

**Submission
No 79**

**INQUIRY INTO REGISTERED NURSES IN NEW SOUTH
WALES NURSING HOMES**

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As a Clinical Nurse Specialist in Palliative Care I can speak with some authority to express my concerns at the proposed legislation to remove the mandatory laws to have Registered Nurses on duty 24/7 in residential aged care facilities (RACF). As palliative care is the core business of RACF's it is essential to have a RN on duty to:-

- 1) Recognise the terminal phase of a resident's life
- 2) Initiate the appropriate care to ensure the resident's dignity & comfort
- 3) Consult with the GP to negotiate subcutaneous medications such as Morphine & Midazolam to ensure distressing symptoms of pain, nausea, delirium & terminal restlessness are controlled
- 4) Set up a continuous infusion with the above medications via a syringe driver
- 5) Be competent to manage the terminal symptoms in the RACF rather than calling an ambulance to take the resident to hospital in the dying phase which causes distress to the resident & their family as well as placing a greater strain on ED departments & hospitals
- 6) Enabling the resident to die in their place of care in familiar surroundings with staff who know & love them
- 7) Provide support to the resident's family
- 8) Oversee the resident's care provided by less qualified staff such as AIN's & carers with limited education & skills

These points are just some of the reasons that our frail & aged population with high care needs at the end of their life, deserve the most qualified nursing staff & care that is available. In the coming years with the demographic ageing of the population the need for RN's 24/7 in RACF's will become even greater.