Development of an aged care allied health needs assessment tool

Online survey – supporting information



# Overview

The Department of Health and Aged Care (the department) has engaged [HealthConsult](https://www.healthconsult.com.au/), in partnership with [Allied Health Professions Australia](https://www.ahpa.com.au/) and [Liquid Interactive](https://liquidinteractive.com.au/), to develop a practical, user-friendly assessment tool to identify the allied health needs of residents in aged care homes.

## Why is this important?

Currently, aged care providers do not have a consistent method for assessing residents' allied health needs, leading to potential gaps in essential care. The Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety emphasised the need for standardised, evidence-based assessment tools. Such tools would help reliably identify residents' needs and ensure appropriate referrals to allied health professionals.

This project directly supports the Australian Government's aged care reforms, including the National Aged Care Mandatory Quality Indicator Program (QI Program), by promoting timely, targeted, and high-quality allied health care for residents.

### What allied health professions are included?

Physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech pathology, dietetics and podiatry are included within the scope of this project. This aligns with the Quarterly Financial Report (QFR) and is important for consistency across residential aged care programs. It is intended that the final tool will also be able capture the need for other allied health professions (as listed in the QFR).

### How is ‘needs assessment’ defined?

For the purposes of this project, ‘needs assessment’ refers to the process to identify a resident’s need for referral to specific allied health services.

The tool is not intended to replace the discipline-specific, comprehensive clinical assessments conducted by allied health professionals to determine a resident’s treatment plan.

### What are the objectives of the project?

The purpose of this project is to develop an assessment tool that:

* can be used to consistently and accurately identify and record when a resident requires referral to one or more allied health services by clinical staff in aged care homes (for example, enrolled nurses, registered nurses, and allied health professionals)
* ensures comprehensive data collection on allied health service recommendations to facilitate QI Program reporting
* integrates with or replaces existing assessments and does not duplicate existing work or data collection
* is easy for clinical staff to use
* respects the rights of residents.

### What will the project involve?

In the coming months, HealthConsult and partners will:

* consult with residential aged care providers, workers, residents, and allied health professionals to understand current needs and practices
* collaborate with residential aged care providers, workers, residents, and allied health professionals to develop and test a practical, user-friendly digital assessment tool
* pilot the assessment tool in selected aged care homes to evaluate effectiveness
* refine the tool based on pilot feedback and stakeholder input.

### How can I get involved?

We are interested in feedback from residential aged care providers, workers, residents and their representatives, and allied health professionals to understand current needs and practices.

**Share your feedback via this** [**online survey**](https://healthau.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_etFMgheMewbO2bQ)**.**

The survey should take about 15-20 minutes to complete.

This survey will close at 3:00 pm AEST on 23 June 2025.

If you or someone you know has feedback but cannot complete the survey, please contact the HealthConsult team at [AHNAT@healthconsult.com.au](mailto:AHNAT@healthconsult.com.au).

### Why your views matter

Your insights and experience are crucial. By participating, you'll help create a tool that:

* ensures residents receive appropriate allied health care
* makes providing care easier for staff
* supports aged care providers to meet quality standards.