

**Submission
No 39**

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

Organisation: St Andrew's Village Ballina Ltd

Date received: 16/07/2015

Wednesday 15 July 2015

Jan Barham MLC

Greens Member of the NSW Legislative Council

Parliament House, Macquarie St,

SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Ms Barham,

Re: Registered Nurse 24 Hours Aged Care Facilities.

My concerns are raised as the Regional Chair for the Far North Coast Aged and Community Services Association NSW and Act (ACS), which covers an area from Grafton in the South, Tweed in the North and Drake in the West, as well as CEO of St Andrew's Village Ballina Ltd.

The Living Longer Living Better Reforms regarding the Commonwealth Government removing the distinction between low and high care beds which came into place on the 1st of July 2014, has meant that the NSW legislation that was supposed to cover high care beds only (nursing home) could apply across the board to every bed in every facility including those designated as low care originally.

In short this will mean that the NSW legislation which covers 580 facilities could be covering over 1200 facilities, meaning that every facility would need to have a RN on duty 24 hours a day (whether they need one or not). This is absolutely ludicrous.

If this legislation burden is not removed, those 620 facilities in NSW that were known as low care will face non-compliance with legislation and **ALL** will face huge financial burdens with no improvement in quality of care.

It is my belief that neither the Federal nor the State have offered to fund the shortfall. As an example, for a small 47 bed facility such as Timbrebongie House Aged Care Narromine, this could be as much as \$400,000.00 per year. Small facilities in the Far North Coast will be affected financially in the same way. When you add this to 620 facilities across NSW, the cost is astronomical and is caused because of a Federal Government Reform and brought about because of no safety issues.

Every other state relies on Commonwealth legislation and the accreditation system to make sure the right mix of staff is available to meet the needs of those in care. As the expected quality of care is no different from other states (who do not require 24/7 Registered Nurses), obviously the quality of care in aged care in NSW works.

There is no doubt that Registered Nurses are respected and required in the previous styled Nursing Homes, however because of a stroke of a pen, a Registered Nurse would be required 24 hours a day in facilities that previously did not require or need them. This is absolute bureaucracy gone mad.

I wish to register as the Chair of ACS Far North Coast and CEO of St Andrew's Village Ballina Ltd my opposition to Registered Nurses being required 24 hours a day in these facilities that once used to be known as low care facilities. I hope that common sense will prevail for once.

Recommendation:

That the NSW Legislation covering high care beds and the need for a Registered Nurse (RN) 24 hours a day, seven days a week be repealed. Age Care is a Commonwealth responsibility and as every other state in Australia does not have the same legislation as NSW and these States have Quality of Care which is at a high standard and monitored by accreditation, then the RN 24 hours a day seven days a week should be repealed.

Yours sincerely

Phillip M. Carter

CEO