

GOVERNMENT SCORECARD

WINNERS AND LOSERS FROM A
COALITION GOVERNMENT

2013-2022

C4

Elderly
are Treated
With Respect
and Care



THE 3RD EDGE
ANALYTICS & RESEARCH

Introduction

Every truth has two sides; it is as well to look at both,
before we commit ourselves to either.~ Aesop

Even before the election date has formally been announced, the rhetoric from both major parties is whittling the complexity of our current condition to a simple set of key issues. Our attention is being focused on the economy, climate, defence, and the cost of living. These are all very pressing concerns, and would benefit from honest information and full, frank conversations. Although we know in politics, open discussions are hard to come by. It is largely a fear-driven profession that has mastered the art of distraction and deception.

We also know that the issues the candidates are highlighting are only those in which they can claim past success or for which they have already earmarked repentant funding. The plethora of real-life concerns that citizens still struggle with daily are lost in the noise and lights of the big-boy power plays. Likewise, the actions taken over the past nine years are usually drowned out by the song and dance of the last few weeks of term.

The Government Scorecard (The Scorecard) has been created to bring some balance back to the picture of Australia being portrayed by our politicians in campaign mode. It exists to allow voters to be fully informed about the achievements and failures of the current government, and to determine for themselves whether they align with the obvious priorities these results represent. It is true that there is only so much time and money to go around, and so difficult choices must be made about winners and losers in the political game. This document allows you to question for yourself whether you are comfortable with the winners and losers chosen by the liberal government during their nine years in office.

The Scorecard shows the outcomes of the values employed by the Coalition Government since 2013 and enables you to decide whether these align to your own beliefs about what is critical for our country.

While this report presents a set of indicators to judge the success of the current government, it does not and nor cannot contain every single statistic of value in determining the state of the nation and the health of the communities within it. Nevertheless, every single fact contained in here is important. They are all important, because each number represents the quality of a person's life.

The measures covered in the report have been chosen to create a broad and holistic picture of policy outcomes over the last decade. They have been inspired by two key frameworks, being the Gross National Happiness Index and the Balanced Scorecard.

Measures have been grouped into six categories which present performance in the areas of:

1. Community safety and vitality
2. Individual health and wellbeing
3. Income, wealth and working life
4. Educational outcomes
5. Governance integrity and accountability
6. The economy

The economy is intentionally placed last in this series as it the area that you will already hear most about during the election. Note that these measures also provide trends since 2013 to identify progress in each area. Where data is not available, suggestions have been made for indicators that could be of value in the future.

This section of the report covers the second success area for the Community category being

C4. Elderly are Treated With Respect And Care

Feedback on the data contained in this report is welcome and greatly appreciated. If you would like to provide comment, further analysis, or would like to suggest any additional measures please send a message to contact@3rd-edge.com.

C4. Elderly Are Treated With Respect and Care

“The way we treat our elderly in the twilight of their lives is a measure of the quality of a nation.”~ Hubert H Humphries

There has been much attention given to the crisis in aged care in recent years. However, it is probable that they could have been averted, or at least minimised, if there had been an effective system of performance management embedded in the aged care sector. As was highlighted in the Aged Care Royal Commission (2018-21), very little has been done from a regulatory perspective to ensure that high-quality, safe and effective care is provided to the older population receiving aged care services¹.

In 2019 (seven years after taking power), the government established the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission and the National Mandatory Aged Care Quality Indicator Program (NMQIP). NMQIP reports on only three indicators being pressure injuries, physical restraints and weight loss (each with several subcomponents). The glaring absence of additional valuable information is evident throughout this scorecard, in both the lack of any available data for indicators, or a very limited dataset for specific indicators.

The Register of Senior Australians (ROSA) is a cross-sectoral partnership of researchers, clinicians, aged care providers and consumer advocacy groups. Through their report for the Royal Commission they identified several performance measures that could readily be reported given data that was already collected. Thanks to their dedication, hard work and professionalism, we may soon, finally have a national performance system to provide evidence for improving the aged care sector. You can find out more about ROSA at www.rosaresearch.org.

However, while the majority of older Australians are in institutional care, a significant proportion are still living at home and participating in society as normal. For this reason the first section of indicators cover general wellbeing of older Australians, and the second then targets performance in aged care more specifically.

¹ Caughey GE, Lang CE, Bray SC, Moldovan M, Jorissen RN, Wesselingh S, Inacio MC. [International and National Quality and Safety Indicators for Aged Care](#). Report for the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety. South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute, Adelaide, South Australia. August 2020.

Vision of Community Thriving	Key Performance Indicators*
C4. The elderly are treated with respect and care	<p>Overall wellbeing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1 Societal participation 4.2 Enabled to live in the community* 4.3 Poverty 4.4 Abuse 4.5 Discrimination 4.6 Mental health 4.7 Unmet needs <p>Residential care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.8 Reliance vs funding 4.9 Waiting times 4.10 Affordability 4.11 Addressing client needs 4.12 Compliance with quality standards 4.13 Satisfaction 4.14 Complaints 4.15 High sedative load 4.16 Pressure injuries 4.17 Weight loss or malnutrition 4.18 Quality of Care

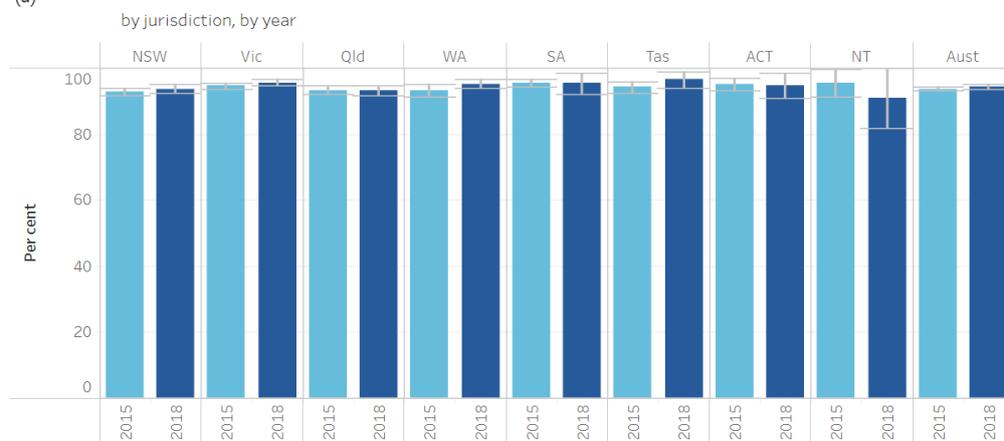
*

Overall Wellbeing

4.1 Societal Participation

There was a slight increase in the percentage of participation in social and community activities from 93.6 per cent to 94.4 per cent between 2015 and 2018. However note the lack of available data from before or after this time period.

Figure 14.11 Measure 1: Participated in social or community activities away from home in the last three months (65+ years old)
(a)



Source: table 14A.49

(a) For Measure 3, for the NT in 2018, confidence intervals are not available as the proportion has a relative standard error greater than 50 per cent.

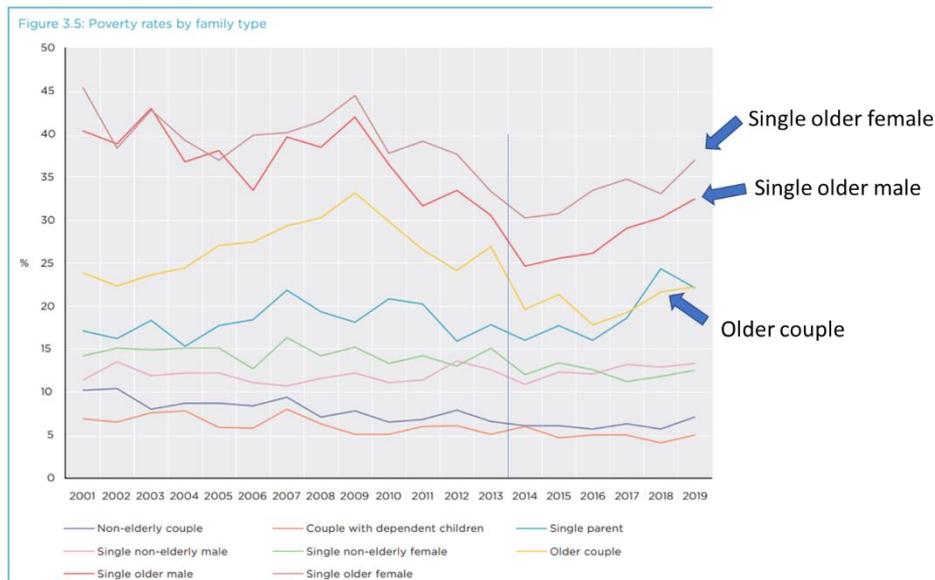
Source: Productivity Commission, Report on Government Services. 2022. Part F, Section 14 Aged Care Services.

4.2 Enabling to Live in the Community

'Enabling people with care needs to live in the community' is an indicator of governments' objective to promote the wellbeing and independence of older people, by enabling them to stay in their own homes. As noted by the Productivity Commission report in 2022, data are not yet available for reporting against this indicator.

4.3 Poverty

Since 2013, there has been a sharp increase in poverty for both single older females and single older males. The rate of poverty for older couples has also steadily increased from 2016.

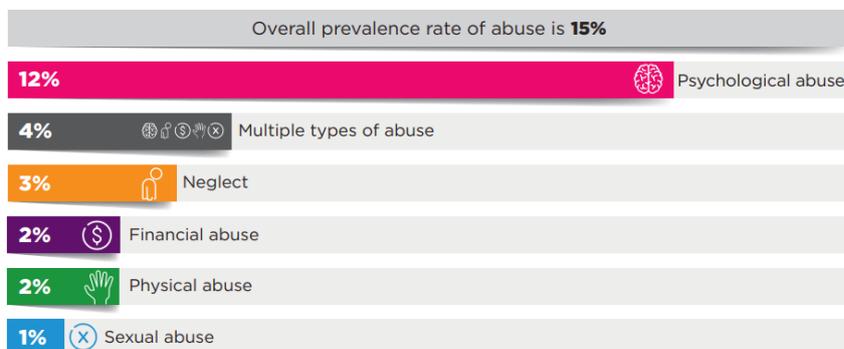


[HILDA-Statistical-Report-2021.pdf \(unimelb.edu.au\)](https://www.unimelb.edu.au/hilda-statistical-report-2021.pdf)

4.4 Abuse

Abuse of older Australians has made headlines in recent years, but it was only in 2019 that the Attorney-General's Department commissioned the National Elder Abuse Prevalence Study (NEAPS) to determine the extent of occurrence. This is the first national survey about elder abuse undertaken, so there is no comparative data at this time. The survey undertaken in 2020 shows the following prevalence and type of elder abuse occurring at the time of the survey.

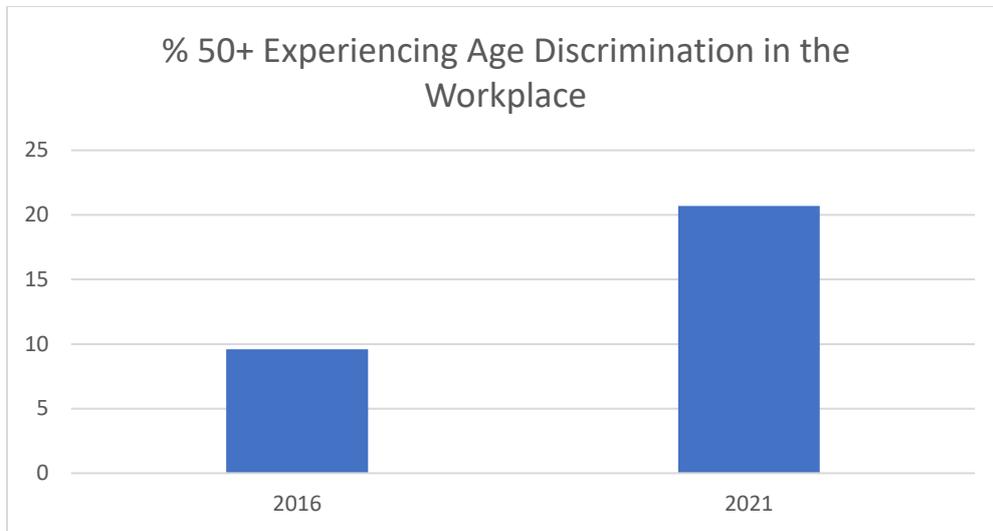
Figure 1: Prevalence of elder abuse overall, the five subtypes and multiple types of abuse



Source: Australian Institute of Family Studies | National Elder Abuse Prevalence Study: Summary Report

4.5 Discrimination

The proportion of people over 50 years experiencing discrimination in the workplace more than doubled in the period between 2016 and 2021.

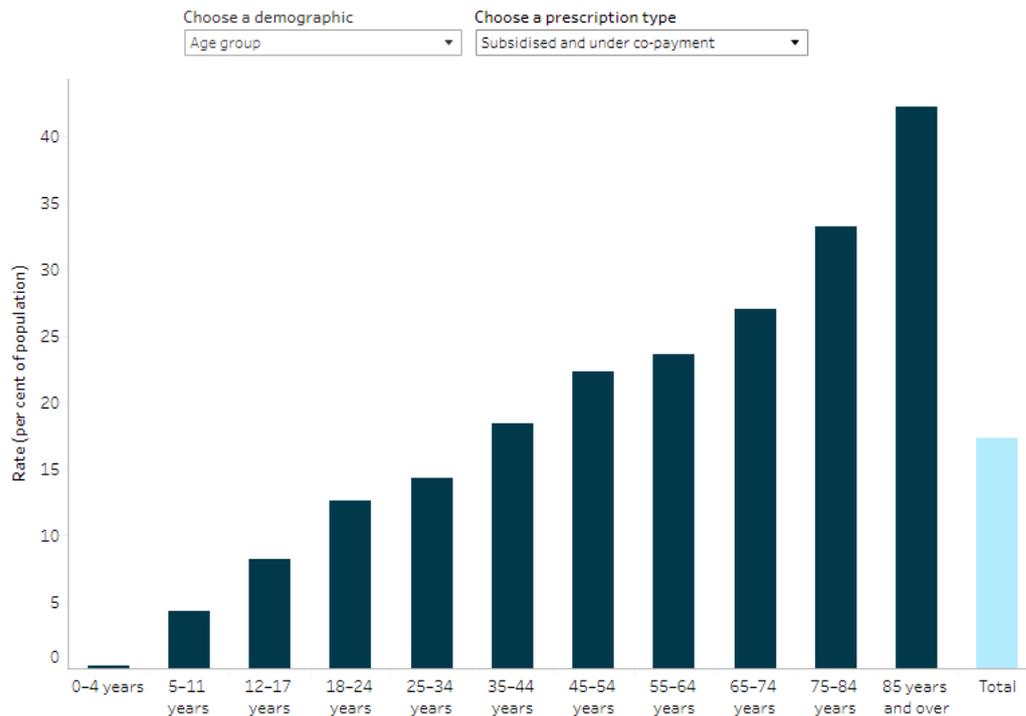


Source: Australian Seniors Series: Ageing in the Workforce. 2021

4.6 Mental Health

The following graph clearly shows that the older you get, the more anti-depressants you are prescribed.

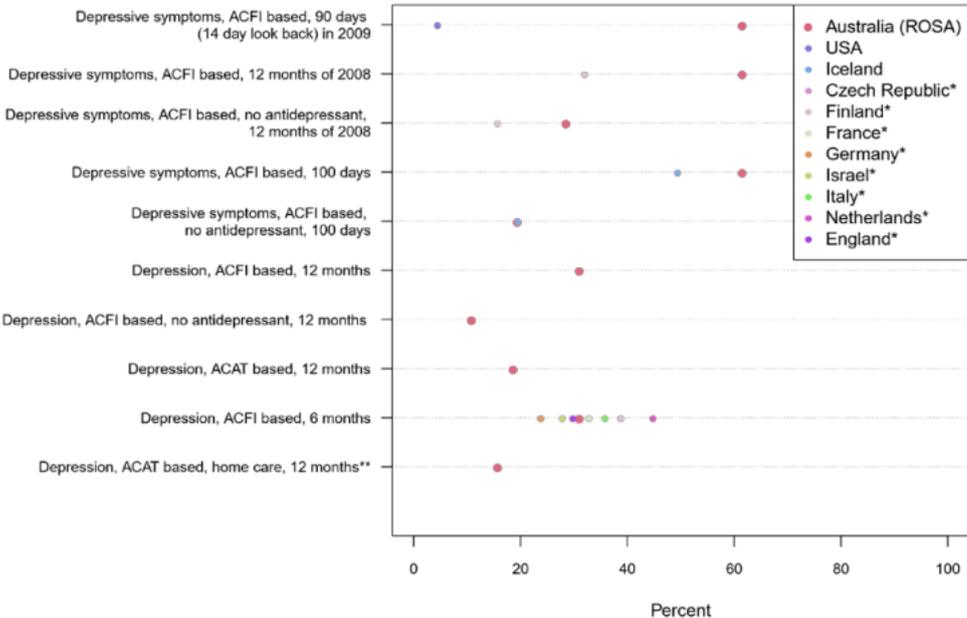
Interactive PBS.3: Patients dispensed with mental-health related prescriptions, by patient demographic characteristics and type of prescription, 2019–20



Source: PBS/RPBS data (sourced from Australian Government Department of Health); Table PBS.4

Prescriptions do not always equate to depressive symptoms, and so to get further clarity on the state of mental health of older Australians, we can use data from ROSA. The following diagram shows Australia leading the way in older citizens showing depressive symptoms in aged care facilities.

Figure 10. Depressive Symptoms / Depression Indicators Comparison by Country#



4.7 Unmet Needs

The 'Unmet need in the community' measure is the proportion of older people (aged 65 years or over) who were living in households and reported being in need of assistance, that also reported that their need was not fully met. There was an increase in unmet need from 30.8% in 2015 to 34% in 2018.

Figure 14.6a Measure 1: Older People living in households and needing assistance with at least one everyday activity (Need not fully met) (a), (b) by jurisdiction, by year



Source: table 14A.30

(a) Confidence intervals are not available where the proportion has a relative standard error greater than 50 per cent. (b) See data tables for information on non-publication of data for individual jurisdictions.

Source: Productivity Commission, Report on Government Services. 2022. Part F, Section 14 Aged Care Services.

Residential Care

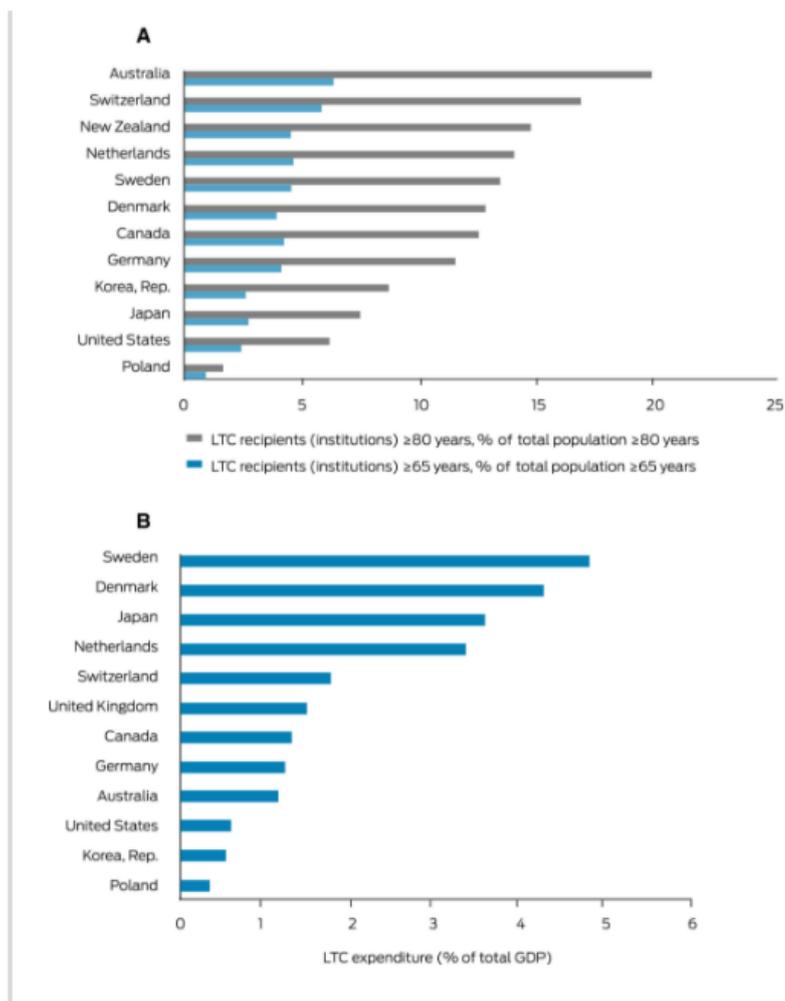
4.8 Reliance v Funding

The following graphs published in the Medical Journal of Australia² shows that of the OECD nations, Australia places the most reliance on long-term institutional care for both over 65- and 80-year age groups. However, in contrast, the proportion of Australia's GDP spent on long term care for older Australians is one of the lowest in the OECD.

people (12 countries) (Box).

Australian Journal of Public A

Box 1. Estimates derived from OECD data² on proportion of older population receiving long term care (LTC) in institutions (A), and LTC estimates for expenditure on older people as a proportion of gross domestic product (GDP) (B)



4.9 Waiting Times

'Waiting times' is an indicator of governments' objective to subsidise aged care services that are accessible. - As noted by the Productivity Commission report in 2022, data are not yet available for reporting against this indicator.

² Gibson, D. M. (2021). Is Australia over-reliant on residential aged care to support our older population? *Medical Journal of Australia*, 215(1), 45. <https://doi.org/10.5694/mja2.51127>

4.10 Affordability

'Affordability' is an indicator of governments' objective to subsidise aged care services to make them affordable for those that need them. 'Affordability' is defined as the out-of-pocket costs for aged care services (after subsidies) as a proportion of disposable income.

As noted by the Productivity Commission report in 2022, data are not yet available for reporting against this indicator.

4.11 Addressing Client Needs

'Addressing client needs' is an indicator of governments' objective to subsidise aged care services that are appropriate to meet the needs of clients — person-centred, with an emphasis on integrated care, ageing in place and restorative approaches. As noted by the Productivity Commission report in 2022, data are not yet available for reporting against this indicator.

4.12 Compliance with Service Standards

'Compliance with service standards' is an indicator of governments' objective to subsidise high quality aged care services. 'One of the indicators used to represent compliance is the proportion of accredited facilities given three-year re-accreditation. Three years is the longest period for which re-accreditation can be granted (in most cases), so if a service is re-accredited for this period it implies a higher level of service quality than for those re-accredited for a shorter period.

As reported by the Productivity Commission in 2022, the proportions of services that were re-accredited for three years dropped from 96.9 in 2018 to 87.3 in 2021.

Figure 14.7 Measure 1: Re-accreditation period in effect as at 30 June, 3 years by jurisdiction, by year



Source: table 14A.36

Source: Productivity Commission, Report on Government Services. 2022. Part F, Section 14 Aged Care Services.

4.13 Satisfaction

'Client and carer satisfaction' is an indicator of government's objective to subsidise high quality aged care services. The following graph shows the satisfaction levels for those receiving services. It has dropped slightly from 89.2% in 2015 to 84.4% in 2018. Note this data only appears to be collected (or reported) every three years.

Figure 14.8a People who received formal assistance from organised and formal services with at least one activity in the last 6 months who are satisfied with the quality of assistance (a), (b) by jurisdiction, by year



Source: table 14A.43

(a) For Measure 2, for the NT in 2018, confidence intervals are not available as the proportion has a relative standard error greater than 50 per cent. (b) There are no major cities in Tasmania; no outer regional or remote areas in the ACT; no major cities or inner regional areas in the NT.

Source: Productivity Commission, Report on Government Services. 2022. Part F, Section 14 Aged Care Services.

The satisfaction of primary carers with the quality of service provided began lower and dropped at a higher rate during this time period, moving from 84.7% in 2012 to 71.3% in 2018.

Figure 14.8b Primary carers (carers of people aged 65 years or over) who received formal assistance in their caring role from organised services in the last 6 months who are satisfied with the quality of assistance (a), (b) by jurisdiction, by year



Source: Productivity Commission, Report on Government Services. 2022. Part F, Section 14 Aged Care Services.

4.14 Complaints

Complaints received' is an indicator of governments' objective to subsidise high quality aged care services. Between the period of 2017-18 and 2020-21 there was an increase of 44% from 23.1 to 33.4 complaints per 1000 residents.

Figure 14.9 Complaints received for Residential aged care (permanent and respite), per 1000 residential aged care residents (permanent and respite) by jurisdiction, by year

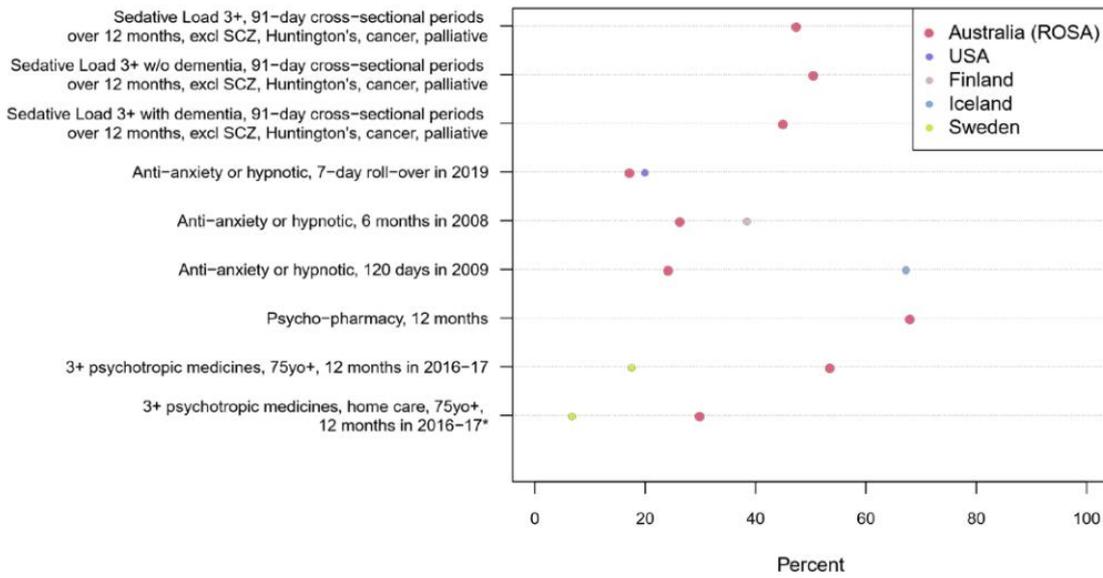


Source: table 14A.37

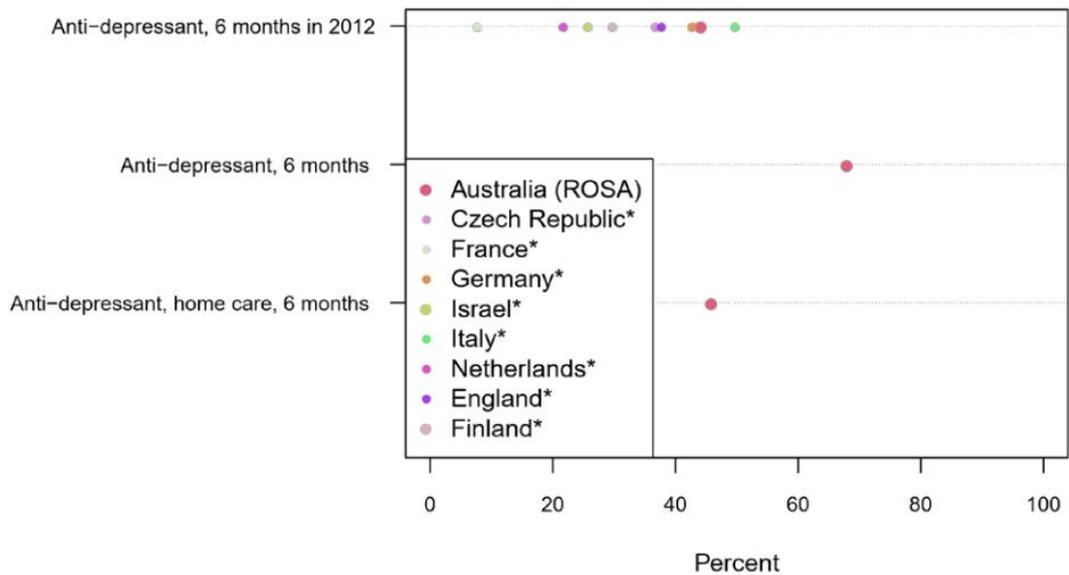
Source: Productivity Commission, Report on Government Services. 2022. Part F, Section 14 Aged Care Services.

4.15 High Sedative Load

A high sedative load is an important indicator as it can cause other health issues such as falls, fractures, hospitalisation, stroke, physical and cognitive impairment. There is no longitudinal data available for this measure but is proposed by ROSA as part of the Royal Commission recommendations. The comparative research conducted by ROSA shows the rates of three or more psychotropic medications used in people aged 75 years and older were 3-4 fold higher in Australia than in Sweden. This indicates that residents in aged care are bearing a significantly high sedative load.

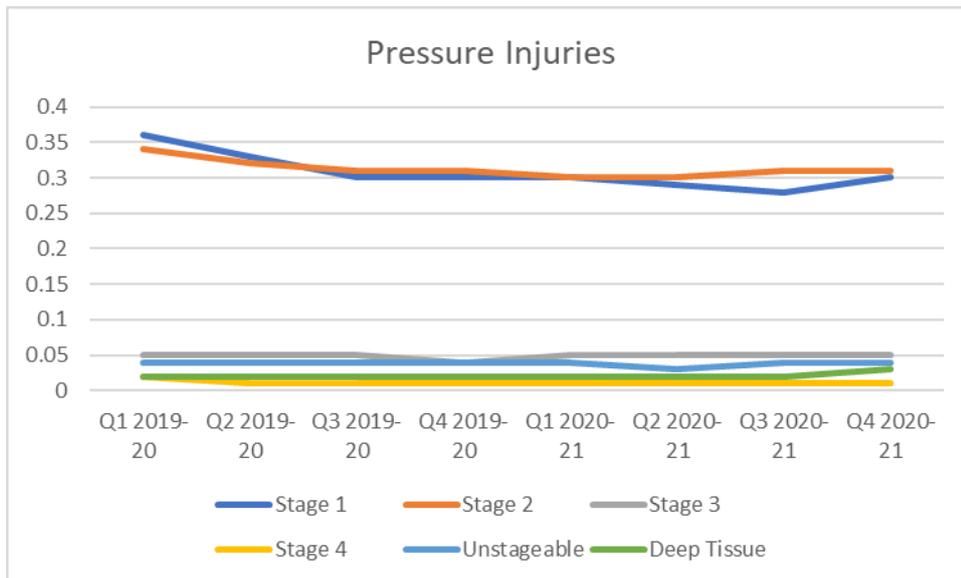


In addition, ROSA's research shows the use of antidepressants in a year by people in residential aged care and home care in Australia is high, 68.3% and 46.2%, respectively. This rate is higher than seven of the eight countries in the SHELTER study.



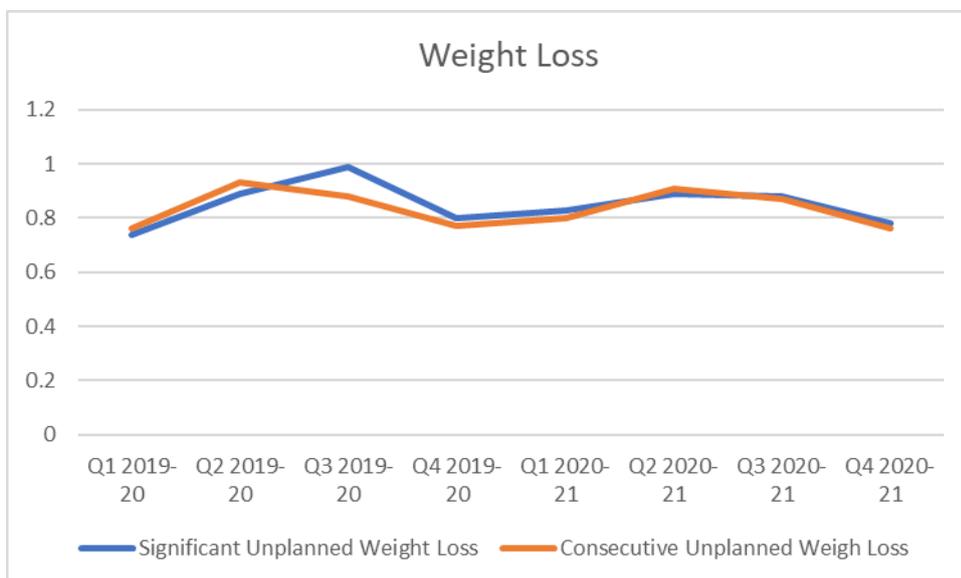
4.16 Pressure Injuries

The NMQIP has reported pressure injuries across several stages since 2019. The results since this time show a slight decrease or stable prevalence of pressure injuries across all stages.



4.17 Weight Loss

Despite some fluctuations of the two years of reporting, the rate of significant or consecutive weight loss in aged care has remained relatively stable over this period.



4.18 Quality of Care

Quality of care' is an indicator of governments' objective to subsidise high quality aged care services.' Quality of care' is defined as the standards achieved by residential aged care services in providing for the personal, functional, clinical and psycho-social wellbeing of their residents.

As noted by the Productivity Commission report in 2022, data are not yet available for reporting against this indicator.

Summary

Over the term of the Coalition government, there has been a slight increase in societal participation, and most recent data shows steady performance in pressure injuries and weight loss. However, for all other indicators, there is either no data available, or decreased performance during the available reporting period.

	Key Performance indicator	Overall performance 2013-2022*
C4. Elderly are treated with respect and care	Overall Wellbeing	
	Societal participation	
	Enabled to live in the community	No data available
	Poverty	
	Abuse	
	Discrimination	
	Mental health	
	Unmet needs	
	Residential Care	
	Reliance vs funding	
	Waiting times	No data available
	Affordability	No data available
	Addressing client needs	No data available
	Compliance with quality standards	
	Satisfaction	
	Complaints	
		High sedative load
	Pressure injuries	
	Weight loss or malnutrition	
	Quality of Care	No data available

* Some results are not available up until 2022, and so are assessed on the last reporting date.

Winners and Losers

If the Minister for Senior Australians and Aged Care Services was a CEO in the private sector, he would have been booted out long ago. No organization in their right mind would retain someone who not only did not bother to establish robust measures of performance and accountability, but then apparently failed dismally on the criteria that did exist. As far as I can see it, the Minister is the key loser from this scorecard, followed closely by the LNP who got away with desperately underfunding the sector for nine years. It is interesting to think how much funding for aged care was diverted to now non-existent submarines or carparks that were never built.

Meanwhile, absolutely everyone else has lost from the last nine years of the Coalition government. The people that rely on quality aged care services have been let down by the underfunding and poor performance. Their carers have been short-changed, disappointed by a system that is meant to support their loved ones so that they can assist in growing the economy. Australian taxpayers have also been let down by not being provided with transparent service outcomes for their income contributions.

Overall, here are the winners and losers from this scorecard.

Winners	Minister for Senior Australians and Aged Care Services - who has sailed through with absolutely no performance management or accountability for his portfolio.
	LNP - who got away with underfunding the sector for the last nine years.
Losers	<p>Older Australians - who are suffering through increased poverty and decreased mental health.</p> <p>Carers for older Australians - who place trust in the government to deliver a high quality of aged care services.</p> <p>The Aged Care Sector in Australia- who without strong governance have been left doing the best they can with the resources they have.</p> <p>The LNP - who are now suffering tarnished reputation through their lack of oversight and action in this area.</p> <p>The Australian taxpayers - who have had no transparency about the outcomes (or lack thereof) being delivered in Aged Care for their taxpayer dollars.</p> <p>Performance management professionals - who would be aghast to think that such a huge and growing sector of an economy could be left without a robust performance management system in place.</p> <p>The Aged Care Sector Internationally - who have missed out on a performance data set from Australia which could be used to frame benchmarks and best practice.</p>

“If you’re not measuring you don’t care and you don’t know” ~ Steve Howard

Other Indicators Available In This Series

In the community category, the additional performance indicators will be published.

Vision of Community Thriving	Key Performance Indicator(s)
C1. Australians in stable and affordable housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home ownership • Housing affordability • Public housing waiting list • Homelessness
C2. People free from violence in their homes and in their neighbourhoods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crime rate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Homicide ○ Sexual assault ○ Other assault ○ Robbery • Rate of domestic violence • Violence against children • Levels of incarceration
C3. Children would be nurtured and protected from harm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mortality • Rate of child sexual assault • Rate of violence against children • Rate of youth detention • Child protection substantiations • Self-harm • Suicide • Homelessness • Poverty • Mental illness • Subjective wellbeing
C5. Neighbours would know and support each other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowing your neighbours • Rate of social support
C6. Everyone would have food and water security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food security • Water security
C7. All citizens and visitors would feel welcome regardless of gender, race or religion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling part of the local community • Migration rates • Asylum seeker detention • Experienced discrimination
C8. A high level of engagement in civic life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civic engagement
C9. Active participation in helping the less fortunate for example, through donations and volunteering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteering - unpaid voluntary work • Donation rates
C10. Support provided for other countries and communities in trouble	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foreign aid spending
C11. Care shown for our planet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land clearing • Carbon emissions • Uptake of renewable energy • Animal extinctions • Citizen faith that the climate crisis is being taken seriously