

Submission  
No 131

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

Name: Dr Charles Ovadia  
Date received: 23/07/2015

---

Partially Confidential

To the Standing Committee into Registered Nurses in Nursing Homes.  
Dear Members of the Committee

I write to make a few points about the staffing requirements.

I have been a General Practitioner in \_\_\_\_\_ for 33 years and have attended continuously many of the nursing homes in the area including one where I have had the privilege of having a large number of residents under my care . In that time this Nursing Home has been closed, moved, renovated and reopened.

I with some other doctors have been the most constant presence at this nursing home having outlasted multiple Directors of Nursing, managers, administrators, Nursing staff and support staff. Everyone else has come and moved on.

It is clear that in that time the residents who are now in nursing homes are much more frail and totally dependent on care than previously. Their needs are more intense.

In reality they are at the end stage of their lives and they are there for care that will make their end part of their lives dignified and loving and allow their families the support required.

Doctors like me visit for a short time but their care is in the hands of the people on site and the head of that team is the Registered Nurse.

I have seen over this time the duties of the RNs being taken over by less qualified staff. The staff are well meaning but are aware of their lack of knowledge and depending on the individual shy about making decisions or brashly make inappropriate ones.

They do not have the clinical knowledge or skills to recognise changes, dangers or how to manage them.

I know that now, even sometimes in daytime, patients are being transferred to Emergency Departments inappropriately for simple things such as Urinary Infections, Chest infections, fever, back pain.etc , all of which are easily managed on site.

After transfer of a frail elderly person, the issue is their dignity and choices made by them and their families about end of life care.

I am sure that someone will have made a submission on behalf of the Emergency Departments physicians about the " Choosing Wisely" program. One of those decision that is disputed and encouraged for review is the transfer of elderly frail people from nursing homes to ED where the goals of treatment are not clear for the admitting doctors and the ensuing loss of dignity for the patient and upheaval in their care.

So I believe using less qualified staff in nursing homes will lead to more transfers to hospitals( I have seen that often enough), to more inappropriate transfers ( Also seen), and involve other doctors and hospitals in expensive triage and treatment which is then also inappropriate. ( also seen)

I would urge the committee to recommend the maintenance of Registered Nurses in Nursing Homes at all times and to improve the skill in management of end of life care. That management will always centre on the Registered Nurse.

Thank You  
Yours Faithfully  
Charles Ovadia