



Aged Care Services Policy

1. Purpose

WA Country Health Service (WACHS) is a Registered Provider of aged care services under the [Aged Care Act 2024](#) (Cth) (the Act), and as such must comply with specific legislative requirements.

This policy provides an overview of the key requirements of the Act, the Aged Care Rules 2025, and the Aged Care (Transitional Provisions and Consequential Amendments) Rules 2025 such as:

- [Statement of Rights](#)
- [Statement of Principles](#)
- governance and reporting requirements
- incident management and Serious Incident Response Scheme (SIRS)
- quality and safety
- workforce
- [Code of Conduct for Aged Care.](#)

The requirements under the Act will be managed in line with relevant WA health system policy frameworks and WACHS policy documents as relevant to the facility, site or program.

This policy promotes culturally safe, trauma-aware and healing informed aged care for Aboriginal people in partnership with Aboriginal communities and ACCHOs consistent with the [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Aged Care Framework 2025-2035](#).

2. Policy

WACHS provides Commonwealth funded aged care services through:

- Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP)
- Support at Home Program
- Specialist Aged Care Programs, specifically Transition Care Program (TCP) and Multi-Purpose Services Program (MPSP)
- Residential Aged Care.

Individual aged care programs may be supported by specific operational manuals and supplementary policy documents.

Staff are advised to consult with their line manager to confirm the applicable documentation relevant to their scope of practice and service delivery.

WACHS is committed to service delivery on Country, ensuring culturally safe, person-centred aged care that supports older Aboriginal people to age well within their community and cultural context.

2.1 Eligibility and Access Pathway

Individuals seeking to access Commonwealth funded aged care services are required to undergo an aged care needs assessment. An older person may be eligible if they have care needs, and they are:

- 65 years or older
- 50 years or older – if they are an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person, or homeless or at risk of becoming homeless

Note that these eligibility criteria do not apply to acute/subacute services delivered from MPSP sites.

2.2 Statement of Rights

The [Statement of Rights](#) outlines the rights that older people have when accessing aged care services and ensures that older people and their needs are at the centre of services provided.

Under the [Act](#), every person has the right to:

- maintain independence, autonomy, empowerment and freedom of choice
- have equitable access
- receive quality and safe aged care services from government funded providers
- have their privacy and personal information protected
- receive good communication
- raise issues without the fear of reprisal (negative consequences)
- access advocates
- stay connected to the people who are important to them

As a Registered Provider, WACHS and its aged care workers must take all reasonable steps to uphold the rights of the individuals, demonstrate understanding of these rights and embed practices to ensure service delivery consistently aligns with them.

The Aged Care Statement of Rights, consistent with the [WACHS Cultural Governance Framework](#) reinforces the principals of cultural safety, respect for identity, and equitable access-ensuring that the rights of Aboriginal people are embedded in governance, service design, and care delivery.

2.3 Statement of Principles

The [Statement of Principles](#) guides decisions, actions and behaviours required under the Act. It includes principles that registered providers should deliver care in a way that:

- is person-centred
- values workers and carers
- is transparent, sustainable, and represents value for money
- continues to improve.

Refer to the [ACQSC Statement of Principles](#) for more information.

2.4 Governance and Reporting Requirements

WACHS must comply with relevant regulations and reporting requirements pertaining to:

- the governance of the organisation including governing, quality care and advisory bodies, and key personnel
- financial management and prudential standards
- information management and access including personal information, record keeping, and the provision of information to individuals
- complaints management and open disclosure processes.

Associated providers must deliver contracted services in accordance with the obligations applicable to Registered Providers under the Act. It is mandatory that service agreements are established, clearly outlining these legislative requirements to ensure compliance and accountability.

2.5 Incident management and Serious Incident Response Scheme (SIRS)

WACHS is required to maintain an effective incident management system to identify, manage and resolve all known, alleged or suspected incidents related to aged care services delivered and support open disclosure processes as per WACHS [Open Disclosure Policy](#) to prevent future incidents.

WACHS must identify reportable incidents and report them through the [Serious Incident Response Scheme \(SIRS\)](#).

Aged care workers must follow the SIRS reporting process when responding to incidents that are reportable under the Act. Refer to WACHS SIRS Procedure (in development).

Where a reportable incident occurs under SIRS that involves an individual who is also a National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) participant, aged care workers must notify the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission and the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission.

Where appropriate an incident should also be reported under the [Datix Client Incident Management System](#). Please see [MP Clinical Incident Management Policy](#) for more information.

2.6 Quality and Safety

WACHS must ensure compliance with quality and safety requirements in accordance with the applicable Registration category and the specific aged care Program being delivered.

This includes but is not limited to the:

- [Aged Care Quality Standards \(ACQS\)](#)
- [National Safety Quality Health Service \(NSQHS\) Standards](#)
- [Integrated Health and Aged Care Services \(IHACS\) Module](#)

Commonwealth funded aged care services are required to maintain a Continuous Service Improvement Plan. WACHS meets this requirement through Quality Improvement Plans which are informed by service audits such as the National Aged Care Quality Indicator Program.

All WACHS residential aged care sites supporting NDIS participants must also comply with the relevant NDIS legislation and the [NDIS Practice Standards](#).

Cultural safety, connection to Country and trauma-aware care are integral to the delivery of safe, high-quality services. WACHS ensures that quality and safety systems reflect Aboriginal health priorities by embedding culturally responsive and trauma-informed approaches that support older Aboriginal people to live and age well on Country, consistent with the [WACHS Aboriginal Health Strategy](#) and the [WA Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Framework 2015-2030](#).

2.7 Aged Care Worker Requirements

In accordance with Section 152 of the Act, WACHS, as a Registered Provider, must comply with all requirements relating to the screening, qualifications, training and capability development of aged care workers and responsible persons. Under the Act, a volunteer is considered an 'aged care worker'.

As prescribed by the [Aged Care Rules 2025](#) all WACHS aged care workers must:

- undergo and comply with aged care worker screening
- meet qualifications and training requirements
- be given opportunities to comply with other obligations as required e.g. vaccinations
- be given opportunities to develop their capability to provide funded aged care services.

2.8 Aged Care Code of Conduct

All WACHS aged care staff are required to comply with the [Code of Conduct for Aged Care](#). This includes:

- supporting a person's right to personal choice, dignity and respect
- promoting kind, honest and respectful behaviour
- keeping people receiving aged care safe from harm

In addition to adhering to the Code of Conduct for Aged Care and [Code of Conduct for NDIS](#) where relevant, WACHS and all WACHS staff, must also comply with the MP 0124/19 [Code of Conduct Policy](#).

3. Roles and Responsibilities

“**Responsible persons**” are responsible for exercising due diligence to ensure the organisation delivers safe, quality aged care in compliance with legislative duties, including governance, risk management and adherence to the Aged Care Quality Standards and Aged Care Code of Conduct.

“**Aged care workers**” are required to comply with directions and Standards under the Aged Care Act 2024, related to their scope of service.

Volunteers, in addition to “aged care worker” requirements, must also comply with the directions per the WACHS [Volunteer Policy](#).

All staff are required to comply with the directions in WACHS policies and procedures as per their roles and responsibilities. Guidelines are the recommended course of action for WACHS and staff are expected to use this information to guide practice. If staff are unsure which policies procedures and guidelines apply to their role or scope of practice, and/or are unsure of the application of directions they should consult their manager in the first instance.

4. Monitoring and Evaluation

The WACHS Older Adult Program Committee will review quality and compliance indicators on legislative obligations on a quarterly basis and escalate issues to relevant governing committees as required.

Additional compliance mechanisms include but are not limited to:

- Statement of Compliance
- Financial and prudential reporting requirements
- Quality and safety reporting and assessments against relevant Standards and Indicators.

This policy will be evaluated as required to determine effectiveness, relevance and currency. At a minimum, it will be reviewed every five years by the Older Adult Program Committee.

5. References

[Aged Care Act 2024](#)

[Aged Care Rules 2025](#)

[Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission, "Provider obligations"](#)

6. Definitions

Term	Definition
Aboriginal	Within Western Australia, the term Aboriginal is used in preference to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, in recognition that Aboriginal people are the original inhabitants of Western Australia. No disrespect is intended to our Torres Strait Islander colleagues and community.
Aged Care Worker	<p>An aged care worker of a registered provider refers to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) an individual employed or otherwise engaged (including as a volunteer) by the registered provider to deliver funded aged care services; or (b) an individual who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) is employed or otherwise engaged (including as a volunteer) by an associated provider of the registered provider; and (ii) is engaging in conduct under the associated provider's arrangement with the registered provider relating to the registered provider's delivery of funded aged care services; or (c) an individual who is a registered provider. <p>Note: An individual engaged by a registered provider includes an independent contractor.</p>
Registered Provider	<p>In Section 10 of the Act, registered providers are defined as:</p> <p>(2) an entity registered under paragraph 67(1)(a) in one or more provider registration categories and with effect in relation to one or more service groups.</p> <p>(3) A registered provider is registered in one or more provider registration categories which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the residential care category; and (b) any other category prescribed by the rules.
Responsible Person	<p>In Section 12 of the Act, a responsible person is defined as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) any person responsible for the executive decisions of the registered provider. (b) any other person who has authority or responsibility for planning, directing or controlling the activities of the registered provider (c) Any person who has responsibility for overall management of the nursing services delivered by the registered provider; and who is a registered nurse; and (d) Any person who is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the registered provider.
Staff	<p>Staff member, of a health service provider, means</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) an employee in the health service provider (b) a person engaged under a contract for services by the health service provider; (section 6, Health Services Act 2016)

Volunteer	<p>In Chapter 1, Part 2 of the Act an Aged Care Volunteer means a person who:</p> <p>(a) Volunteers for or is otherwise engaged by a person or body that receives financial assistance under section 265 for the purpose mentioned in paragraph 265 (2) (d); and</p> <p>(b) Implements that purpose by visiting individuals accessing funded aged care services to provide companionship, social support or friendship to those individuals who are socially isolated or are at risk of social isolation.</p>
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Document Summary

Coverage	WACHS sites delivering services under the Aged Care Act 2024
Audience	WACHS Aged Care workers and relevant WACHS staff
Records Management	Corporate Record Keeping Compliance Policy Health Record Management Policy
Related Legislation	<p>Aged Care Act 2024</p> <p>Aged Care Rules 2025</p> <p>Health Services Act 2024 (WA)</p> <p>National Insurance Disability Scheme Act 2013 (Cth)</p> <p><i>And other legislation relevant to applicable WA Health system frameworks and WACHS policy documents</i></p>
Related Mandatory Policies / Frameworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clinical Governance Safety and Quality Policy Framework • Employment Policy Framework • Financial Management Policy Framework • Information Management Policy Framework • Integrity Policy Framework
Related WACHS Policy Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumer and Carer Feedback Management Policy • National Disability Insurance Scheme Worker Screening Policy • Open Disclosure Policy • Volunteer Policy • Residential Aged Care Services Guidelines (in development) • Community Aged Care Services Guidelines (in development) • Aged Care Criminal Record Screening Policy
Other Related Documents	<p>Code of Conduct for Aged Care</p> <p>Provider Governance Policy (ACQS)</p> <p>WACHS Cultural Governance Framework</p> <p>WACHS Aboriginal Health Strategy</p> <p>WA Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Framework 2015-2023</p> <p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Aged Care Framework 2025-2035</p>

Related Forms	MR40 series
Related Training	Available from MyLearning : Aged Care: Serious Incident Response Scheme – Home and Community Services (SIRSC EL2) Aged Care: Serious Incident Response Scheme – Residential Care (SIRSR EL2) Strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards (ACQS EL2) The New Aged Care Act: Understanding and Adapting to the New System (NACA EL1) Aged Care: Know Your Code (KYC EL2) Record Keeping Awareness Training (RAT) Open Disclosure: The initial Discussion (ODDIS EL2) Accountable & Ethical Decision Making (AEDM) Aboriginal Cultural eLearning (ACeL) Aboriginal Person Centred Care training Supporting Older People: Trauma-Informed Care training (TIC EL2)
Aboriginal Health Impact Statement Declaration (ISD)	The completion of an Aboriginal Health Impact Statement and Declaration (ISD) is required for all new and revised policy documents. For further information, please see the ISD Guidelines . ISD Record ID: 4883
National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards	1.01 - 8.13 (MPSP)
Aged Care Quality Standards	1 - 7
Chief Psychiatrist's Standards for Clinical Care	NA
Other Standards (please specify and include link)	

7. Document Control

Version	Published date	Current from	Summary of changes
8.00	23 February 2026	23 February 2026	Change of title (previously Residential Aged Care Services Policy) to accurately reflect scope. Purpose changed to reflect the legislative requirement of WACHS as a registered aged care provider.

8. Approval

Policy Owner	Chief Operations Officer
Co-approver	Nil
Contact	Senior Program Manager Aged Care
Business Unit	Aged Care
EDRMS #	ED-CO-14-4198

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