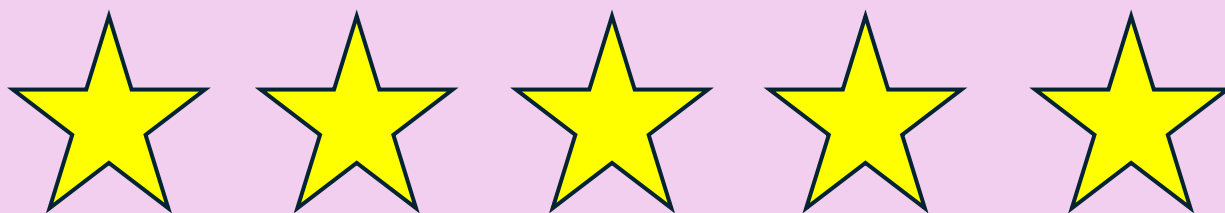


Star Ratings – Are they Reliable?

Fact Sheet: Understanding the Star Rating system for Residential Aged Care Facilities

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What are Star Ratings?

Star Ratings were introduced in December 2022 to assist the public in identifying residential aged care facilities that deliver quality care.

Star Ratings are a quantitative measure and as such have been controversial and criticised as unreliable in identifying quality care.

The Star Ratings system was introduced to provide a transparent, standardised, and easily understood method of assessing the quality of aged care services, as historical assessments tools were often fragmented and difficult to interpret.

Calculating Star Ratings

Star ratings for residential aged care facilities in Australia are developed through a combination of subjective, consumer-reported, regulatory, and clinical data forms.

What is included in measuring Star Ratings;

- **Residents' Experience**

The first sub-category is 'Residents' experience' which involves a face-to-face annual Resident's Experience Survey. The respondents are asked questions on their personal experience regarding safety, staff treatment, food quality, social engagement, and overall satisfaction.

- **Compliance**

Compliance with quality standards and regulatory requirements is also measured using data from the aged care regulator, the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission, including site audit outcomes and findings of non-compliance. From 1 November 2025, the Compliance rating incorporates graded assessments against the strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards and relevant regulatory decisions.

- **Staffing**

‘Staffing’ is measured through the average amount of care time, personal, and clinical care, that is received by aged care residents, which is compared to benchmark average care targets.

The average minimum care targets are determined depending on the specific care needs of their residents, which is ultimately modelled against national standards under the Australian National Aged Care Classification funding model. To achieve a rating of 3 stars or more, aged care facilities must meet both of their mandatory Registered Nurse care minutes, as well as their total care minutes targets.

- **Quality Measures**

‘Quality Measures’, requires measuring the quality of care provided to residents across 5 quality indicators under the National Aged Care Quality Indicator Program. Providers are asked to report clinical outcomes, including pressure injuries, restrictive practices, unplanned weight loss, falls and major injury, and medication management. Methods of measurement are applied to determine performance against other facilities.

The overall Star Rating combines residents' experience (33%), provider compliance (30%), staffing (22%) and quality measures (15%). The percentages show how much each area contributes to the overall rating, with residents' experience and provider compliance carrying the greatest weight.

In what way could the rating system be improved?

- **Improving the reliability** of the Residents' Experience Survey, particularly for vulnerable residents, while protecting anonymity and better capturing the experiences of people living with dementia, cognitive impairment or communication difficulties.
- Better **identifying and reflecting provider non-compliance** with the Aged Care Act and regulatory requirements.
- Including **non-delivery of care minute targets** and 24/7 Registered Nurse requirements.
- **Reducing the time lag** between compliance issues being identified and those issues being reflected in Star Rating.
- Making it clearer when providers have had **serious non-compliance issues**.
- Currently there is no overall Star Rating for a facility if one of the four sub-category ratings is missing, reducing transparency for consumers.
- **Further clarification is needed** where a facility has a good overall rating but has performed poorly in staffing or compliance.

A reliable Star Ratings system is essential to public confidence in aged care and should be extended to Support at Home. However, further refinement is needed to ensure ratings are accurate, transparent and meaningful for consumers.

Contact Aged Care Justice if you would like a free legal consultation:



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