

Future directions for supported residential services (SRS)

## Discussion sheet 7:

# Accommodation and personal care standards

The current SRS regulatory scheme is being updated. Changes are proposed to the existing scheme to enhance protection for people living in SRS and to ensure the scheme is contemporary and provides flexibility to meet the needs of the industry into the future.

**The *Health Services Act 1988* and the SRS Regulations set a range of minimum standards for the accommodation and personal care provided to residents. These span a wide range of areas from requirements for the physical premises to be safe and home-like through to specific requirements related to the personal care provided to residents. These provide important protections for residents and were the subject of a range of submissions to the review.**

### What we know

- During the consultations conducted for this review it was evident that many proprietors provide services well in excess of these minimum standards. It was, however, still considered important to have minimum standards to protect the safety and wellbeing of residents.
- Some of the current standards are highly prescriptive such as '*the finger nails of each resident should be trimmed at least once a week*'. These sorts of statements make it difficult for proprietors to be responsive to individual needs and, at the same time, remain compliant with the regulations.
- Other standards are very general giving proprietors too little guidance about what is expected to be provided. The lack of clarity about some of the standards has, at times, made it difficult to assess compliance.
- Complaints have also been received from residents, proprietors and community visitors to review the standards so they are contemporary, appropriate and clear.
- In modern regulations in human service areas there has been a move away from prescriptive standards to principle-based standards. Principle-based standards are statements about what outcome is expected to be achieved such as that '*residents will be assisted to maintain a reasonable standard of personal hygiene*'. Such statements provide more flexibility to determine how standards will be met for each resident.

### New directions – proposals for legislative reform

It is proposed to retain the existing standards as minimum standards and to consolidate them into an integrated set of consistent outcome-based standards that are defined in terms of what residents can expect. As outcome based statements, they will be more flexible than existing standards in order to meet individual differences.

The practical, clear layout of the standards and the expected outcomes will lessen confusion about what proprietors' obligations are in meeting the needs of residents.

The objectives and principles for the new legislation described in *Discussion sheet 1* provide an overarching framework for the new outcome standards. All of these will inform detailed guidelines that will be issued under the legislation to underpin the standards. The guidelines will give a range of examples that describe what is expected and how each outcome will be assessed for compliance.

Proprietors must continue to meet all of these standards as a condition of registration.

**Proposal: To put in place an integrated set of outcome-based standards for accommodation and care that a proprietor is obliged to meet for residents.**

Standards across four broad areas have been developed:

- lifestyle
- food and nutrition
- personal and health care
- physical environment.

Within these areas, a number of domains have been identified together with a brief description of the principle-based outcome that is expected for each domain.

**Standard 1: Lifestyle**

Residents retain their personal, civic, legal and consumer rights and are assisted to achieve active control of their own lives within the facility and in the community.

	<b>Domain</b>	<b>Expected outcome</b>
1.1	Privacy, confidentiality and dignity	Residents' rights to privacy, confidentiality and dignity are respected at all times.
1.2	Protection from abuse	Residents are treated with respect and not subject to verbal, emotional, sexual or physical abuse or neglect.
1.3	Protection of personal property	Residents are provided with suitable facilities and assistance to ensure their personal property is not used, taken, borrowed or given to anyone else without their permission.
1.4	Emotional support and respect	Residents live in a 'home-like' environment in which they enjoy positive relationships with staff who are supportive of residents' emotional wellbeing.
1.5	Participation and choice	Residents are encouraged to participate in decisions and are enabled to exercise choice and control over their lifestyles and the services they receive, while not infringing on the rights of other people.
1.6	Independence	Residents are encouraged to achieve optimal independence and maintain friendships and family relationships.
1.7	Leisure	Residents are encouraged to participate in activities that interest them within and outside the facility.

## Standard 2: Food and nutrition

Residents are provided with safe and nutritious food sufficient to meet their daily requirements.

	<b>Domain</b>	<b>Expected outcome</b>
2.1	Participation and choice	Residents' health and dietary preferences are taken into account in the selection of food.
2.2	Nutritious food	Residents are provided with food that is adequate in quality, quantity, variety and nutritional value to meet their daily requirements.
2.3	Meal times	Residents are provided with food at regular intervals and times.
2.4	Safe food	Food facilities and storage and preparation practices comply with relevant regulation.

## Standard 3: Personal care and support

Residents receive personal care services in accordance with their mobility and personal care needs and are encouraged to access appropriate health care providers, as necessary.

	<b>Domain</b>	<b>Expected outcome</b>
3.1	Personal hygiene	Residents are assisted to maintain an acceptable level of personal hygiene.
3.2	Toiletries	Residents have access to toiletries as necessary to safely maintain their personal hygiene.
3.3	Clothing	Residents are assisted to dress in clean and well-maintained clothing of their choice, which is appropriate to the climate.
3.4	Bedding and linen	Residents' beds are maintained with clean bedding and linen that is kept in good repair and is adequate for warmth.
3.5	Personal safety	Residents can contact a staff member for assistance at all times using an electronic communications system that is installed in each bedroom, toilet, shower room and bathroom and operates continuously.
3.6	Medication management	Residents' medication is stored, distributed and administered safely and effectively.
3.7	Choice of and access to health care providers	Residents are offered the opportunity to select their own health care providers (such as GP, allied health, dentist) and are provided with reasonable support to access those providers appropriately.
3.8	First aid	At all times, a well-equipped and maintained first aid kit is available that is easily recognisable and accessible to staff.
3.9	Care planning	The care of each resident is guided by a documented care plan in consultation with the resident and that identifies the initial and ongoing health, personal care and other support needs of the resident and the services to be provided to assist with those needs.
3.10	Information transfer	If a resident is transferred to another residential service or is admitted as an inpatient to a health care agency, an adequate written summary in accordance with the guidelines is sent with the resident to enable the ongoing provision of high-quality health and personal care and a record of that information is retained at the transferring service.

## Standard 4: Physical environment

The premises are safe, well-maintained and in a comfortable condition and residents and visitors can find their way around easily.

	Domain	Expected outcome
4.1	A comfortable environment	<p>The premises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• have a home-like appearance in all areas</li><li>• are maintained at an appropriate temperature</li><li>• are clean and hygienic</li><li>• are well lit</li><li>• are maintained in good repair and in safe condition.</li></ul> <p>Furniture in common areas and bedrooms is clean and comfortable, safe and well maintained.</p> <p>Waste is removed promptly.</p> <p>Offensive odours are controlled.</p>
4.2	Ease of access	<p>Residents should have ease of access and be able to move around freely.</p> <p>Bedrooms should be numbered clearly.</p> <p>A plan of the facility that identifies resident room allocations and exit points should be kept in a prominent but not public place for access in an emergency. Exits should be clearly marked.</p>

## Implementation

Once the legislation is passed, new regulations will be developed that will include these proposed standards. This means the standards will come into effect some months after the legislation has been passed. In the interim proprietors will continue to be required to meet the standards in the existing regulatory scheme.

The department will develop guidelines to support proprietors. These will be developed in consultation with stakeholders to ensure the expected outcomes are fair and clear.

Training for proprietors and departmental officers involved in monitoring the program and community visitors will be provided.

Information sheets will be developed for residents and their families. Once finalised, the accommodation and care standards together with the guidelines and information sheets will be published on the department's website.

## Frequently asked questions

### Q. 1 What are the standards?

**A.** The standards outline the level and quality of personal care and service one can expect to receive when living in an SRS.

The standards currently exist in the legislation, but they can be hard to find. The proposed new format for standards will make it easier, both for proprietors to understand their obligations in delivering the standards and for residents to understand what they can expect.

### Q.2 What will the proposed standards mean for residents?

**A.** Moving to an outcome-based approach to standards means that a more flexible and personal approach can be taken to meet individual resident personal care needs. The proposed standards will

also be written in a clear and comprehensible language that will be easier for residents and their families to understand in terms of what they can expect to receive from an SRS.

### **Q.3 What will the proposed standards mean for proprietors?**

The consolidation of the proposed standards will make it easier for proprietors to understand their obligations in the delivery of personal care and support. The standards will be supported by guidelines, issued under the legislation, that will explain in detail how each aspect will be assessed for compliance. The guidelines will support proprietors to provide better quality care tailored to the needs of individual residents.