



Mental Health Commission
of New South Wales

Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committees on Community Affairs
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

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Dear Committee Secretary

Re: Effectiveness of the Aged Care Quality Assessment and accreditation framework for protecting residents from abuse and poor practices, and ensuring proper clinical and medical care standards are maintained and practised

The Mental Health Commission of NSW is an independent statutory agency responsible for monitoring, reviewing and improving mental health services and the mental health and wellbeing of the people in NSW. It works with government agencies and the community to secure better mental health and wellbeing for everyone, to prevent mental illness, and to ensure the availability of appropriate supports in or close to home when people are unwell or at risk of becoming unwell.

The Commission is guided in all of its work by the lived experience of people with a mental illness and promotes policies and practices that recognise the autonomy of people who experience mental illness and support their recovery, emphasising their personal and social needs and preferences as well as broader health concerns.

The Commission is concerned that the mental health and wellbeing of older Australians is being compromised by an all too common misunderstanding of their needs and limited availability of specialist services. In response, we recently launched two documents: *Living Well in Later Life: The case for change* and a statement of 11 principles which we urge all relevant Government and non-Government organisations to adopt (see attached)

These documents are the result of a collaboration between the Commission, older consumers and carers, and key organisations such as Council on the Ageing NSW, the NSW Ministry of Health, The Faculty of Psychiatry of Old Age (NSW Branch) of the RANZCP and the NSW Health Education and Training Institute.

The Commission commends these documents to the Community Affairs Committee and urges that the inquiry consider the mental health needs alongside the physical care needs of older Australians, particularly those in residential care.

If you have any questions with regard to these documents or the work of the Commission more broadly please contact Deputy Commissioner, Catherine Lourey, [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]
John Feneley
Commissioner

31 July 2017