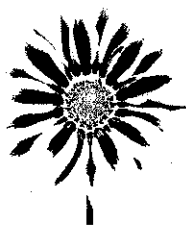


**Submission
No 20**

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

Organisation: Sunhaven Hostel

Date received: 14/07/2015



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LEGISLATIVE
COUNCIL

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01.07.2015

The Director
General Purpose Standing Committee No.3,
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
Sydney..NSW..2000.

Inquiry into Registered Nurses in NSW nursing homes

I write this submission on behalf of the Board of Management, Staff and Residents of Ashford Ageing Care Facility, trading as Sunhaven Hostel.

Background information:

Ashford is a small regional rural remote town and community of approximately 800 people, the nearest regional town of Inverell being 56 kilometres away. The community has a central school, a shire depot for Inverell Shire Council, a chemist and a combined service station / news agency / grocery store. A community bus service offers the only public transport option and operates a fortnightly service to Inverell on pension day. The community, along with Inverell Shire Council and Hunter New England Area Health Service, has recently completed the refurbishment of the local Masonic Lodge Hall into a state of the art medical centre where the community health nurse offers treatments three days a week, a visiting Doctor has surgery on average one and a half days a week, HACC service operate three days a week, pathology once a fortnight, and offer services through Allied Health when required.

Sunhaven Hostel is an 18 bed community owned Facility in Ashford. The Facility has been successfully operating for 22 years, and has consistently met all the standards of accreditation required to operate an aged care facility. The Facility has the layout of a country homestead, all 18 rooms having ensuites, and direct access to verandahs. The Facility has a 2 bedroom unit to provide palliative care to Ashford community members and accommodation for visiting ambulance officers and family. A fire sprinkler system has been recently fitted, and the Facility has gained pre approval for significant refurbishment with the plans to build a library and computer room.

Sunhaven Hostel is the community's second largest employer, offering employment to 26 staff. The care support staff hold Current Certificate III in Aged Care qualifications, and are currently enrolled in Certificate IV in Aged Care and have recently completed the Certificate IV requirement to administer and monitor medications. Staff are provided with an annual training program that ensures their qualifications are current at all times. The Board of Management is supporting one staff member through her Registered Nursing Degree, with 2 other staff studying their Enrolled Nurses' Certificates.

Medications are provided in individually packaged and labelled dose administration aids, dispensed and packaged by the local Pharmacist and are stored in a locked trolley. S8 medications are also dispensed this way, and are stored in a double locked cupboard. An S8 drug register is maintained. All treatments and medications are prescribed and reviewed by the Doctor who services Ashford, and he liaises with the Community Health Nurse who will instruct and oversee treatments when required. The Community Health Nurse visits the Facility three times a week if required to supervise, instruct and review treatments and medications.

Sunhaven Hostel cares for residents with a mixture of care needs. Those residents who have a high funding instrument classification do so due to behaviour and/or dementia. When a resident becomes permanent, it is part of the Sunhaven Hostel Resident Agreement that if the Resident's care needs can no longer be met by the Facility, alternative accommodation will be found if agreed by all parties involved.

The impact of the proposed changes to the legislation is as follows:

- The future of Sunhaven Hostel will be in jeopardy if Registered Nurses are required to be on duty twenty four hours a day.
- The financial burden alone will impact on the Facility's ability to continue to be a viable Facility for the aged and a community employer.
- There are very few registered nurses in the district to meet this requirement.
- The costs of sourcing agency nurses would be well beyond the Facility's financial capabilities.
- The closest air services are three hours away in Armidale, Tamworth and Toowoomba if Registered Nurses had to be sourced from metropolitan areas.
- If this legislation comes into being, the Registered Nurse would have to be multi skilled. There is not enough for a registered nurse to do without being prepared to take on other duties.
- They would be expected to assist with the washing, ironing, providing personal care to residents, assist in the kitchen, assist with cleaning and take on some of the administrative duties . At present, the Facility's management team do the above, and the Board of Management would expect the same from a Registered Nurse.
- Small community owned and stand alone facilities in regional rural remote areas such as Ashford will be nonexistent and community members wishing to stay in their communities with family support will not have that choice.
- The move away from community, family and friends will have an emotional affect on their well being, and negatively impact on their overall care.
- The impact on the 18 residents living in Sunhaven Hostel of having to find alternative accommodation in a larger regional centre and move them from their community, would be detrimental to their current care and well being.
- There would be a huge negative impact on an already fragile community with the loss of employment from standing down staff, and the flow on effect on the local businesses and school.

Solutions:

- If access to the Community Health Nurse became unavailable, the Facility would contract a Registered Nurse for a set number of hours a week to carry out the supervision, instruction and reviewing of treatments and medications as required.
- The Facility will continue to provide training to maintain currency of qualifications and retain evidence on file.
- The Facility will review staff/resident ratio if there is an increase in those residents who may require a higher level of care.
- The Facility will continue to promote the level of care that Sunhaven can provide, and will continue to support and work with families to come up with the best solutions when care needs of a resident can no longer be met by the Facility.
- The Management team of Sunhaven Hostel is fully aware of the staffs' capabilities of caring for residents and will continue to provide forums where staff can have an input into the decision making process.

Please accept the above submission on behalf of the community of Ashford, and know that you are holding the future of Sunhaven Hostel and the Ashford community in your hands.

Yours Faithfully,

Kim Meale
Manager