

Senate Committee on Finance and Public Administration

Inquiry into Residential and Community Aged Care in Aust

- Wintringham faces all of the problems and concerns that other aged care providers experience
- However over and above all of these problems we also have the additional concern that our clients and residents are from a homeless background
- The Aged Care Act is designed for a very different client group than ours. It is designed around meeting the aged care needs of an 85 year old Anglo-Saxon middle class female. This is not a pejorative statement but simply an reflection of the typical client profile in C'wealth funded care facilities
- Wintringham clients are however more likely to be a 65 year old working class male with little or no family supports
- Wintringham has worked with a succession of supportive C'wealth Aged Care Ministers and their bureaucrats to find ways that the Aged Care Act can be interpreted to allow our services to exist.
- I would ask that Senators when they are reviewing the submissions to this Inquiry, to be aware that aged homeless or impoverished men and women are equally entitled to receive quality aged care services and that the problems Wintringham face in delivering these services are significantly more complex than those facing other providers.
- These problems relate to both capital costs and recurrent funding as well as with the general regulatory environment with the aged care industry.
- We can speak at length on any of these areas and will take direction from Senators as to how you would like us to proceed at this hearing.
- However, I wish to state that in the 20 years since I established Wintringham I can say that there generally has been strong bi-partisan support for the work we do with our homeless clients.
- A solution advocated by Wintringham over many years to the difficulty that politicians, bureaucrats and Wintringham all face with administering an Aged Care Act that has little or no relevance to the aged homeless, is to make homelessness a Special Needs Category in the Aged Care Act.
- I am pleased to say that the current Government, as part of its recent White Paper on Homelessness, has indeed accepted that argument to amend the Act. I would ask that Senators support the amendment.

Bryan Lipmann, AM
CEO, Wintringham
20.2.2009