



## THE HON JUSTINE ELLIOT MP

### Minister for Ageing

#### MEDIA RELEASE

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#### **Australian Government to Publish Quality Data on Nursing Homes**

From 1 July 2009, Australian families will be able to gain more access to information on the quality and compliance of Australia's 2,830 aged care homes.

"Choosing an aged care home can be very difficult and families deserve this information – especially, when they are making one of the toughest decisions of their lives," Minister for Ageing, Mrs Justine Elliot, announced today.

"It is about helping families to make informed decisions for their loved ones," Mrs Elliot said.

The expanded dedicated web-page would contain information relating to their compliance with government safety and standard levels.

The materials would be on the existing website – [agedcareaustralia.gov.au](http://agedcareaustralia.gov.au) - which families currently use to find the contact details for homes in their local area.

The decision to make this information easily accessible follows representations from consumer and advocate groups to improve transparency and accountability following the 12 years of neglect by the previous government.

Currently, there is some information on the current sanctions at:

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/ageing-rescare-sanction.htm>

And there is an archived sanctions site – for those which have been lifted or expired – at:

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/ageing-rescare-sanction-sancarch.htm>

From mid-year, the Australian Government would list state-by-state or territory-by-territory nursing homes or hostels which:

- have been the subject of an official sanction in the previous year;
- are currently the subject of an official sanction;
- have received a notice of non-compliance (NNC) in the previous year; or
- is currently the subject of a NNC.

In the lead-up to the development of the new webpage, the Australian Government would consult with the Ageing Consultative Committee – which meets in Canberra on March 25.

The Department of Health and Ageing's Office of Aged Care Quality and Compliance has been given carriage of implementing the new reporting regime.

Submissions can be made to: Compliance Support Section, Office of Aged Care Quality and Compliance, Department of Health and Ageing, MDP 68, GPO Box 9848, CANBERRA ACT 2601 or [acc@health.gov.au](mailto:acc@health.gov.au). The deadline for submissions is April 17.

"There are 2,830 nursing homes in Australia and the vast majority are doing an excellent job providing quality care for older Australians, but when action is required this Government will move swiftly," Mrs Elliot said.

## **Sanctions**

Sanctions are imposed on a nursing home by the Department of Health and Ageing where there is an immediate and severe risk to the health and safety of residents. Progress on fixing the serious risk is monitored daily.

Currently, there are 10 aged care homes under sanction in Australia.

In the 2007-2008 financial year, there have been 17 decisions to impose sanctions on 16 homes.

For six of those homes in this period, sanctions expired or were lifted and in one additional case, Glenwood Gardens, the home was transferred to a new approved provider.

## **Notice of Non-Compliance**

A Notice of Non-Compliance is imposed when a Home has not complied with their responsibilities, but where this non-compliance is not causing an immediate and severe risk to residents well being. The Notice makes clear what problems need to be addressed, and a timetable.

From the period July 1, 2008 to February 12, 2009, the Australian Government has issued 83 notices of non-compliance, with another 17 in the process of being issued. In the 2007-2008 financial year, it issued 75 notices.

A Notice asks approved providers to address a single or several non-compliant issues.

Some common issues currently being addressed relate to the provision of: **clinical care; nutrition and hydration; medication management; and pain management.**

Several notices addressing non-compliance with laws relating to police checks have also been issued.

## Current sanctions

| State | Residential Home                        | Sanction Imposed  | Sanction Expiry  |
|-------|---|-------------------|--|
| VIC   | Kirralee Residential Aged Care Facility | 25 July 2008      | 24 July 2009   |
| VIC   | Patricia Gladwell Aged Care Home        | 28 August 2008    | 27 February 2009   |
| VIC   | Lakes Entrance Aged Care Facility       | 17 September 2008 | 16 March 2009  |
| VIC   | Rosden Private Nursing Home             | 23 September 2008 | Sanction revokes allocated places with effect 1 October 2008 |
| WA    | John Mercer Lodge                       | 7 October 2008    | 6 April 2009   |
| VIC   | Latrobe Private Nursing Home            | 1 November 2008   | 30 April 2009  |
| SA    | Charles Young Residential Care Centre   | 8 December 2008   | 7 June 2009  |
| QLD   | Raffin Place                            | 13 December 2008  | 12 June 2009   |
| QLD   | Mareeba Garden Settlement Hostel        | 17 December 2008  | 16 June 2009   |
| WA    | Numbala Nunga Nursing Home              | 23 January 2009   | 22 July 2009   |

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