Aged Care Reviews
Sentiments 2015
What Australians Really Think about Aged Care, in their Own Words

About the Report
This report consolidates the sentiment addressed in the user generated comments by visitors to www.agedcarereviews.com.au for the financial year 2014-15 (1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015). It also summarises the ratings (number of stars) awarded to each service and facility during the same period.

The data is split into the following categories:
- Residential Care Ratings and Reviews
- In Home Care Ratings and Reviews
- Pre-Commit Tour Ratings and Reviews

Reviewers are mainly residents, care recipients or (most often) their families. Each of the more than 2,000 reviews captured in this report then goes through a rigorous validation process in the back end before it appears online and in this report. Aged Care Operators are given the opportunity to respond to any review; however the views of the operators have not been included in this sentiment analysis.

User Generated Content
Most importantly, the data at agedcarereviews.com.au and in this report is both unsolicited and user generated. The sentiment analysis is based on the real words used by the reviewers. It is, therefore, an accurate and fair assessment of the perceived state of Aged Care in Australia as reviewed by the most important voice: the people who use the services, their friends and families.
Key Sentiment Findings

People are very keen to express their opinions about the care and services being provided to our elderly loved ones. Some of the key findings which arise from the sentiment analysis this year include:

- More than 1/4 of people feel negative about Residential Care
- Queensland fares significantly worse than NSW/Vic in Residential Care review comments
- Nearly 70% of people are positive about In Home Care
- Facilities in Regional areas (Geelong & Gold Coast) fall well below the national averages. Newcastle is consistent with the national outlook
- Care and Staff are the most common positive attributes mentioned in the review comments
- Poor Care, Food, Number of Staff and Facilities all rate as common negative attributes mentioned

“Beautifully maintained, looks more like a resort, lovely outdoor area, spotless rooms and Facilities, wonderful staff, lots of activities. Cannot fault any of the services provided, the caring staff are just so loving and caring, and so gentle with the oldies.” – Marina, Victoria

Just under two thirds (65%) of comments about Residential Care across Australia are positive. More than one quarter (27%) are negative. 8% are neutral or express a mix of positive and negative sentiment which cannot be categorized especially as either.

For Operators and Government, this suggests that customer satisfaction across the sector is relatively low. For those looking for a facility for their loved ones, it means that extra attention is needed, with lots of research and consideration required to find the right accommodation and care solution.
There are some marked differences in the sentiment addressed in Residential Care in the larger states. Queensland (55% Positive comments) facilities are significantly below their counterparts in New South Wales (60%) and Victoria (69%) and also below the national average of 65%. Whilst Victoria outperforms all other states with a 69% Positive score and 24% negative, just under one quarter of negative comments does not auger well for residents there either.

With more than one third (35%) of Residential Care comments from Queensland being negative, Operators in that State should especially consider their options to improve service quality.

“Needs knocking down and rebuilding staff do not appear caring just condescending” – Andrew, NSW

“Shocking place staff treat residents with no respect or empathy. Close it down” – Bell, VIC

“The food is always of small size meals, very bland, no taste, anaemic. Elderly always complaining, but none [sic] listens to them.” – Maria, VIC

“It was a terrible place the staff were absolutely rude and non caring. I just wish I could have taken my precious mum home” – Werner, SA

“It seemed to me that people with dementia are treated as non people” “It’s all about profit and not resident focused care at this facility” – Juliet, VIC

“Old building, staff are all foreign [sic] persons, I have trouble understanding them so I think it would be hard for the older people.” – Christian, QLD

“Residents are treated as units! It is a worry that they don’t have time to toilet residents when they feel the urge to void etc but do it a few times a day. I was horrified.” – Rosetta, NSW
Sentiment by Region: Residential Care

Comments about Aged Care Residential Facilities in Newcastle are relatively consistent with the national averages with 64% of people reviewing positively (the national average is 65%).

Geelong facilities fall well below the national average with 44% positive reviews (compared with 65%) and 44% negative (compared with 27% nationally). Quality of Care is the most commonly cited negative comment seen in the reviews.

Overall, the number of negative reviews for the Gold Coast far outweighs the positives. The Gold Coast facilities returned more than double the national average for negative reviews with 59% negative compared with the 27% national average. Quality of Care, Number of Staff and poor facilities all contributed to the negative sentiment expressed by reviewers.

Newcastle Comments

“If my grandmother says she is happy, then I am happy!” – Vicki, NSW

“I was disappointed with the care of my mother towards the end of her stay there” – Annette, NSW

“my mothers precious belongings were put in plastic bags, many broken, destroying cherished belongings” – Liz, NSW

Geelong Comments

“The safe are amazing and always put the residence [sic] first.” – Mocha, VIC

“One day she was forgotten and left on a commode chair in the bathroom. For 2 hours.” – Annie, VIC

“Not a place l would like to be in.” - Lynette, VIC

“I can’t see how this qualifies as an aged care facility if there is no care for residents.” – Margaret, VIC

Gold Coast Comments

“Every team member we met smiled and said hello...even a wave from one the catering ladies!” – Gay, QLD

“Bad staffing, non English speaking staff and not up to Australian standards.” - Theo, QLD

“This is an old establishment that needs a good make over” – Sri, QLD

“Not enough activity to keep the residents active or entertained. My nan said she could die of boredom in there!” – Dee, QLD
Ratings: Residential Care

These Ratings (Stars) are assigned by Residents, care recipients and their families. They can be considered as “the voice of the customer” but they do not always match with the actual sentiments expressed in comments. That is, sometimes people will rate a facility as “5 Star” and write a negative comment and vice versa.

Quality of Building
80% of people rate the Quality of the Buildings as 4&5 Stars. Of all the available criteria, Quality of Building has the lowest level (1%) of 1 Star rating.

Quality of Staff & Care
77% of people rate the Quality of Staff & Care as 4&5 Stars. This is the second highest of the available criteria. Of this, 55% rate the Quality of Staff and Care as 5 Star. In contrast, 13% rate this same criteria as 1&2 Stars.

Quality of Food
Quality of Food receives the lowest (62%) 4&5 Stars rating and also the most number of 1&2 Stars at 16%. This suggests that poor Quality of Food is a significant concern for many people.

Quality of Lifestyle & Wellbeing
Quality of Lifestyle & Wellbeing is among the poorer performing with a 1 Star rating of 6% and 14% for 1&2 Stars combined.

Residential Care Rating Summary
These ratings suggest that Aged Care customers believe that:
- The buildings and facilities are generally very good
- Quality of Staff and Care is mixed; those that are good tend to be very good and those that are poor can be very poor
- In general, Food, Lifestyle and Wellbeing needs should be improved

Extreme Comments

“They killed my mother and stole her belongings.” – Layla, VIC

“Would not recommend to even send the dog there.” – Judah, VIC

“Dementia patients were hauled out of bed whilst still asleep” – Lucy, VIC

“Poor food, terrible care, lack of interest, took no notice of listed two page care plan” – Laila, VIC

“Residents hate the place. Staff disinterested and bored. Food dreadful.” – Lori, NSW

“My Aunt was of sound mind, but her last few months of her life were a living hell in this establishment” – Kyleigh, NSW

“My father was an invalid, while he was on the toilet, right in front of his eyes, nurse steals from his wallet!” – Ezequiel, VIC

“The food they feed the residents at this place is no better than pig swill. The soup is coloured water floating in grease. Diabetics are fed party pies and pizza slices” – Lilla, NSW
In Home Care

In Home Care services provide care and support services to people so they can live as independently as possible in their own homes and communities. Finding the right services can be challenging. Care receivers, their families and friends are invited to share their experiences with others at www.agedcarereviews.com.au

“Overall Sentiment: In Home Care”

Most people (more than two thirds - 69%) speak positively of their In Home Care experiences. Less people (21%) are negative compared with Residential Care (27%), but 21% is still a high number of unhappy clients.

For Operators and Government, this suggests that overall the In Home Care market meets the needs of the majority but there remains a very high level of customer dissatisfaction. For those looking for a service provider it means that the offerings are varied and extra attention and research is needed to ensure the most appropriate quality of service is found for their loved ones.

Positive Comments

“My parents receive high quality in home care from a wonderful team of carers and health professionals. This care enables them to remain in their home.” – Jeannette, Victoria

“My dad receives excellent in home care. He is 100 years old and living independently due to their services.”
- Abbigail, SA

“Sensitive and responsive. They provide daily care to my two elderly parents. They not only attend to their personal care, but take a genuine interest in them and brighten their day with their positive interactions.”
- Rafaela, VIC

“I am very lucky to have support for my loved one from such a quality service.”
- Rafaela, VIC

“The assistance that he receives to continue to enjoy his life is so caring and genuine, I am so delighted to see these careers love him as I do”
- Vernice, VIC

“The ladies who call on my eighty-six year old Mum have enabled her to live with cancer in her own home .... long after her expected ‘use-by date’ (as she puts it).” – Gaylene, NSW

“Love the service as I can still live in my own home, all the staff are wonderful to me.” – Dallin, VIC

Overall Sentiment: In Home Care

Sentiment Australia: In Home Care

Positive 69%

Negative 21%

Neutral 10%
Sentiment by State: In Home Care

Both Victoria and Queensland (72% each) outperformed New South Wales (64%) for In Home Care. Queensland was marginally higher (23%) than Victoria (18%) for the corresponding negative sentiment.

Just over one quarter (26%) of comments in New South Wales were negative about In Home Care services.

The Other States (ACT, South Australia, Tasmania, and Western Australia) fare poorly with only 50% positive sentiment comments. These states accounted for only 5% of the responses and may not show the complete picture at this time.

Negative Comments

“Lifestyle advisor is sarcastic and rude and does not care. Staff are never on time if they bother to turn up and never the same careworker. All about money.” - Daisy, NSW

“My husband and I have been receiving Home Care at Level 4 and have been very unhappy with the service. I just wish that a supervisor would call in unexpectedly and check on the work they are supposed to be doing.” – Patricia, NSW

“My parents are such gentle and kind people, who are unable to speak up for themselves. They require a great deal of support and recently [had their] care to almost nothing, with the explanation that they didn't have the funds to help them any more, beyond getting mum up and then back to bed.” – Matilda, TAS

“Staff are well meaning but lack nursing qualifications and adequate training. The service is inflexible and unresponsive to individual needs.” – Grandmother, NSW
Ratings: In Home Care

These Ratings (Stars) are assigned by care recipients and their families. They can be considered as “the voice of the customer” but they do not always match with the actual sentiments expressed in comments. That is, sometimes people will rate a service as “5 Star” and write a negative comment and vice versa.

Quality of Staff
Quality of Staff receives 85% 4&5 Star ratings, the highest of this category. Only 4% of people rate the Quality of Staff at 1 Star.

Quality of Service Provision
Service Provision Quality is rated at 4&5 Stars by 77% of responders.

Responsiveness
Of the criteria in this section, Responsiveness rates the lowest in 4&5 Stars at 77% combined with 58% for 5 Stars.

In Home Care Rating Summary
These ratings suggest that Aged Care customers believe that:

- In general, In Home Care staff are of a relatively high quality
- Quality of Service Provision is average
- Responsiveness needs improvement

Interestingly, the Overall Quality rating, which is a separate criteria rather than a combined and calculated average, has the highest 1&2 Star Ratings (15%) and the lowest 5 Star rating at 49%. This suggests that there may be other factors involved in user perception of the quality of In Home Care services.

“Organization appears to have poor staff retention rates; carers vary considerably and I doubt that many have had experience/training in regard to people with dementia. Communication is inconsistent and generally quite poor. Phone calls aren't returned.” – Marg, NSW
Facility Tour Reviews

One of the most common ways people choose an Aged Care facility is to visit and have a tour. Most even, tours are conducted by the facility management or senior staff, depending mainly on the size of the facility. Reviewers are invited to share their experience with others at www.agedcarereviews.com.au

“This nursing home had pleasant surroundings. It provides a smaller community feel as it only accommodates 30 residents in the low care facility. This ensures residents have an ‘at home’ feel. There are pets (cats/a bird) on site, a meals and sitting area and a lovely outdoor area” – Lavonne, Victoria

Ratings: Tour Reviews

Tour Comments

“The staff here seemed pretty good - they answered all of my questions, and seemed knowledgeable and friendly.” – Random, VIC

“This aged care facility was one of the bottom line for my opinion, poor hygiene[sic] smelly of urine when you walk in the place, cluttered in the room, too much furniture in the room not enough to move around, floor dirty everywhere.....and etc...” – Helena, NSW

“To start off with the staff seemed to want to rush us through our inspection. They were a bit pushy. And we were only given a tour by one of the nurses - apparently the management were all in a meeting.” – Roger, VIC

Quality of Information Provided
73% of people rated the Quality of Information as 4&5 Stars. 8% rated the information as only 1 Star and a further 7% rated it at 2 Stars.

Helpfulness of Staff
Overall, just under 80% of people (79%) rated the Helpfulness of Staff during Tours as 4&5 Stars. Helpfulness was the highest rating in this category at 61% for 5 Stars.

Quality of Ambiance & General Environment
Ambiance and General Environment received the fewest number of 5 Star ratings at 47% with a further 28% rated at 4 Stars.

Somewhat surprisingly, the Overall Quality rating, which is a separate criteria rather than a combined and calculated average, rated the overall Quality poorly with 16% gaining just 1&2 Stars.
Key Sentiment Comments Expressed

Rather than using predetermined criteria as in the Ratings (Stars) approach, Sentiment Analysis lets us find the most common words used by care receivers, friends and family to describe their feelings about Aged Care in Australia.

The Word Cloud above summarises the main words used by people. The size of the words reflects the relative instances of the word appearing in the comments. The larger the word appears in the Word Cloud, the more often people have used it in their comments.

Not surprising is that the words “Care” and “Staff” dominate the map. It is interesting that these same two words dominate both positive and negative renditions. (Note that the word map above shows combined sentiment comments words)

Other key words favoured in the comments include (in order of importance):
- Residents
- Facility
- Mother
- Mum
- Home

Word Clouds

A word cloud is a visual representation for data to help visualize free form text. Tags are usually single words, and the importance of each tag is shown with font size or color. This format is useful for quickly perceiving the most prominent terms and to determine its relative prominence.

Sentiment Analysis

Sentiment Analysis is the process of detecting the contextual polarity of text. In other words, it determines whether a piece of writing is positive, negative or neutral.
Sentiment Comments Comparison

The following graphics demonstrate the relative importance of various aspects of Aged Care using the comments posted in both Positive and Negative sentiments.

Positive Sentiment Comments: Australia

Top of mind for Aged Care positive comments are Care (44%) and Staff (32%). Facilities are important to people (16%). Food (1%), Management (1%), Activities (3%) and Communication (3%) matter most when they are not right.

Negative Sentiment Comments: Australia

When things go wrong (Care 38%) people tend not to blame the Staff (6%) but rather focus on a range of words including Food (13%), the Number of Staff (12%), Facilities (11%), Management (7%) and Activities (7%).

Real People – Real Words

The comments people choose to write, in free form, when reviewing an Aged Care Service or Facility can be really important indicators of what they truly feel.

Reading and learning from others’ experience is what makes Aged Care Reviews a valuable resource for anyone searching for the right facility or service for their loved one.

It is also really helpful for service Operators to get feedback from their clients.

Together we can improve Aged Care across Australia for everyone. Aged Care Reviews – It’s what Australians really think about Aged Care, in their own words.
How Aged Care Reviews Works

Launched in January 2014 and currently housing more 2,000 reviews, the site receives facility data directly from the Australian Government’s ‘My Aged Care’ directory website to ensure every aged care facility in Australia can be reviewed and rated by aged care residents and their families.

Residents, care recipients or (most often) their families leave a review. That review then goes through a rigorous validation process in the back end before it appears online. Aged Care Reviews works with aged care operators to see reviews responded to and to encourage reviews from their residents and families.

We don’t charge the public a cent at any point. Instead, we do charge aged care operators to upgrade their listing and get aggregate level data insight reports.

We don’t ever pull down a review, even negative reviews, unless the review infringes our Content Guidelines, in which case we always ask a reviewer to amend it first.