



## **THE HON JUSTINE ELLIOT MP**

### **Minister for Ageing**

#### **MEDIA RELEASE**

6 March 2009

#### **Australian Government acts on Dandenong aged care home**

The Australian Government has imposed sanctions on Kendalle Pty Ltd, the approved provider of Grandview Gardens Aged Care Facility in Dandenong, Victoria – citing serious risk to resident health and safety.

A serious complaint about poor wound management at the home was received by the Department of Health and Ageing on 24 February which conducted an unannounced visit the same day.

This was followed by a referral to the independent Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency which undertook a comprehensive review audit at the home.

The Accreditation Agency identified serious risk to the health, safety and well-being of residents in the Grandview Gardens Aged Care Facility. The official sanction was issued and served on March 4.

The Australian Government has been monitoring Grandview Gardens since issues were raised by an “informant” in late-October about non-payment of staff entitlements. Further concerns were raised by the Australian Nursing Federation and family members at Christmas.

Grandview has been the subject of visits since then by the Accreditation Agency and Commonwealth Nursing Officers from the Department of Health and Ageing.

Grandview Gardens Aged Care Facility has 60 high care places. It currently has 56 high care residents. (It has 12 residents over the age of 90.

At Grandview Gardens Aged Care Facility, the Accreditation Agency had concerns about serious risk to the health, safety and well-being of residents related to pain management, skin care and human resource management, including:

- Systems and processes at the Home to manage clinical care were ineffective in ensuring that the care needs of residents were met;
- Pain assessments and management plans were not implemented effectively and were not reflective of the severity of the residents’ pain;
- Residents’ skin integrity was not being maintained, and appropriate interventions to reduce the likelihood of serious wounds were not being implemented consistently;
- Staff lack of knowledge of appropriate care interventions was impacting on residents’ health and wellbeing;
- Individual problems like bed sores, pressure wounds and failure to change stoma bags causing discomfort for residents; and
- Staff vacancies were often not filled and staff were regularly expected to undertake double shifts – of more than 15 hours.

As part of the Australian Government's response, a range of tough measures have been put in place including:

- Accreditation Agency assessors are to be on-site daily until the serious risk is mitigated;
- Department of Health and Ageing staff will continue to monitor closely the nursing home;
- Appointment of an adviser, with nursing experience, approved by the Commonwealth, who has the appropriate skills, qualifications and background to assist the home to comply with their responsibilities for a period of six months; and
- Nursing home is ineligible to receive Australian Government subsidies for any new residents admitted during the period of the sanctions for a period of 6 months.

In the 2007-2008 financial year, Grandview Gardens received \$3.21 million in Australian Government funding.

There are now four Victorian nursing homes under sanction out of 785. Nationally, there are nine nursing homes under sanction out of a possible 2,830 aged care homes.

Grandview Gardens is now organising a family/residents' meeting for next week to inform them of the situation at the facility and the approved provider's plans to improve the care and welfare of residents.

"We make no apologies for placing a nursing home under sanction," the Minister for Ageing, Mrs Justine Elliot said.

"This is about the protection and the welfare of frail and aged Australians and we will act when it is necessary.

"The Rudd Labor Government is committed to improving the care and quality of Australia's nursing homes and its residents – after 12 years of neglect by the previous government," Mrs Elliot said.

Over the next four years, funding for aged and community care would reach record levels of more than \$41.6 billion -- with \$29.5 billion of that on residential aged care alone.

Over the next four years, the Australian Government would be providing an average of \$43,000 for every aged care home resident.

This Government is committed to continuing to work in partnership with older Australians, their families, staff, unions and providers to improve the quality of aged care in Australia.

Anyone with concerns about the care or welfare of residents should immediately contact the Department of Health and Ageing's Complaints Investigation Scheme on **1 800 550 552**.

**For more information, contact Mrs Elliot's office on (02) 6277 7280**