

National Quality Framework

NQF Annual Performance Report 2024

This slide pack should be read in conjunction with the full Annual Performance Report

More details available at: [acecqa.gov.au/apr](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/apr)



Australian Children's
Education & Care
Quality Authority



Acknowledgement of Country



Australian Children's
Education & Care
Quality Authority

ACECQA acknowledges the traditional custodians of all lands across Australia.

We recognise and celebrate the contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Australians, including their role in the education and care of children.

CONTENTS



- I. Purpose of the Annual Performance Report
- II. Overview of the children’s education and care sector
- III. Report snapshot
- IV. Report chapters:
 - Chapter 1: Children’s health and safety
 - Chapter 2: Educational program and practice
 - Chapter 3: Children from vulnerable and disadvantaged backgrounds
 - Chapter 4: Workforce
 - Chapter 5: Service provider perceptions of the NQF

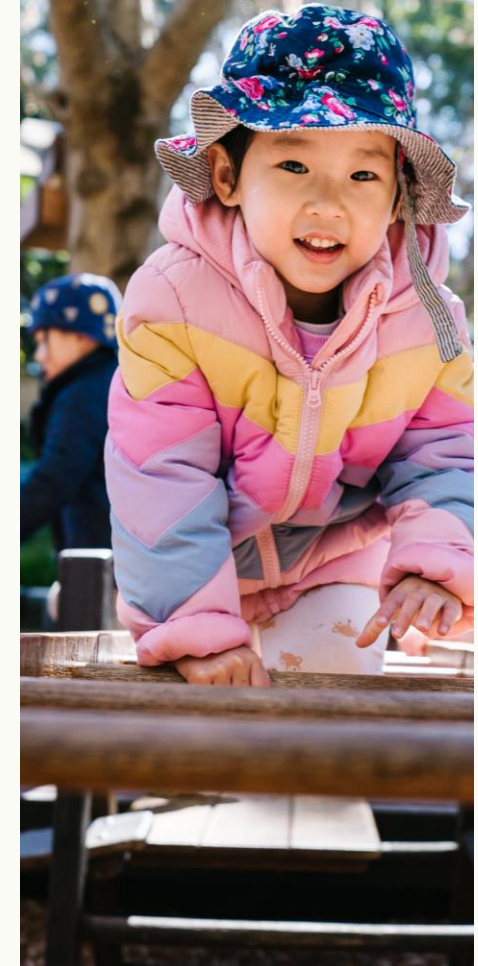
PURPOSE OF THE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

The National Quality Framework (NQF) is Australia's commitment to high quality children's education and care. It aims to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of children attending NQF approved services, as well as promote their educational and developmental outcomes.

This report analyses fundamental aspects of the NQF, including children's health and safety, educational program and practice, workforce trends, and families' understanding of quality.

ACECQA's role is guided by a shared NQF Evaluation Framework. In addition to this annual report, we publish quarterly NQF Snapshots, occasional papers and discrete research projects.

Most of the data used in this report is sourced from the **National Quality Agenda IT System (NQA ITS)**, as at 30 June 2024.



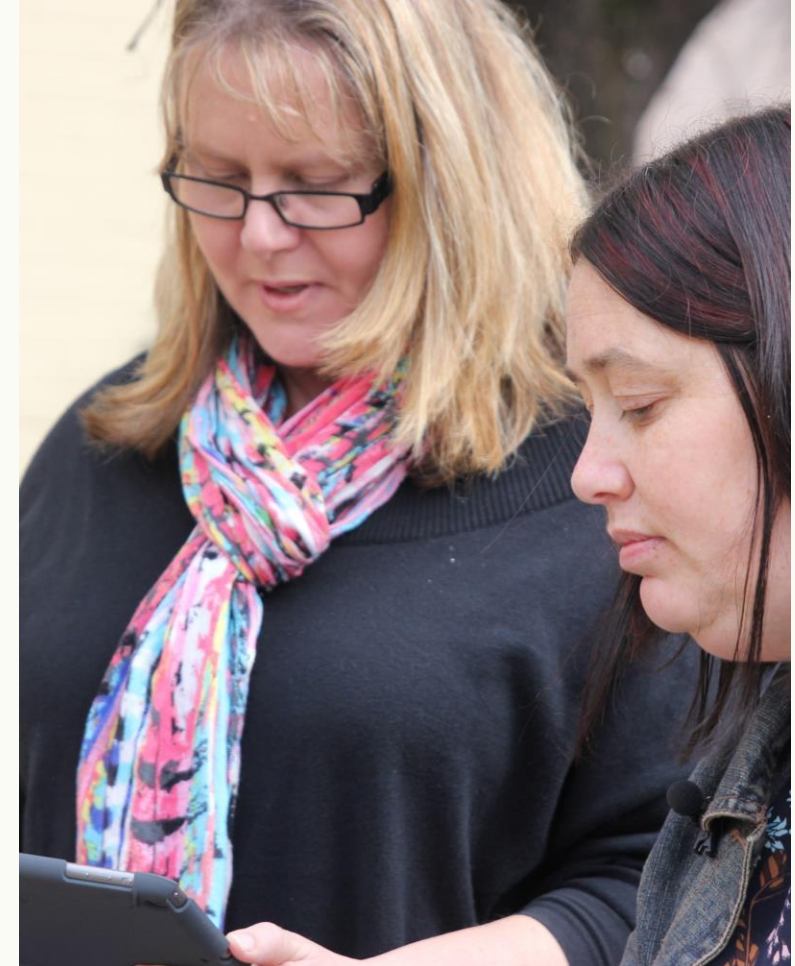
OVERVIEW OF THE CHILDREN'S EDUCATION AND CARE SECTOR



OVERVIEW OF THE SECTOR: PROVIDERS

As at 30 June 2024:

- There were around **7200 service providers**, with **79% operating a single service**.
- The **15 largest providers in Australia operate more than 100 services each**, with a combined total of around **3700 services**.
- Private for-profit providers operate:
 - 70% of long day care services
 - 65% of family day care services
 - 53% of outside school hours care services
 - 1% of preschools/kindergartens.
- **‘Private not-for-profit community managed’ providers operate half of preschools/kindergartens (50%), with more than a fifth (22%) being ‘state/territory and local government managed’.**



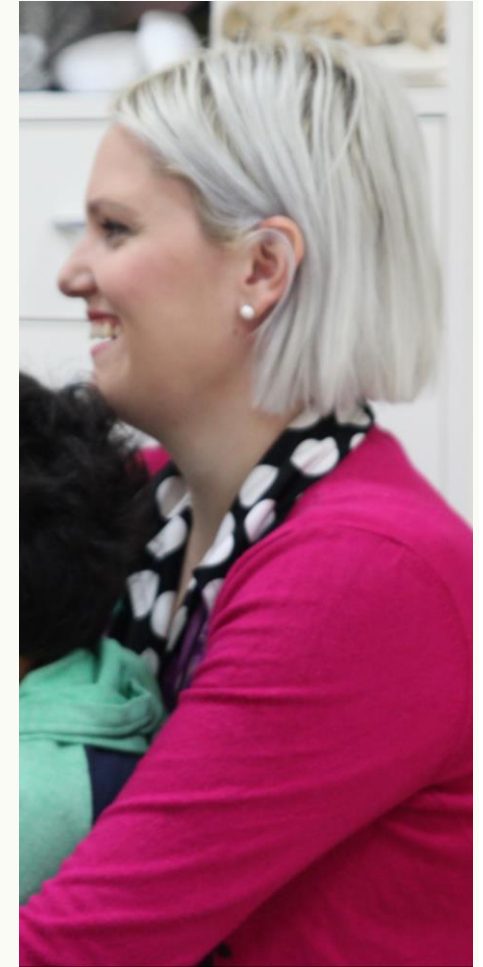
OVERVIEW OF THE SECTOR: SERVICES

As at 30 June 2024:

- **Over 17,700 children’s education and care services approved to operate under the NQF:**
 - **52% classified as long day care services**
 - **28% outside school hours care services**
 - **17% preschools/kindergartens**
 - **2% family day care services.¹**
- **Four-fifths (80%) of services located in the three most populous states: New South Wales (34%), Victoria (27%) and Queensland (18%).**
- **More than 16,000 (91%) had a published quality rating² against the National Quality Standard (NQS), with 90% of these services rated Meeting NQS or above.**

¹ Centre-based services offering more than one type of service are classified as follows: services which provide long day care in addition to any other service type are classified as long day care services; services which provide preschool/kindergarten as well as outside school hours care are classified as preschools/kindergartens; services which provide outside school hours care only are classified as outside school hours care services.

² The proportion of services with a quality rating will not reach 100% at any one time because a proportion of services will only recently have been approved and may not have started operating or may have only been operating for a short period of time. In general, state and territory regulatory authorities will assess and rate newly approved services within 9-18 months of operations commencing.





Children's health and safety



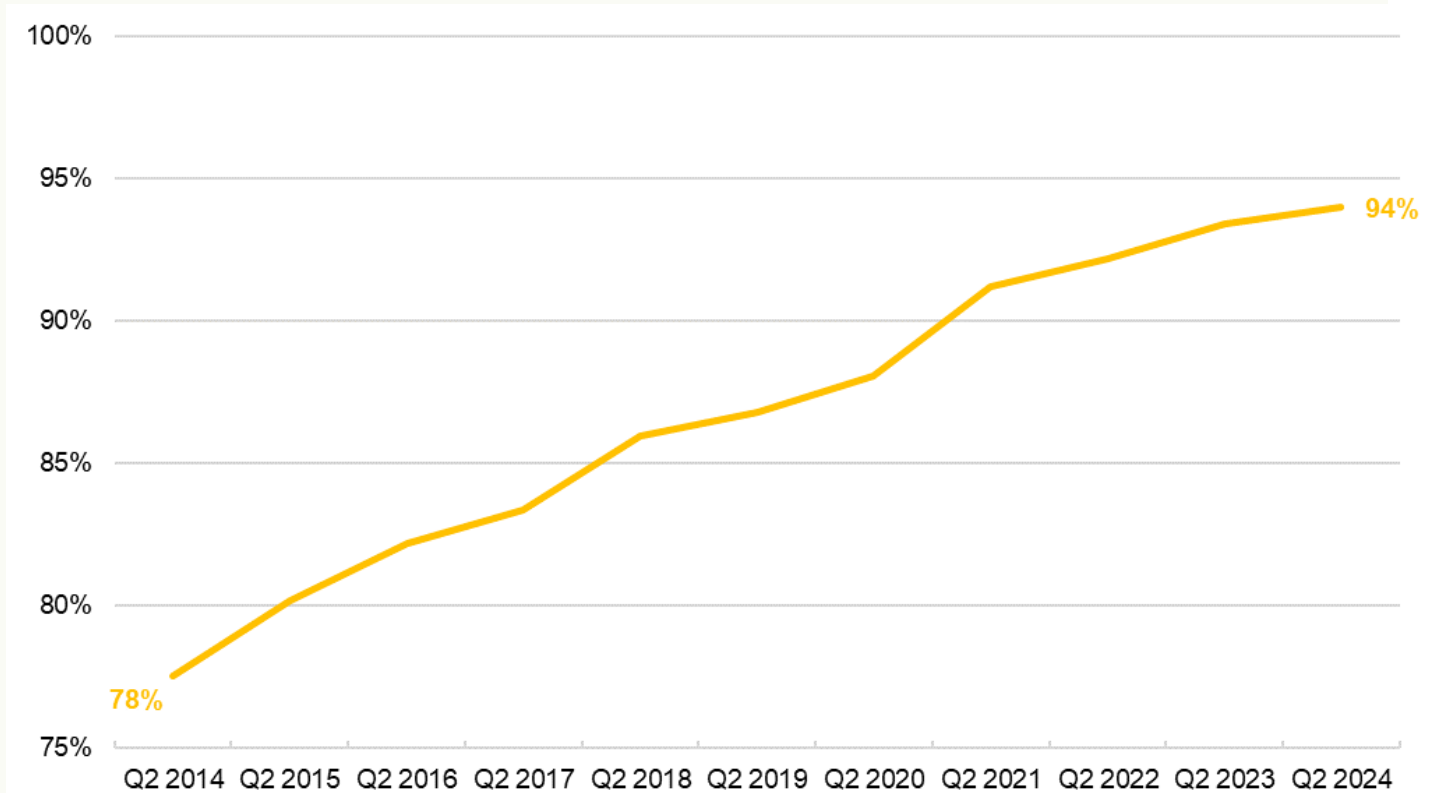
CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY

Quality Area 2 of the NQS has two standards that address health and safety.

As at 30 June 2024:

- **94%** of services are rated **Meeting NQS or above**, up from 93% one year ago and 92% two years ago (See Figure 1).

Figure 1: Proportion of services rated Meeting NQS or above for children's health and safety





2 Educational program and practice



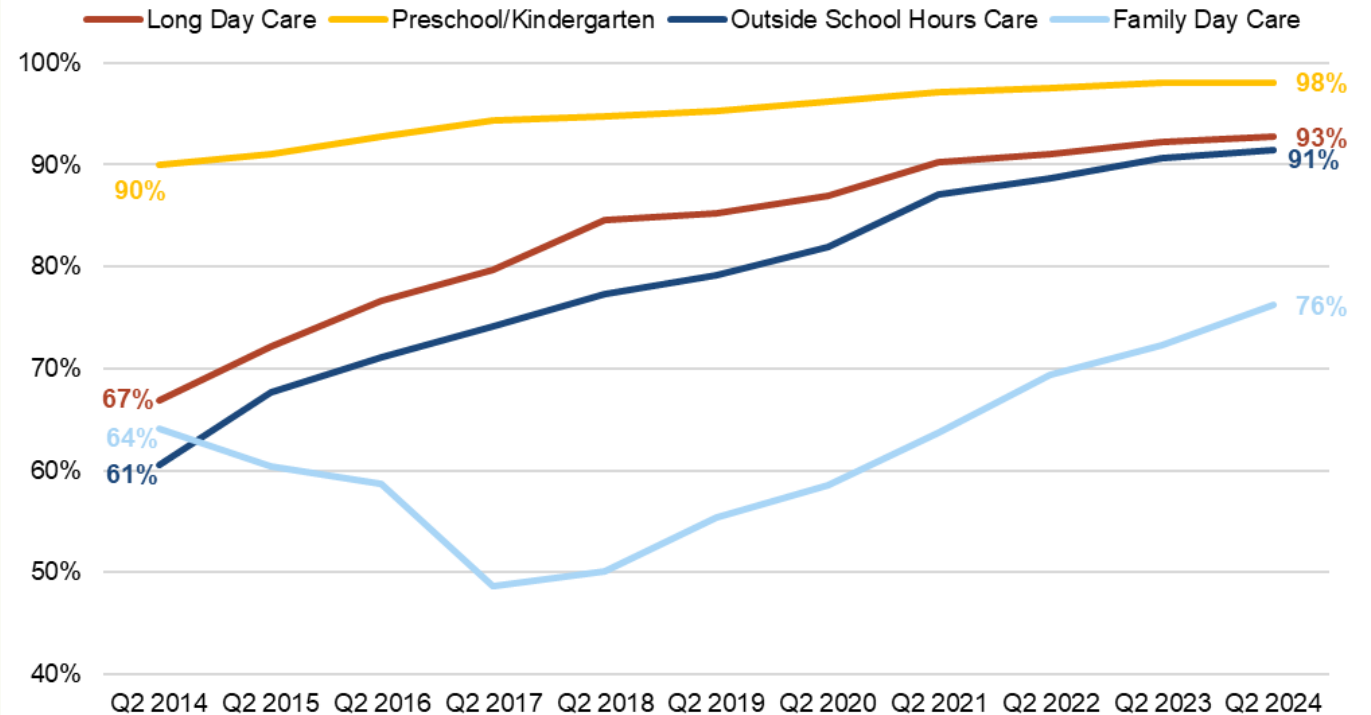
Educational program and practice

Quality Area 1 of the NQS has three standards that address educational program and practice.

As at 30 June 2024:

- **98% of preschools/kindergartens are rated Meeting NQS or above, followed by 93% of long day care services and 91% of outside school hours care services.**
- **Over three-quarters (76%) of family day care services are rated Meeting NQS or above – the highest proportion to date.**

Figure 2: Proportion of services rated Meeting NQS or above for educational program and practice





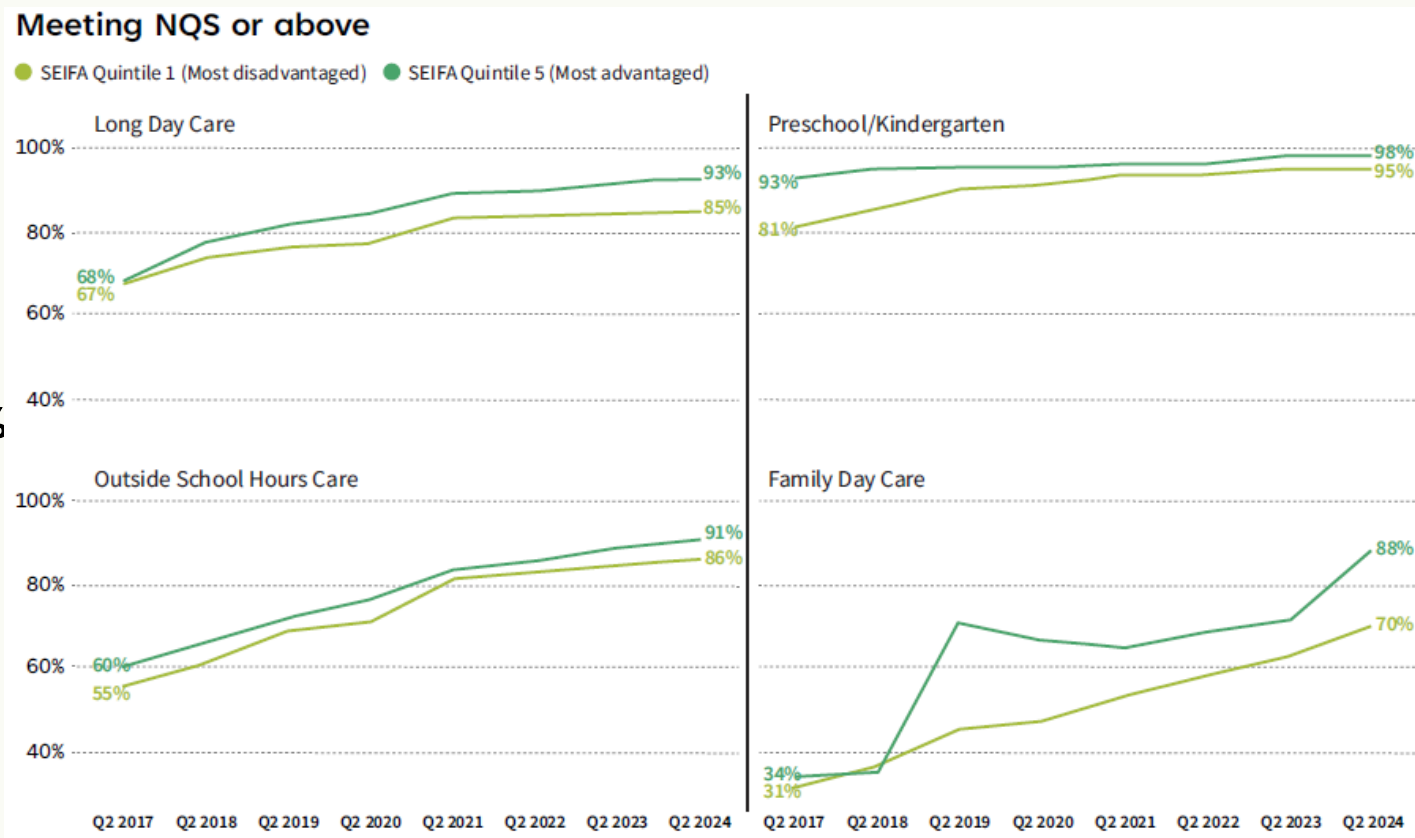
3 Children from vulnerable and disadvantaged backgrounds



Children from vulnerable and disadvantaged backgrounds

- Since children from more **disadvantaged backgrounds** experience greater vulnerability, they are more likely to receive the **greatest benefits from attending high quality education and care services.**
- As at 30 June 2024, **85% of long day care and 70% of family day care services in the most disadvantaged areas are rated Meeting NQS or above, compared with 93% and 88% of LDC and FDC services respectively in the most advantaged areas.** This gap has endured over the past eight years.

Figure 3: Comparison of overall quality ratings between the most disadvantaged and most advantaged areas by service type





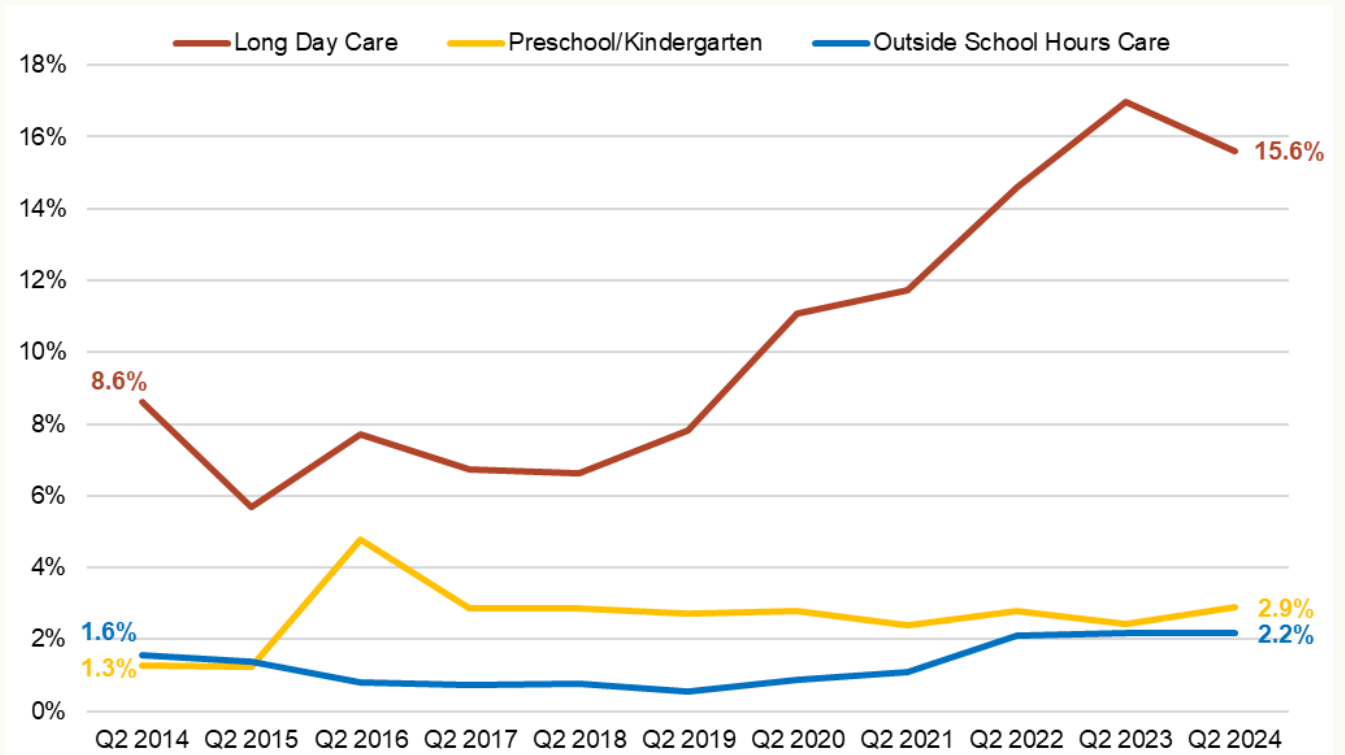
4 Workforce



Workforce

- *Shaping Our Future*, the national children’s education and care workforce strategy (2022–2031), represents a **long-term commitment to the workforce** by Australian governments and sector stakeholders.
- Quality outcomes for children depend upon a **highly skilled, well supported and professionally recognised workforce**.
- As at 30 June 2024, **15.6% of long day care services hold a staffing waiver**, compared with **2.9% of preschools/kindergartens** and **2.2% of outside school hours care services**.
- Overall, the proportion of services holding staffing waivers decreased from 9.7% in 2023 to 9.2% in 2024.

Figure 4: Proportion of services with a staffing waiver by centre-based service type





5 Service provider perceptions of the NQF



Service provider perceptions of the NQF

- Governments have been committed to monitoring and reducing unnecessary burden associated with the National Quality Framework since its introduction in 2012.
- In keeping with ACECQA’s function under the National Law to establish consistent, effective and efficient procedures for operating the NQF, ACECQA surveys approved providers’ perceptions regarding administrative requirements and overall support for the NQF.
- Overall support for the NQF has consistently been above 95% across all ACECQA’s seven surveys to date.

Figure 5: Approved providers’ overall support for the NQF

	Number of respondents	% of respondents that were supportive of the NQF
2013 survey	2,257	98.1%
2014 survey	2,623	97.9%
2015 survey	1,335	99.3%
2017 survey	2,362	97.1%
2018 survey	2,178	96.8%
2022 survey	1,804	96.9%
2024 survey	1,845	96.7%



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