# Improving allied health care in residential aged care

## Developing an aged care allied health needs assessment tool

The Department of Health and Aged Care 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—including physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech pathologists, dietitians and podiatrists.

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

## What will the project involve?

HealthConsult and partners will:

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

Residents will play a central role in the co-design process, ensuring the tool accurately reflects their needs and preferences.

## How to get involved

We invite you to participate or stay informed through the following opportunities:

* Complete an [**online survey**](https://healthau.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_etFMgheMewbO2bQ) or provide a written submission to [**AHNAT@healthconsult.com.au**](mailto:AHNAT@healthconsult.com.au) by 23 June 2025.

Email [**AHNAT@healthconsult.com.au**](mailto:AHNAT@healthconsult.com.au) to:

* **Aged care homes:** Register your interest to participate in the pilot program.
* **Allied health professionals:** Nominate yourself to join one of five expert panels advising on the project. We are seeking professionals from:
  + Physiotherapy
  + Occupational Therapy
  + Speech Pathology
  + Dietetics
  + Podiatry
* **Stay informed:** Join our mailing list to receive regular project updates and announcements.

## Key project dates

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| **May 2025** | Expert panels established |
| **April–June 2025** | Stakeholder consultations and evidence review |
| **May–July 2025** | Co-design workshops with aged care providers, residents, and allied health professionals |
| **August 2025** | Digital assessment tool prototype developed |
| **August–November 2025** | Pilot testing in selected aged care homes |
| **December – January 2025** | Evaluation and refinement of the assessment tool |
| **February 2026** | Final report submitted |

## Be part of shaping better care

Your insights and experience are crucial. By participating, you'll help create a tool that simplifies care delivery for staff, ensures residents receive appropriate allied health services, and supports aged care providers to meet quality standards more efficiently.

**Get involved**

Want more details? Interested in participating?

[**AHNAT@healthconsult.com.au**](mailto:AHNAT@healthconsult.com.au)

