

2/55 Beckwith Street
Ormiston QLD 4160

25 August 2002

Committee Secretary
Dr Margot Kerley
C/- Standing Committee on Ageing
House of Representatives
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600
Dear Dr Kerley

My mother is currently in a low care aged facility in Cleveland, Brisbane. Her general health has deteriorated rapidly in the past five months, especially her mobility, to the point where she needs assistance with everyday things like dressing, getting in and out of a chair, showering, toileting, etc. She is also now incontinent. She is clearly no longer a "low care" case. She has also been taken to hospital twice in the early hours of the morning after falling in her room and not being able to reach the help button on the wall.

As you are no doubt aware, there are only two levels of assisted care available in Queensland - low care and high care. My mother clearly falls somewhere in the middle and I believe there should be another classification of medium care, for while she can still do some things for herself to a degree and is not what is commonly thought of as a "nursing home" case, she clearly cannot do the things that the other residents in the low care facility can.

The problem is that until she is classified as high care by the ACAT team, she cannot even get on a waiting list for a high care facility. The waiting lists in this area are currently 12 to 18 months. I have been told that if she has another stroke or bad fall and is unable to be cared for at the low care facility any longer, she will be put in hospital until a bed can be found at the first of 5 high care facilities that we as her family nominate.

It is a ridiculous situation that people cannot even get on a waiting list for the sort of care they will need until it is too late!

I ask that another classification of care be created, being medium care. I also ask that it should be possible to put people on waiting lists at a facility before they have been classified as needing that care. Obviously if someone needed the bed before another person on the waiting list had reached that level of care, then the bed could be given to them. But at least people could be somewhere on the way to getting the care they require.

At present it will take an emergency with my mother's health to force things to the point where she will jump a queue and be given a bed at a high care facility.

I am not sure how the bed licensing system works, but there obviously needs to be a huge increase in the number of beds available to cater for the people in this area of Brisbane, the Redlands, who need those beds NOW, not in 12 to 18 months time.

Regards,

Fiona Bannister