



Mentoring program

The pilot of our mentoring program commenced in Melbourne last month. There were 11 participants from the assessor and administration work streams who took part in the mentor training program.

The mentors were accepted into the program following a written application and interview. They completed a two day training course covering topics including identifying different learning styles, working with diversity, practical goal setting, managing challenges and communication strategies.

Mentors have now been paired with mentees and they will work together to achieve professional and personal goals. The pilot will last three months after which time there will be an evaluation and review of processes and resources.

Once finalised, the program will be rolled out across the company. The aim is that all new staff will be allocated a mentor for three months as part of their introduction to the

company. There will also be an opportunity for anyone to be mentored at any point of their career with us. The mentoring program is different to Coaching for performance. However, both are important contributors to personal growth and professional development with the organisation.



Meet Richard Hanssens

Richard is a New Zealander who came to our Company as part of our recruitment drive as we were gearing up for the peak accreditation period last year.

Where did you start your career?

I trained as an action method counsellor working with youth at risk, prisoners and community organisations across New Zealand. In 1990 I worked in the mental health sector assisting people to make the transition from institutional care to living in the community. This involved training people in everyday life skills from shopping to paying bills and managing relationships and the stigma associated with mental health issues. I then worked for the Auckland District Health Board to set up and train a range of mental health services. For ten years I worked in a national advocacy service for people with hepatitis C, providing education, resources and taking part in research projects in this area.

What experience did you have prior to becoming an assessor for us?

I worked for the Office of the Health and Disability Commissioner assessing complaints, before moving into the role of complaints investigator. We had complaints ranging from massage therapists to medical specialists and I led a number of investigations into complaints concerning residential aged care. I was fortunate to work under a Commissioner who as a former law professor was exacting and set high standards in report writing.

What is your impression of our accreditation system?

I am very impressed with the auditing system used by our Company. The defined nature of the four accreditation standards and the assessment of the 44 expected outcomes allow the assessor to gather sufficient information to monitor the level of service delivery and to identify any existing, or likely problems which may occur.

My impression is that the four rounds have supported the aged care sector in Australia to develop a strong and accountable service to residents and one which is resident focused.

I have enjoyed moving from my work as an assessor to working during this last round as a decision maker and I look forward to future challenges that working in this area will bring.



Some tips for assessors

How we promote residents' rights

Seeking information from residents and representatives is a vital component of our assessments of homes. Residents and representatives give valuable feedback on a home's processes, and results such as their level of satisfaction with how the home supports them to achieve quality of life.

Make sure you reassure residents and representatives of their right to privacy and confidentiality when you are seeking feedback. During the planning phase of a visit, check whether the home has residents who speak other languages and ensure you have a supply of privacy flyers in the relevant languages.

At the beginning of interviews, inform residents and representatives that their views are considered as a whole and when writing the report, they will not be identified. Where an individual has provided positive or negative feedback, make sure the information is corroborated through additional interviews, as well as through other sources such as discussions with management. Take care you do not disclose the resident or representative's identity during this process.

Preserve the identity of residents and representatives by considering the way in which feedback is reported:

- quoting a resident's positive feedback may inadvertently identify the resident or others
- cluster resident and representative interviews together.



**YOUR VIEWS ARE
IMPORTANT TO US –
SO IS YOUR PRIVACY**

The Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency Ltd ('the Agency') is the independent body established by the Commonwealth government to monitor aged care homes for the quality of care and services that they provide.

To decide whether a home meets the necessary standards, aged care quality assessors visit the home to see how it operates, talk to people – residents, relatives and friends, management and staff – and review documents.

We value your time and information and we also value your privacy.

Your views are important to us – so is your privacy
Accreditation

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Privacy flyers in English and 15 community languages can be downloaded from our website

To read more about resident interviews, go to page 42 of the *Audit handbook*.

Assessor registration survey

We received overwhelmingly positive feedback regarding the new assessor registrar. 314 people responded to the survey, with very high satisfaction rates on all questions about re-registration (95-98%) and registration (86-98%).

We have used information from the survey to implement some improvements including:

- All registrar documents are being reviewed and updated

- Information on our website is easier to find
- We are planning to trial EFT payments soon
- A separate guideline regarding professional development is being prepared.

The Registrar will email all assessors a copy of the survey results.

Assessor contact details

If your contact details change, make sure you let the Registrar know – **registrar@accreditation.org.au**.

It is your responsibility to ensure your contact details are correct so that the Registrar can send you information or re-registration reminders.