The National Quality Standard Professional Learning Program (NQS PLP) today launches a new free video resource, a series titled Getting to know the NQS. Over the course of eight episodes, the series explores and explains each of the Quality Areas of the NQS. The series can be found at: www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/nqsplp/e-learning-videos/getting-to-know-the-nqs. This e-Newsletter serves as a supporting document for the video series.

Who should watch it?

Getting to know the NQS is suitable for all the service types covered by the NQS.

The series is not just for new educators. In fact, many newly-qualified educators will have studied the NQS in detail and might be very familiar with it. All educators—as well as coordinators and management staff—need to know the NQS well, in order to meet the goal of delivering high-quality education and care for all Australian children. This means that Getting to know the NQS is suitable for, and has been designed for, all educators, coordinators and staff, regardless of how long they have been working in the sector.

Why a video series on the NQS?

The simple reason for the new video series is that it’s very important—but not necessarily easy—to get to know the NQS. The official Guide to the National Quality Standard, published by the Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA), is a comprehensive and detailed document. It not only lists each of the 58 Elements of the NQS, it also explains why each of them has been included and what they are designed to achieve, as well as including examples of the high-quality practices and policies that assessors may be looking for during assessment visits. This means that the Guide to the National Quality Standard is essential reading for all educators, coordinators and staff at early childhood and school-age care services. But reading the Guide, in its entirety, requires time and attention. At 194 pages (excluding the glossary and index), it cannot be tackled in one sitting, and the information it contains needs to be read and reviewed over a period of time.

In an effort to encourage educators and others to get to know the NQS—and the Guide—we decided to produce a series of short videos. The series is not a substitute for reading the Guide, but an introduction to it. After watching each episode in this series, viewers should turn to the Guide for more detail.
What's in the series?

The structure of the series is very simple, and covers each of the Quality Areas of the NQS:

- Introduction
- Quality Area 1—Educational program and practice
- Quality Area 2—Children’s health and safety
- Quality Area 3—Physical environment
- Quality Area 4—Staffing arrangements
- Quality Area 5—Relationships with children
- Quality Area 6—Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
- Quality Area 7—Leadership and service management.

Getting to Know the NQS is presented by early childhood consultant Anne Stonehouse, and features footage from a variety of settings: family day care, long day care centres and school-aged care services. The series is designed to be engaging and interesting, with plenty of visual appeal to accompany the spoken information. One of the features of the series is animation created especially for the project. Each episode concludes with a brief list of questions to prompt thinking and discussion.

How can the series be used?

The series has been designed as a modular learning unit: each episode can be watched in isolation, or can be viewed alongside any other episode in the series. We do, however, strongly recommend that all viewers watch the introduction first.

The series is suitable for viewing by individuals and groups. It might be particularly useful for the following purposes:

- generating discussion in team meetings
- preparing or revising Quality Improvement Plans
- preparing for external assessment.

We have also prepared a resources guide for the series, containing the scripts for each episode, along with a comprehensive list of relevant NQS PLP resources, to enable viewers to refer quickly to particular issues and explore them in more depth. The resources guide is available alongside the video series on the NQS PLP website.
Some of the issues

All components of the NQS are equally important, but not all of them are equally well understood. For this reason, Getting to know the NQS highlights some of the issues that have posed challenges for educators, coordinators and staff, such as:

- the relationship between the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and the NQS
- valuing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures
- managing risks to children’s safety
- documenting children’s learning.

Where to from here?

Getting to know the NQS can be found on the NQS PLP website: www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/nqsplp/e-learning-videos/getting-to-know-the-nqs and the NQS PLP Facebook page: www.facebook.com/eylfplp. We welcome your feedback on the series, which you can contribute via the Facebook page and our online forum.