

TAS Nursing home fails to meet standards

An aged-care home in Tasmania has come under fire for its lack of skilled staff and failure to provide basic care to residents.

The Aldersgate Village aged care home in Rocherlea, Launceston has two months to show improvements or its licence could be revoked after a report by the Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency found it failed to meet 19 of 44 required standards.

The 54-bed home with 25 high-care residents was found 'non-compliant' in vital areas such as medication and pain management, palliative care, nutrition and hydration, skin care, staff education, and fire and emergency plans.

The report stated 'residents do not receive appropriate clinical care' with 'assessments of residents' care needs

incomplete'. Almost one third of incident reports were blamed on residents, with inconsistent recording of vital signs following falls.

The report noted only one registered nurse was on duty to provide staff supervision and specialised nursing care to 66 residents, 49 (75%) of whom required a high level of care during the afternoon and night shift.

ANF Tasmania branch secretary Neroli Ellis welcomed the report findings.

'We have had issues with that facility for 12 months and concerns about the skill mix. It was inevitable they would be found non-compliant, there are not enough qualified nurses and now that's going to be addressed.'

The home has replaced senior

management staff and has employed a full-time clinical nurse educator for six months to address staff needs and education.

Meanwhile the ANF has renewed a call for the licensing of all aged care workers following a report on a pilot study conducted by RN and Australian National University research fellow Dr Tony Jones outlining the importance of licensing in aged care facilities.

ANF assistant federal secretary Ged Kearney said while the Federal Government had committed resources to education and training programs it did not go far enough as carers in aged care facilities remain unlicensed.

'The purpose of licensing is to protect the public. The study makes the point that many of

the personal carers surveyed had no, or very little, relevant education or training. While we applaud efforts to train and educate the health workforce our major concern is the need for licensing.'

Ms Kearney said licensing would ensure carers had a professional framework that would make them accountable to the people they care for, the people they work with and the broader public.

'People in aged care facilities have a right to be cared for by appropriately qualified staff. Carers should have a professional body that sets standards of training, education and accountability. A professional framework would ensure carers worked to a code of ethics and provided a high level of care,' she said.

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