

**Submission  
No 122**

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

**Name:** Ms Eleanor McDonald

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The future of Aged Care in Nursing homes is in your hands right now. As decision makers for the whole community I hope that you are guided to do the right thing.

How anyone can perceive that removing Registered Nurses from aged Care 24/7 is the right thing to do is completely beyond me and I can only wonder at the reasoning and justification behind this. Because no matter what it is sugar coated with it will be coming down to dollars and no matter how important the bottom line may be it ought not be allowed to influence this decision.

I can only speak from the heart here as I am sure many other submissions will extol the virtues and necessity of skilled staff making crucial decisions every single day about the quality of life for residents, families and the staff who support them.

As a Registered Nurse who has worked in the Aged and Community care field for 25 years I have had the privilege of working with the most amazing caring staff who have done everything in their power to bring comfort and joy into the lives of the residents and their families despite the pressure of working in an industry which keeps expecting more for less. I have seen great Registered Nurses with years of experience walk away from aged care as a result of this pressure and that loss to the industry is massive.

Aged care R/N's are the best managers in any industry, the ability to juggle multiple tasks, meet the needs of the residents, families, staff and the organisation they work for, they would be worth twice as much money if they worked in the corporate world.

The complexity of the role is enormous it is not just about medication management, staff supervision, clinical care, palliative care and documentation. It is about creating an environment of care, compassion and harmony to enable the staff to do their job well and feel supported by the R/N. Where residents feel safe that their needs will be met in a timely manner and that they are reassured by the presence of people who care for them and have time for them. Where relatives feel secure and comforted in the knowledge that they are doing the best for their family member and they can trust the organisation and the people who are looking after their loved one.

Relationships are priceless, the quality of this time in a persons life leaves memories that last forever for the families, often too for staff. There is no greater privilege than helping people to enjoy what time they have left, to die with dignity and to assist their loved ones to come to terms with it. To do this takes knowledge, experience, understanding and compassion.

I cannot see how removing the role of the Registered Nurse from being on duty 24/7 in the Nursing Homes could benefit anyone who actually needs them.

May you be guided to make the right decision.