



Independent Aged Care Complaints arrangements

2015 Budget

Older Australians have a right to feel safe and receive care appropriate to their needs when receiving aged care. Establishing an independent complaints mechanism will help ensure people can have confidence that any complaints they may have will be appropriately managed and addressed.

What was announced in the 2015 Budget?

The Australian Government is increasing the independence of aged care complaints handling arrangements by transferring the complaints powers of the Secretary of DSS to the existing Aged Care Commissioner from 1 January 2016.

This transfer will build sector confidence in the complaints process, and will result in efficiencies generating savings of \$2.8 million over four years.

This measure will result in a separation of complaints management from the funder and regulator which reflects best practice in complaints handling.

The Department of Social Services will retain policy and compliance functions, and the Australian Aged Care Quality Agency will continue to manage the accreditation system.

The independence of the complaints scheme was recommended in the 2009 Walton Review, and the Productivity Commission's 2011 Report '*Caring for Older Australians*'.

Key facts

- Aged Care Complaints will now be the responsibility of the Aged Care Commissioner from 1 January 2016.
- This change will result in efficiencies in how complaints activities are delivered resulting in a save of \$2.8 million over four years.
- Compliance action under the Aged Care Act 1997 will remain the responsibility of the Secretary of DSS.
- In 2013-14, there were 11,803 contacts with the Aged Care Complaints Scheme.

More information

For more information about this measure and other Department of Social Services' Budget measures, visit the [Department of Social Services](http://www.dss.gov.au) website (www.dss.gov.au).

For information about the 2015 Budget, visit the [Australian Government budget](http://www.budget.gov.au) website (www.budget.gov.au).