

What is the Aged Care National Antimicrobial Prescribing Survey (Aged Care NAPS)?

Aged Care NAPS is an annual survey, which monitors infections and assesses antimicrobial prescribing practices for people in aged care homes (ACH) and multi-purpose services (MPS). In **2026**, the official timeframe for the Aged Care NAPS is between **June 1** and **December 31**.

Participation in Aged Care NAPS assists ACHs and MPS to identify how they can improve the safety of care for residents.

Participation also supports ACH and MPS providers to meet the Strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards¹, which require providers to implement an antimicrobial stewardship system that is consistent with contemporary, evidence-based practice and relevant to their service context. The Standards also require providers to ensure that older people, aged care workers and health professionals are encouraged and supported to use antimicrobials appropriately to reduce the risk of antimicrobial resistance.

Previous Aged Care NAPS surveys have identified documentation of the reason for prescribing an antimicrobial, high use of topical antimicrobials and prolonged use of antimicrobials, as areas for improvement.

Infections and antimicrobial prescribing in Australian residential aged care homes

Results of the 2023 Aged Care
National Antimicrobial Prescribing Survey



ALL Australian aged care homes and multi-purpose services are eligible to participate in 2026.



What is antimicrobial resistance?

Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is the ability of a microorganism (bacteria, viruses and parasites) to stop an antimicrobial (antibiotic, antiviral and antifungal) from working against it. The single most important contributor to resistance is the overuse and misuse of antimicrobials.

Why is antimicrobial resistance and antimicrobial use an issue for aged care residents?

A number of studies have shown that Australian ACH residents have a high rate of AMR.^{2,3} A high level of inappropriate antimicrobial use in Australian ACHs and MPS that contribute to Aged Care NAPS has also been identified. These findings mean that residents are at risk of acquiring and transmitting AMR infections, and of other harms from antimicrobial use such as drug toxicity and unnecessary costs.

How should the survey be performed and what data is collected?

Data can be collected for Aged Care NAPS by a senior nurse, infection control practitioner, general practitioner or pharmacist. The National Centre for Antimicrobial Stewardship (NCAS) hosts online training sessions, provide phone support and the NAPS website also has online training materials.

Aged Care NAPS collects descriptive information about each participating home (including location, provider type, number and age profile of residents present on the survey day) and specific data about residents who have a confirmed or suspected infection and/or are receiving an antimicrobial on the survey day. No identifying information is collected for residents.

For more information

Email support@naps.org.au

The Aged Care NAPS is a collaboration between the participating aged care homes, the National Centre for Antimicrobial Stewardship (NCAS), Guidance Group and Victorian Healthcare Associated Infection Surveillance System (VICNISS) Coordinating Centre.

References

1. Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing. *Strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards*. Canberra: Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing; 2025
2. Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care. Australian Passive Antimicrobial Resistance Surveillance. First report: multi-resistant organisms. Sydney: ACSQHC; 2018
3. Stuart RL, Kotsanas D, Webb B, Vandergraaf S, Gillespie EE, Hogg GG, Korman T. Prevalence of antimicrobial resistant organisms in residential aged care facilities *Med J Aust* 2011; 195 (9): 530-533.