

**Submission
No 3**

**INQUIRY INTO PROVISIONS OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH
AMENDMENT (REGISTERED NURSES IN NURSING
HOMES) BILL 2020**

Name: Mr Peter Connell
Date Received: 13 January 2021

Submission regarding “PUBLIC HEALTH ACT 2010 – SECT 104” Nursing homes to be staffed by registered nurses.

Availability of Registered Nurses (RNs) in Rural/Remote areas of NSW.

There is a well-documented chronic shortage of RNs in rural NSW, nursing homes are in competition with local hospitals, hostels and community health organisations for their services. To fill our roster of required RNs, our nurses are working long hours with overtime adding to our costs. The Director of Nursing (DON), a management position, and the Clinical Care Manager (CCM), management and clinical, have been diverted from their positions to fill vacant shifts. Casual workers on the verge of retirement have delayed leaving the work force to enable our nursing home to continue operating.

Available Communications for RNs off premises but on call.

When this legislation was originally written, mobile phones were not readily available, costing \$4000 in 1987 for a phone that was not reliable or mobile. Today mobile phones are cheap, efficient and readily available. To come across a person without a mobile phone is comparatively rare.

What happens in Victoria

Provision of Nursing Services (High Care Only)

“If after all efforts to have an RN on duty fails, an enrolled nurse may be in charge of the facility with a registered nurse available ‘on call’ to assist the enrolled nurse.”

In NSW and Victoria a Residential Aged Care Facilities (RACF) that was previously a hostel (only allowed to take low care residents), can operate under the previous rule of only having an RN available on call, even though they have high care residents now residing in their home through “ageing in place”. This gives these previously low care facilities a **large financial advantage** over facilities running under the Nursing Home legislation and are required to be staffed with registered nurses at all times.

A more practical solution to the rostering of RNs in high care nursing homes in NSW.

We believe all practical efforts should be made to have an RN on duty at all times for the best possible care of our residents.

An RN must be rostered and in attendance **outside** of the hours of 7.00 am to 7.00 pm.

Between 7.00 am and 7.00 pm an enrolled nurse may be in charge of a facility with an RN available on call to offer advice or attend the facility as needed.

This would allow for the necessary skills to be available for clients in residential aged care facilities with the flexibilities to suit both clients and staffing levels.

It will spread the load over the RN and EEN work force, avoiding burn out in our RNs and reduce the financial burden nursing homes carry as opposed to the low care facilities.

Both State and Federal governments need to look more closely at increased funding for facilities that are required to have a registered nurse to be on duty.