

ACA/EBOS

Excellence in Care Awards 2026

AWARD INFORMATION AND CRITERIA

Introduction

The Aged Care Association (ACA) works on behalf of its members to achieve an aged care sector where providers are resourced to deliver accessible, quality care for New Zealanders who need it.

Aged residential care providers deliver services to over 40,000 older New Zealanders and their families every year, and we want to make sure examples of excellence in care are recognised and celebrated.

These awards recognise care facilities and individuals that are at the top of their game, making the most of opportunities, implementing innovations and improving services.

The awards are open to all members of the ACA.

Judging will be carried out by independent panels, and the winners showcased at the ACA Annual Conference in Tākina Wellington in October 2026.

The awards are in two categories: the first highlights the great work happening in care facilities and the second acknowledges individuals who are making outstanding contributions to the people they care for and work with.



The 2026 ACA|EBOS Excellence in Care Awards open for nominations on **Monday, 22 June 2026**. Entries are **open until 5 PM on Friday, 31 JULY 2026**.

Awards Process

» Eligibility

All care facilities that wish to enter these awards must:

- Be certified to operate in New Zealand
- Meet all contractual, certification and accreditation obligations required for the sector
- Be a member of the Aged Care Association
- Comply with the eligibility criteria of the award they are entering.

» Judging Process

All entries will be considered by a panel of judges, and finalists will be notified by 28 August 2026.

There will be two finalists in each award category, except the Gilmours Excellence in Food Service Award, which has three finalists.

Winners will be announced at the ACA Conference Awards Ceremony and Gala Dinner on Thursday, 29 October 2026 at Takina Convention Centre in Wellington. To be announced as a winner, you must be in attendance.

» Judging Portal and Process Overview

All entries must be submitted using the designated judging portal. Judges will review only the materials provided within the portal at the time of submission.

Additional documents, attachments, or links sent separately will not be accepted or evaluated. This policy ensures that all participants are assessed based on the same criteria and materials



EBOS Healthcare are proud to be the 2026 awards partner

The EBOS Healthcare Overall Excellence in Care Award is the premier award of the ACA | EBOS Excellence in Care Awards programme. It recognises the most outstanding achievement across all award categories, with all individual category winners automatically eligible for consideration. The award celebrates excellence, innovation, and exceptional contributions to the delivery of aged care in New Zealand. All section winners will be eligible to be the EBOS Healthcare Overall Excellence in Care Winner. The winner will be announced at the end of the awards ceremony on Thursday, 29 October 2026.



Award Finalists

» Award Finalists Presentation

All finalists will be required to deliver a three-minute presentation on their award entry at the ACA Conference.

Presentations must be delivered as a spoken address, supported by visual material in a PowerPoint presentation.

Each award category has its own entry criteria and assessment rubric. The full judging rubric can be found in the final section of this document.

If you have questions about the required submission materials or the judging process, please contact events@aca.org.nz for guidance.

» ACA/ASB Conference Gala Dinner and EBOS Awards Ceremony

Finalists and other entrants are invited to celebrate the success of the industry at the ACA/ASB gala dinner and EBOS/ACA Excellence in Care awards ceremony on the evening of Thursday, 29 October 2026 at Tākina, Wellington.

Tickets to the awards ceremony can be purchased as part of conference registration.

Register [now!](#)



FOOD AWARD CRITERIA

[APPLY HERE](#)

Gilmours Excellence in Food Service Award

OUTLINE OF AWARD

This award recognises celebrates outstanding achievement and innovation in food service in aged residential care, showcasing excellence in menu design, food safety, service delivery, resident experience, and continuous improvement.

JUDGING PROCESS

Three finalists will be selected. Judges will visit the finalists' facilities unannounced during a nominated week (to be advised). During the visit, judges will dine with residents to experience the meal first-hand.

ELIGIBILITY

Meet the eligibility criteria listed on page 3.

YOUR ENTRY MUST INCLUDE:

A Synopsis of entry: a brief description of the entry and outcomes.

The facility's main entry description

The nominated facility's kitchen structure

The Facility's outcomes - how has the facility's food made a difference?

Visual material – photos and/or videos (under 3 minutes), including images of main meal service.

Supporting material, including, but not limited to:

- » A menu rotation if cyclic, or weekly menu
- » Examples of recipes that cater to residents' individual requirements
- » An Explanation of menu design
- » A Food safety certification
- » Waste management systems
- » Testimonials from residents, staff, families or the community.

CARE FACILITY AWARD CRITERIA

[APPLY HERE](#)

Lifecare Property Small Operator Award

OUTLINE OF AWARD

This award recognises celebrates outstanding achievement and innovation in food service in aged residential care, showcasing excellence in menu design, food safety, service delivery, resident experience, and continuous improvement.

ELIGIBILITY

Must be a member facility.

Be a facility certified for fewer than 60 beds.

If part of a group, the group must have a combined total of fewer than 300 beds.

ENTRIES SHOULD INCLUDE:

The impact on the quality of lives of their residents and families
 The impact on the education and working environment of its staff
 The involvement of families of residents in the care home's activities
 The communication/feedback to the families of residents
 The development of strong connections with its local community
 Testimonials from residents, staff, families or the community

ENTRIES MUST INCLUDE:

A Synopsis of entry - a brief description of the entry and outcomes
 The Entry - What was the idea/issue, and what did you do?
 The Team - who were the key individuals involved in this project?
 The Outcomes - how have you made a difference?
 Visual material - photos and/or a short video (no longer than 3 minutes)

CARE FACILITY AWARD CRITERIA

[APPLY HERE](#)

Hercules Health Innovative Delivery Award

OUTLINE OF AWARD

This award recognises exceptional effort by organisations and care homes to enhance the excellence of the care they deliver to residents. This may be through innovation, creativity or redesign of the delivery of services in order to provide a true continuum of care options for elderly residents.

ELIGIBILITY

Open to all member facilities.

ENTRIES SHOULD INCLUDE:

Examples of how the innovation has impacted on the resident's quality of life

Why the entry was innovative:

- » *Is it the first of its kind in the New Zealand aged residential care sector?*
- » *Has it been adapted from another industry?*
- » *Has it improved efficiency in the care of residents/how the business operates?*

Testimonials from residents, staff, families or the community

ENTRIES MUST INCLUDE:

A Synopsis of entry - a brief description of the entry and outcomes

The Entry - What was the idea/issue, and what did you do?

The Team - who were the key individuals involved in this project?

The Outcomes - how have you made a difference?

Visual material - photos and/or a short video (no longer than 3 minutes)

[CARE FACILITY AWARD CRITERIA](#)[APPLY HERE](#)

Eversource Sustainability Award

OUTLINE OF AWARD

This award celebrates organisations or individuals who have demonstrated exceptional sustainability practices within their facility. The award aims to highlight those who have successfully integrated sustainable principles into their day-to-day operations by way of offering sustainable products and services. These could include practices such as food and/or general waste minimisation, improved recycling or upcycling practices, innovative practices for supporting a circular economy for waste reduction, promoting sustainable consumption, among others.

ELIGIBILITY

Open to all member facilities.

ENTRIES SHOULD INCLUDE:

A description of the adopted sustainable practice(s) and outcomes of the practice.
Evidence of the positive change witnessed since adopting the practice.
Testimonials from residents, staff, families or the community

ENTRIES MUST INCLUDE:

A Synopsis of entry - a brief description of the entry and outcomes
The Entry - What was the idea/issue, and what did you do?
The Team - who were the key individuals involved in this project?
The Outcomes - how have you made a difference?
Visual material - photos and/or a short video (no longer than 3 minutes)

CARE FACILITY AWARD CRITERIA

[APPLY HERE](#)

Aged Care Association Excellence in Design Award

OUTLINE OF AWARD

This award recognises exceptional design, construction or changes to a care facility to create a positive environment for residents and staff. This may include sustainable building practices or creative garden and landscape design, construction of physical care facility buildings or changes to the interior to achieve superior results for elderly residents.

ELIGIBILITY

Open to all member facilities.

ENTRIES SHOULD INCLUDE:

Why the design is innovative or exceptional

Explain how the design has improved the quality of lives of their residents and families, and improved the working environment for its staff

Testimonials from residents, staff, families or the community

ENTRIES MUST INCLUDE:

A Synopsis of entry - a brief description of the entry and outcomes

The Entry - What was the idea/issue, and what did you do?

The Team - who were the key individuals involved in this project?

The Outcomes - how have you made a difference?

Visual material - photos and/or a short video (no longer than 3 minutes)

'Before' and 'after' photos/details of improvements made to the care facility environment.



**Aged Care
Association**
NEW ZEALAND

INDIVIDUAL AWARD CRITERIA

[APPLY HERE](#)

Careerforce Legendary Service to the Aged Care Sector Award

OUTLINE OF AWARD

This award recognises the outstanding contribution of an individual who has been part of the aged residential care sector for more than ten years. This person will have continuously made a difference in the lives of numerous residents and staff members.

ELIGIBILITY

Open to anyone, from a senior manager of a large group, to care staff, non-care staff or a volunteer in the aged residential care sector, who has contributed to the aged residential care sector for more than ten years.

ENTRIES SHOULD INCLUDE:

How the commitment, attributes, skills and experience of this individual have directly impacted on the quality of care the residents/family received over the timeframe.

Examples of the positive benefit they have had on the sector.

Testimonials from residents, staff, families or the community

ENTRIES MUST INCLUDE:

A Synopsis of entry - a brief description of the entry and outcomes

The Entry - why the nominee should be considered for the award, with examples

Visual material - photos and/or a short video (no longer than 3 minutes)

INDIVIDUAL AWARD CRITERIA

[APPLY HERE](#)

Leecare Individual Award for Outstanding Solutions

OUTLINE OF AWARD

This award recognises the stand-out problem-solver in a care facility. This individual must have been instrumental in implementing solutions to enhance the delivery of quality care.

ELIGIBILITY

Open to anyone who is either a volunteer, employed or contracted in an aged residential care facility.

ENTRIES SHOULD INCLUDE:

Document how their innovative approach or solution addressed a problem or a gap and directly impacted on the quality of care the residents/family received

Examples of how this has benefited the care facility

Testimonials from residents, staff, families or the community (optional)

ENTRIES MUST INCLUDE:

A Synopsis of entry - a brief description of the entry and outcomes

The Entry - why the nominee should be considered for the award, with examples

Visual material - photos and/or a short video (no longer than 3 minutes)



Nomination T&Cs

» 1. Eligibility

1.1 Facilities

To enter the Excellence in Care Awards, facilities must:

- Be certified to operate in New Zealand.
- Meet all applicable contractual, certification, accreditation, and regulatory requirements.
- Meet the eligibility criteria for the award category entered.

1.2 Individuals

To enter an individual award category, entrants must:

- Be employed by a facility that is a current member of the Aged Care Association (ACA).
- Meet the eligibility criteria for the award category entered.

1.3 Verification

ACA reserves the right to verify eligibility and disqualify any entry that does not meet the requirements of the Awards.

» 2. Entry and Judging Process

2.1 Judging

All entries will be assessed by an independent judging panel appointed by ACA.

2.2 Finalists

Finalists will be notified by 28 August 2026. Two finalists will be selected for each award category unless otherwise stated. Three finalists will be selected for the Gilmours Excellence in Food Service Award.

2.3 Gilmours Excellence in Food Service Award

Finalists in this category will receive an unannounced site visit from the judging panel during a designated assessment week advised by ACA. While finalists will be informed of the assessment week, the date and time of the visit will not be disclosed. Judges will dine with residents and assess the food service experience firsthand.

2.4 Judges' Decisions

Judges' decisions are final and no correspondence will be entered into regarding the judging process or outcomes.



Nomination T&Cs

» 3. Finalist Presentations

3.1 Presentation Requirement

All finalists must deliver a three-minute presentation at the ACA Conference based on their award entry.

3.2 Presentation Format

Presentations must:

- Be delivered as a spoken presentation by the finalist or a nominated representative.
- Include supporting visual material in PowerPoint format.

3.3 Failure to Present

Failure to meet presentation requirements may result in withdrawal from award consideration.

» 4. Awards Ceremony

4.1 Announcement of Winners

Winners will be announced at the ACA Conference Awards Ceremony and Gala Dinner on Thursday, 29 October 2026, at Tākina Wellington Convention and Exhibition Centre.

4.2 Attendance

To receive an award at the Awards Ceremony, the finalist or an authorised representative must be present. If no representative is present, ACA may present the award at a later date.

» 5. General Conditions

5.1 Accuracy of Information

Entrants must ensure all information submitted is accurate and complete. ACA may verify information provided and disqualify any entry containing false or misleading information.

5.2 Privacy and Consents

Entrants are responsible for obtaining any necessary permissions and consents relating to personal information, photographs, testimonials, videos, or other material included in their entry.



Nomination T&Cs

» 5. General Conditions Continued

5.3 Use of Entry Materials

By entering, entrants grant ACA permission to use submitted materials, photographs, videos, and presentation content for Awards-related promotion, publicity, and reporting. ACA will respect the confidentiality of commercially sensitive information identified by the entrant.

5.4 Photography and Media

Entrants, finalists, and winners consent to being photographed, filmed, or interviewed in connection with the Awards. ACA may use this material for promotional and reporting purposes.

5.5 Partner Recognition and Promotion

ACA and Award Partners may promote and publicise finalists and winners, including the use of entrant names, facility names, award categories, photographs, videos, and other non-confidential information related to the Awards.

5.6 Conflicts of Interest

ACA will manage any actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest identified during the judging process.

5.7 Site Visits

Finalists in the Gilmours Excellence in Food Service Award must provide reasonable access for judging activities, including unannounced site visits. Failure to cooperate may result in disqualification.

5.8 Costs of Participation

Entrants are responsible for all costs associated with preparing entries and participating in the Awards programme, including conference registration, travel, and accommodation.

Finalists will be eligible to purchase ACA Conference registrations at the Early Bird rate, regardless of the standard registration deadline.



Nomination T&Cs

» 5. General Conditions Continued

5.9 Disqualification

ACA may disqualify any entrant who does not meet the eligibility requirements, breaches these Terms and Conditions, provides false or misleading information, or acts in a manner that may bring the Awards, ACA, or its partners into disrepute.

5.10 Awards

ACA reserves the right not to present an award in any category if entries do not meet the required standard.

5.11 Changes and Cancellation

ACA reserves the right to amend these Terms and Conditions, alter the Awards programme, or cancel the Awards if circumstances require.

5.12 Acceptance

Submission of an entry constitutes acceptance of these Terms and Conditions.

