

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

**Name:** Name suppressed

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Partially Confidential

I feel very strongly that aged care facilities should keep RN's on their staff. In November 2014 my casual shifts (2 x 4 hour shifts), were replaced by a Cert IV AIN, to cut costs. This left 1 RN to look after up to 56 residents, in a high care facility. This was a second job for me, and I had been working these shifts regularly for several years. I have 45 years nursing experience. Unfortunately, due to the fact I was casual meant I didn't have a case to answer in keeping those shifts. Since Nov 2014, I have stayed on the casual pool, but have had very few shifts. It is now 3 months since I was offered a shift. Whilst upset that I have lost a job I loved, I am more upset by the replacement of experienced, qualified staff with a Cert IV trained member of staff. Whilst Cert IV nurses are qualified to provide basic care to the residents, they are not trained or experienced to manage a patients medical/nursing requirements which requires impeccable observation and clinical care. They are not trained or experienced in providing high level, complex nursing care or recognising any change in the patients condition which many aged care residents require. They are also not trained in pharmacology, enabling them to recognise an adverse effect associated with the medications they are administering, unsupervised. RN's play a major role in ensuring the safe, effective nursing care of residents. They are able to ensure residents needs are met, and to recognise and act upon any changing needs as they occur. They can supervise staff, but this is becoming increasingly difficult to the shortage of RN's on each shift, and the large workload they already have. This is made all the more difficult when their patients are cared for in a multi story building, with numerous levels and rooms. RN's are able to recognise when a patient requires transfer to a hospital for emergency treatment. They are able to communicate effectively with the hospital staff to ensure continuity of care, and to advise on any management skills that may be required when dealing with their resident, particularly in the case of a resident with dementia. They are able to continue with the instructions and care that may be required on the return of the resident. RN's understand the legal aspects of caring for an aged care resident, including mandatory reporting procedures. The Cert IV's I have spoken to are not happy with being given this extra responsibility. They recognise they do not have the same skill match of an RN, nor do they aspire to gain that knowledge by training as a RN. Some of the Cert IV staff are trained RN's in their own country but their training is not recognised in Australia, therefore they work as Cert IV staff as this is the only employment they can get, until they have completed the required training. Whilst some of these nurses are competent and caring, many have limited language skills and practical experience to deal safely and effectively with their residents. They rely fully on the one RN in charge to provide this lack in their ability to provide the full care their managers are asking them to perform. The one RN is becoming stressed through the extra responsibility and large workload that only she can perform. This will lead to a further lack of RN's willing and able to work in nursing homes. RN's are paid much less than their equivalent in a public hospital, so are usually staff who are committed to this job because they love providing care to our aged care residents. I implore the politicians to rethink this act, and in so doing ensure that our aged care residents are looked after in a caring, loving environment by well trained, competent staff. I'm sure they would like to know that their loved ones are being provided with the best care they deserve if they require residential care in their final years. We will all become older, and may need the same care ourselves. We need to ask ourselves, are we happy receiving sub standard care which may shorten my life, or allow me to suffer unnecessarily when I should be able to feel loved, cherished and cared for by competent, trained, experienced staff. That is what we all deserve, and none more than our residents of today.