



THE HON JUSTINE ELLIOT MP

Minister for Ageing

MEDIA RELEASE

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Unannounced visits – 1000th milestone reached today

As of today (October 2), the independent Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency has conducted a record 1001 unannounced visits.

Earlier this year, the Minister for Ageing, Mrs Justine Elliot announced that the Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency would conduct a minimum 3,000 unannounced visits this financial year.

The 1001 unannounced visits were conducted between July 1 and October 2, resulting in action on six nursing homes including five sanctions.

Mrs Elliot said “unannounced visits play an important role in improving care and exposing gaps in resident care.

“Unannounced visits gave an accurate picture of a nursing home’s day-to-day operation.

“They are even more important as frail elderly residents are cared for 24 hours a day and are often unable to speak out if they have concerns about their care – especially those in high care,” Mrs Elliot said.

In the case of a nursing home where “serious risk” has been identified, the Accreditation Agency visits daily until the “serious risk” has been removed.

Mrs Elliot said: “I make no apologies for these tough measures. Unannounced visits are all about the health, safety and well being of residents.

“I am confident that the aged care industry and the many older Australians it serves will see the longer term benefits of a more transparent and accountable aged care industry.

“It must be remembered that the vast majority of Australia’s 3000 nursing homes are doing an excellent job providing quality care for older Australians.

“I will continue to work in partnership with older Australians, aged care providers, unions and consumer groups to improve the quality in residential aged care and ensure the long-term viability of the sector,” Mrs Elliot said.

Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency (July 1 to October 2)

NSW/ACT	VIC	TAS	SA/NT	QLD	WA	Total
333	296	30	100	141	101	1001

In addition, the Department of Health and Ageing has conducted 391 unannounced visits for the same period.

NSW/ACT	VIC	TAS	SA/NT	QLD	WA	Total
86	99	12	85	101	8	391

Currently, there are 11 nursing homes under sanction out of a total of nearly 3,000 aged care homes around Australia.

There have been six instances where the Department of Health and Ageing has taken compliance action as a result of the **unannounced** visits during this period.

In five cases, the Department imposed sanctions:

- Kirrallee Aged Care Facility, Victoria;
- Parkdale House, Victoria;
- Lakes Entrance Aged Care Facility;
- Sir James Terrace, Queensland; and
- Rosden Private Nursing Home

(The Department of Health and Ageing also issued a Notice of Non-Compliance on Brighton Aged Care, South Australia as the result of an unannounced visit.)

The Accreditation Agency has a set of at risk factors to identify nursing homes for further unannounced visits. They include:

- existing non-compliance problems in any of the areas of the 44 standards, including nutrition and hydration;
- the number of complaints against a facility;
- the known financial difficulties or business restructuring;
- a change of approved provider;
- major changes in key personnel and senior staff;
- ambitious building programs; and
- a sudden change in resident population and mix of residents.

The Rudd Government is committed to tackling the challenges of the 21st century. And one of those major challenges is our ageing population.

Australians have the second longest life expectancy in the world, at 81.4 years, after the Japanese. In addition, women on Queensland's Sunshine Coast and in Western Australia's wheat belt have among the longest life expectancies in the world.

An ageing population and record life expectancy are to be celebrated. The previous government neglected older Australians; we plan to change that.

That is why, over the next four years, we are investing a record \$40 billion into aged and community care; of that, \$28.6 billion on nursing homes alone.

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