

**Submission  
No 66**

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

**Name:** Mrs Maree Wiseman

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## Registered Nurses 24/7 in nursing homes

I am a Registered Nurse in a rural nursing home. I believe that I am making a difference to the quality of our residents' lives. I have been working in aged care for over ten years. My experience and skills give me the ability to determine a change in a resident's condition to determine whether it needs immediate attention or not.

If one of our residents requires palliative care, my role as a registered nurse is vital. I can assess, anticipate what treatment is needed, provide pain relief, comfort and care and support the resident and relatives through difficult discussions. Going to hospital can be a very traumatic experience for the elderly. The RN colleagues and I provide quality aged care around the clock.

RN's need to be present at all times, night and day in aged care to provide skilled, clinical care to residents with complex and high level, regular needs. People are often on multiple medications and for safety reasons you need to know about the interactions they can have and how they need to be administered.

One aspect of the residents in aged care is that they are often prone to falls which can result in serious injury. We are trained to accurately assess the resident, and when phoning the doctor can determine whether it is safe to monitor the resident or whether they need to be sent to hospital for xray. In rural areas it can be very difficult getting a doctor over to assess the resident. The GP relies heavily on the experienced RN, both day and night. Having more junior staff instead of RN's would result in many more unnecessary hospital admissions which not only would be more traumatic for the resident. It would put more pressure on an overburdened state health system. It would only amount to a cost shifting exercise. Costing more of the NSW state government.

Removing the legislative requirement for a Registered Nurse to be engaged in a nursing home twenty four hours per day, seven days per week will mean many current residents could experience an immediate reduction in the standard of care.

Regarding the employment of Assistants In Nursing and Carers. I have seen first hand when a facility has too many working on a shift that have insufficient training and are caring for our elderly. The standard of care drops, many care needs go unmet. It is imperative that minimum standards be required.

Similarly when insufficient numbers of AIN's or carers are engaged on a shift, once again many of the care needs of our residents go unmet.

Skill mix of AIN's, carers and Enrolled nurses is also very important for adequate care. Many facilities do not adhere to this and this is why we employ your committee to recommend that it too becomes legislation.

Many of our residents are under our care for some years, they become like family to us. We are often their only advocate. Please do not leave it up to the providers to do the right thing because in many cases they won't.