



THE HON JUSTINE ELLIOT MP

Minister for Ageing

MEDIA RELEASE

April 9, 2009

Australian Government acts on two aged care homes: Norwood Nursing Home in South Australia and Yarra Valley Hostel in Victoria

Last night (April 8), the Australian Government imposed sanctions on two separate aged care homes.

Norwood Nursing Home in Oakden, South Australia and Yarra Valley Hostel at Yarra Junction in rural Victoria were placed under sanction by the Department of Health and Ageing.

Norwood Nursing Home was placed under sanction after citing serious risk to the health, safety and well being of its nursing home residents was identified. The Home was the subject of a review audit by the independent Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency after it was the site of a gastro outbreak earlier this month.

Yarra Valley Hostel was placed under sanction following a failure to meet a strict timetable to rectify existing non-compliance and the identification of further non-compliance.

This Hostel is co-located with the Yarra Valley Nursing Home which was put under sanction on March 26. Both Yarra Valley nursing home and hostel are in the bushfire affected areas.

The two homes are unrelated.

Nationally, there are 13 nursing homes under sanction out of a possible 2,830 aged care homes.

Norwood Nursing Home in South Australia

The Accreditation Agency found that Norwood Nursing Home had:

- Relied heavily on workforce agency staff who lack skills and knowledge to provide satisfactory care and services;
- Management systems which are incomplete, inaccurate and not readily accessible to key nursing staff leaving residents at risk of receiving incorrect care and treatment;
- A lack of correct or current documentation concerning residents' nutrition and hydration, including food allergies;
- Weekend nursing staff who were diverted from providing clinical care to clean residents' toilets;
- Not appropriately assessed, planned or reviewed residents' care needs, putting residents at serious risk of not receiving appropriate care, medication and treatments; and
- Inadequate medication management where residents' medications were not regularly assessed and reviewed, leaving residents at risk of not receiving appropriate medications.

The sanctions imposed are:

- Revocation of approved provider status, unless a nurse adviser, approved by the Commonwealth, who has the appropriate skills, qualifications and background to assist the home to comply with their responsibilities appointed by the approved provider for a period of six months; and
- The approved provider is not eligible to receive Australian Government subsidies for any new residents admitted during the period of the sanctions for a period of six months.

Accreditation Agency assessors are to be on-site daily until the serious risk is mitigated and the Department of Health and Ageing staff will continue to closely monitor the nursing home.

The official sanction was issued and served on April 8 to **Airlie Pty Ltd** – the approved provider for Norwood Nursing Home. It is a 40-bed high care aged care facility. There are currently five residents over 90 years.

In the 2007-2008 financial year, Norwood Nursing Home received \$1.872 million in Australian Government funding.

Yarra Valley Hostel

In November 2008, the Department of Health and Ageing issued a Notice of Non-compliance in respect of 13 non-compliant outcomes at the Yarra Valley Hostel.

The hostel had agreed to remedy the non-compliance by 6 February 2009. Following the residents temporary relocation during the Victorian bushfires, a review audit by the independent Accreditation Agency found that the Service had not remedied the previously identified non-compliance and there are now 18 non-compliant outcomes.

The Accreditation Agency found Yarra Valley Hostel:

- Had failed to remedy non-compliance identified in November 2008 and compliance with standards continued to decline since that date ;
- Had insufficient qualified staff to meet the clinical care needs of residents;
- Could not demonstrate that resident's medications were managed safely and correctly;
- Could not meet the nutrition and hydration needs of residents;
- Had ineffective and inadequate behaviour management;
- Had ineffective continence management; and
- Staff were not familiar with care planning and assessment systems relating to resident care needs.

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

- Revocation of approved provider status, unless a nurse adviser, approved by the Commonwealth, who has the appropriate skills, qualifications and background to assist the home to comply with their responsibilities appointed by the approved provider for a period of six months; and
- The approved provider is not eligible to receive Australian Government subsidies for any new residents admitted during the period of the sanctions for a period of six months.

The Accreditation Agency and Department of Health and Ageing staff will continue to closely monitor the home.

The official sanction was issued and served on April 8 to Caulfield Drive Pty Ltd.

Yarra Valley Hostel is a 35-bed low care aged care facility. There are currently 13 residents over 90 years.

In the 2007-2008 financial year, Yarra Valley Hostel received \$627,256 in Australian Government funding.

The Minister for Ageing, Mrs Justine Elliot said: "sanctions are about ensuring that nursing home operators provide proper care for frail and aged Australians."

"The Australian Government will take action when it is necessary and we are 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.

"For the record, the vast majority of nursing homes in Australia provide a world class service and their staff are committed and hardworking."

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