

We wish to lodge our protest about Young People in Nursing Homes.

Elderly people are at risk with young people being accommodated in elderly Nursing Homes for many reasons.

My brother has had an A.B.I. for 18 years & has had many accommodation problems, the worst of all his unpredictable behaviour. As many elderly residents in Nursing Homes used to torment him, he would get annoyed & throw anything that he could lay his hands on, including his walking frame, crockery, cutlery, chairs, he has even pulled a television from a stand & finding inner strength has managed to throw these objects at anyone. He has also been annoyed enough to put his arm through a plate glass window & cut his wrist in the process, requiring hospital treatment.

People with behavioural problems are a serious threat to the frail & elderly in Nursing Homes. It is also very depressing for the elderly & their visiting relatives to actually see people with an ABI & young children who come to visit their grand parents can be very frightened when they see someone acting differently or if someone grabs their arm or a piece of clothing & won't let go. This can be devastating for a child to witness. I am 53 & can still remember visiting Kew Cottages as a child & being frightened by what I saw & never wanted to return & I didn't.

If one elderly person or relative or child was injured by someone with an ABI, WHO would take legal responsibility for their care. Is it the staff problem, or the facility problem, Government problem for housing this person in an inappropriate facility??????????

These are just a few questions that need answers.

Then if someone is misbehaving they are drugged up to calm them down then their mental capacity is being damaged with so many drugs, creating more problems for the staff to control them.

Nursing Homes ARE NOT the place for anyone with brain disorders, as they are so unpredictable & have amazing strength. The staffing ratio in Nursing Homes is not adequate enough & staff are not trained to cope with people with ABI. Of late staff have been imported from overseas to try to fill vacancies in this area of, some of which leave a bit to be desired.

People with ABI desperately need more purpose built facilities with the appropriate staff to make their life as comfortable & as safe as possible. Facilities such as Mary Guthrie House which is attached to Royal Talbot Rehabilitation Centre is a purpose built facility but has very limited accommodation for the many young people that desperately need safe & adequate housing.

ABI patients need much more attention time & can take 2 or 3 staff at any one time which in turn is taking staff away from other residents that may need attention at the same time & if there are only few staff on each shift that can handle some ABI patients who is left to deal with someone who is not ABI?????????????????

Maybe a solution to help ease this problem, would be for a special wing to be built, attached to many nursing homes around Melbourne & country centres, specially designed, equipped, & staffed to cater for young people. It is not acceptable for young people to be housed in Melbourne when they come from country towns.

ABI patients still need family & friends to help their recovery & maybe eventual return to community housing but if they are housed miles away, friends forget them & family has trouble visiting 3 or 4 times a week or sometimes even more. This is a very big drain on family members. I know of parents who visit their son every day, trying to make sure their son is stable enough, eventually, so that when they are not here or able to visit every day, other family members won't find it so difficult to take over.

Please take heed from many many people who have to deal with this problem every day, Maybe just one day it might be one of your own.

Alaine Ball