



**THE HON JUSTINE ELLIOT MP**  
**Minister for Ageing**

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**Tough measures against Gippsland nursing home - protecting frail and aged residents**

19 September 2008

The Department of Health and Ageing has imposed tough sanctions on Lakes Entrance Aged Care Facility in the East Gippsland region of Victoria – following the identification of serious risk to residents involving the provision of care to residents, particularly in medication management.

Lakes Entrance Aged Care Facility is a 75 bed facility – comprising 60 high care and 15 low care beds.

It was identified on an Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency unannounced visit and is the fourth Victorian nursing home put under sanction by the Department of Health and Ageing since 1 July 2008. (In Victoria, there are 802 nursing homes and nationally, there are almost 3,000.)

The tough measures taken against Lakes Entrance Aged Care Facility include:

- The appointment of a specialist nurse adviser for six months to supervise the clinical activity at the nursing home;
- No Commonwealth subsidies for new residents for six months; and
- Ongoing monitoring of the nursing home by the Department of Health and Ageing and daily visits by the Accreditation Agency while a serious risk remains.

The Accreditation Agency assessors identified a range of concerns at the nursing home including:

- Unsafe medication management;
  - Missing medications;
  - Over-medication of paracetamol;
  - Antibiotics not given for two days increasing infection risk;
  - Problems involving self-medication by residents;
- Insufficient skilled and qualified staff to ensure the residents' care needs;
- Care planning of residents not properly oversighted by qualified staff;
- Insufficient physiotherapy review for residents;
- Inadequate falls management, including the lack of neurological assessment after a resident fell and hit their head; and
- Unacceptable waits for assistance, including one case where a resident waited for

90 minutes to receive assistance with toileting.

On September 17, the Accreditation Agency officially called “serious risk” at the Lakes Entrance Aged Care Facility and the Department of Health and Ageing issued JKL Nominees with a Notice of Decision to Impose Sanctions under Section 67-5 of the Aged Care Act.

“The situation at Lakes Entrance Aged Care is entirely unacceptable,” Mrs Elliot said.

“I make no apologies for the Department of Health and Ageing taking tough action.

“The Australian Government’s first priority is the safety, health and welfare of frail and aged residents,” Mrs Elliot said.

The Department of Health and Ageing is meeting today (September 19) with the operators of the facility.

A formal meeting of residents and family members is being arranged for September 24 at Lakes Entrance Aged Care Facility.

### **Unannounced visits and nursing homes under sanction**

Earlier this year, the Minister for Ageing, Mrs Justine Elliot announced 3,000 unannounced visits by the Accreditation Agency to improve the quality of aged care in Australia.

Since July 1, there have been 270 unannounced visits by the Agency in Victoria alone. As a result, three Victorian nursing homes have been put under sanction due to unannounced visits.

In Victoria, there are currently four nursing homes under sanction. They are Parkdale House, Kirralee Residential Aged Care Facility, Patricia Gladwell Aged Care Home and Lakes Entrance Aged Care Facility.

Nationally, there are 10 nursing homes under sanction.

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