

**Submission
No 114**

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

Organisation: Central Sydney GP Network Ltd

Date received: 23/07/2015

23 July 2015

GENERAL PURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE NO. 3
Inquiry into registered nurses in New South Wales nursing homes

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

This submission addresses Item 1 in the Terms of Reference

The Board of Central Sydney General Practice Network (CSGPN) is highly concerned that there is a risk to the requirement to have a Registered Nurse (RN) on duty at all times in Residential Aged Care Facilities (RACF) in NSW. We understand that this risk has arisen due to amended wording of the Federal Aged Care Act, effective from 1 July 2014.

CSGPN represents more than 600 GPs, Practice Nurses, Practice Managers and Indigenous Health Care Workers who work in General Practice in the Inner West of Sydney.

RACF residents have increasingly complex care needs and a high burden of medical conditions. The RNs in RACF assess, monitor and manage resident and consult with GPs on provision of care. This care coordination involving an RN is essential to ensure adequate communication and implementation of resident treatment plans with GPs and Allied Health providers.

Timely access to GP support in RACFs in NSW is a significant issue. The burden on GPs will increase if there is no RN on duty – less qualified staff will not have the same ability as an RN to adequately assess and triage patient needs. The effect will be that the GP will receive an increased number of phone calls and will be required to visit for conditions that could be assessed and treatment recommendations made by phone.

In addition, less qualified staff may be compelled to call an ambulance when unsure about a resident's condition. This will impact on ambulance services, emergency departments and inpatient wards as well as on the resident being transferred. This will be a particular issue in the after hours period.

CSGPN welcomes the Inquiry into Registered Nurses in New South Wales Nursing Homes and looks forward to an outcome that ensures high quality care for some of our most frail and vulnerable citizens.

Yours Sincerely

Dr Allison Bielawski
Chair