assessing quality?

The Australian Aged Care Quality Agency is now publishing Consumer Experience Reports on residential aged care homes. These reports help consumers make decisions about care and services.
How do we assess quality in aged care?
The Australian Aged Care Quality Agency is an independent government body that assesses and monitors residential aged care services to ensure they comply with the aged care quality standards for the quality of care and services in aged care (Aged Care Quality Standards). This helps ensure older people receive the best care possible.

All residential aged care homes that receive government funding need to meet the Aged Care Quality Standards. These standards cover areas such as consumer dignity and autonomy, personal and clinical care, lifestyle services and support, and staffing and management.

The Quality Agency audits homes to measure their performance against the aged care quality standards. This includes interviewing a minimum 10% of consumers in each home.

Homes that meet the standards are accredited for a certain period, and can continue to receive government funding. If homes are not meeting the expected standards, then the Australian Government will hold them to account.

Other ways the Quality Agency helps to ensure quality in aged care is through education and guidance for providers, and consultation with consumers and other key stakeholders.

How does the Quality Agency report on quality in aged care?
The Quality Agency publishes reports about the quality of care and services provided in each government-funded residential aged care home. The Quality Agency makes these reports publicly available on its website at www.aacqa.gov.au/publications.

Accreditation Audit Reports show the results of accreditation audits conducted at homes - showing how each home performs against the quality standards.

Consumer Experience Reports provide information about how consumers experience the quality of care and services they receive in each home. The Quality Agency interviews a random sample of consumers during home audits.

What do Consumer Experience Reports tell me?
The report for each home shows how a random sample of consumers responded to 10 key questions covering aspects of the Aged Care Quality Standards at the home. For example:

- Do staff treat you with respect?
- Do you feel safe here?
- Do staff meet your healthcare needs?
- Do staff follow up when you raise things with them?
- Do the staff explain things to you?
- Do you like the food here?

Will my feedback be confidential?
A Consumer Experience Report does not identify individual consumers in the report. It is published for homes undergoing re-accreditation, where minimum sample requirements for consumer interviews can be met.

How were Consumer Experience Reports developed?
A working group comprised of consumers and industry representatives informed the development of the reports. The work was underpinned by research conducted by the University of Sydney. Experts from La Trobe University developed and tested the questions. The result is user-friendly reports that can be easily accessed and understood by consumers.