



9 December 2020

Pressure Injury and weight loss reported by residential aged care providers as part of the National Aged Care Mandatory Quality Indicator Program

The Office of the Royal Commission has authored this document based on information obtained under compulsory notice from the Australian Department of Health.¹ The Office of Solicitor Assisting the Royal Commission sought and obtained comments on a draft version of this document from the Australian Department of Health prior to finalisation.

Data description

The data used in this document was provided to the Royal Commission by the Australian Department of Health via NTG-0801. The provided data was made available at unit record level and included the names of individual residential aged care services and their reported quality indicators.

These quality indicators have been published online at an aggregate level on the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's GEN Aged Care Data website. The publicly available figures include total observations of pressure injuries, physical restraint and weight loss as well as the number of observations per 1,000 recipient days.

The Office of the Royal Commission has summed the figures received in NTG-0801 and expressed them referring to a different denominator for pressure injuries and weight loss. Only aggregate data has been provided in this document, no individual residential aged care services have been named.

We note that some of these totals differ slightly from the totals reported publicly on the GEN Aged Care Data website. This is likely to be due to different dates of extraction.

Pressure injuries

Pressure injuries (also known as decubitus ulcers, pressure sores, pressure ulcers or bedsores) are localised injuries to the skin or underlying tissue caused by pressure or friction.² Pressure injuries are classified in six stages:

- Stage 1: non-blanchable erythema of intact skin
- Stage 2: partial-thickness skin loss with exposed dermis
- Stage 3: full-thickness skin loss
- Stage 4: full-thickness loss of skin and tissue
- Unstageable: obscured full-thickness skin and tissue loss

¹ Section 2(3C) *Royal Commissions Act 1902* (Cth).

² National Pressure Injury Advisory Panel, NPIAP Pressure Injury Stages, 2016, https://cdn.ymaws.com/npiap.com/resource/resmgr/online_store/npiap_pressure_injury_stages.pdf, viewed 5 June 2020.

- Suspected deep tissue injuries: persistent non-blanchable deep red, maroon or purple discolouration.

Table 1 below outlines the total observations of pressure injuries reported by residential care facilities and the total number of residents assessed.

Table 1: Total observations of pressure injuries and residents assessed for pressure injury during 2019-20, as reported by residential aged care facilities

Category	2019-Q3	2019-Q4	2020-Q1	2020-Q2
Stage 1 pressure injuries	6,065	5,514.8	4,986	5,027
Stage 2 pressure injuries	5,720	5,349.8	5,039	5,077
Stage 3 pressure injures	919	929	793	718
Stage 4 pressure injuries	304	243	223	248
Un-staged pressure injuries	659	627	590	596
Suspected deep tissue injuries	352	365	305	322
Total pressure injuries	14,019	13,029	11,936	11,988
Total number of residents assessed	177,532	176,880	177,095	176,657

Source: NTG-0801

Table 2 outlines the average number of observations of pressure injuries per 100 residents assessed.

In the last quarter of 2019-20, residential care providers reported 11,988 observations of pressure injuries under the National Aged Care Mandatory Quality Indicator Program. Of these 5,027 were recorded as stage 1 pressure injuries, 5,077 as stage 2 pressure injuries, 718 as stage 3 pressure injuries, 248 as stage 4 pressure injuries, 596 as un-staged pressure injuries and 322 as deep tissue injuries.

With 176,657 people assessed for pressure injuries, there was an average of 6.79 observations of pressure injuries per 100 residents assessed.

Table 2: Average observations of pressure injuries per 100 residents assessed, 2019-20

Category	2019-Q3	2019-Q4	2020-Q1	2020-Q2
Stage 1 pressure injury	3.42	3.12	2.82	2.85
Stage 2 pressure injury	3.22	3.02	2.85	2.87
Stage 3 pressure injury	0.52	0.53	0.45	0.41
Stage 4 pressure injury	0.17	0.14	0.13	0.14
Un-staged pressure injury	0.37	0.35	0.33	0.34
Deep tissue injury	0.20	0.21	0.17	0.18
Total pressure injury	7.90	7.37	6.74	6.79

Source: NTG-0801

Weight loss

There are two measures for weight loss recorded through the National Aged Care Mandatory Quality Indicator Program: 'significant unplanned weight loss' and 'consecutive unplanned weight loss'. Significant unplanned weight loss involves a resident losing three kilograms of weight or more over a three-month period. Consecutive unplanned weight loss involves a resident experiencing consecutive weight loss over three successive months. Exclusions apply for residents who are in hospital, receiving respite care or receiving end-of-life or palliative care.

Table 3 outlines the total number of residents that experienced significant unplanned weight loss and consecutive unplanned weight loss, and the number of residents that were measured.

Table 3: Total observations of residents experiencing significant unplanned weight loss and consecutive unplanned weight loss during 2019-20 and the number of residents assessed, as reported by residential aged care facilities

Category	2019-Q3	2019-Q4	2020-Q1	2020-Q2
Residents that experienced significant unplanned weight loss	12,455	14,961	16,312	13,239
Number of residents monitored for significant unplanned weight loss	143,223	164,116	162,051	165,560
Residents that experienced consecutive unplanned weight loss	12,885	15,620	14,527	12,820
Number of residents monitored for consecutive unplanned weight loss	142,818	160,127	156,631	161,496

Source: NTG-0801

Table 4 outlines the proportion of residents that experienced significant unplanned weight loss and consecutive unplanned weight loss during 2019-20.

In the last quarter of 2019-20, residential aged care providers recorded that 13,239 residents had experienced significant unplanned weight loss under the National Aged Care Mandatory Quality Indicator Program. With 165,560 people assessed for significant unplanned weight loss, the proportion of residents that experienced significant unplanned weight loss was 8 per cent.

In the last quarter of 2019-20, residential aged care providers recorded that 12,820 residents had experienced consecutive unplanned weight loss under the National Aged Care Mandatory Quality Indicator Program. With 161,496 people assessed for consecutive unplanned weight loss, the proportion of residents that experienced consecutive unplanned weight loss was 7.94 per cent.

Table 4: Proportion of residents that experienced significant unplanned weight loss or consecutive unplanned weight loss during 2019-20

Category	2019-Q3	2019-Q4	2020-Q1	2020-Q2
Significant unplanned weight loss	8.70%	9.12%	10.07%	8.00%
Consecutive weight loss	9.02%	9.75%	9.27%	7.94%

Source: NTG-0801