

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY QUESTION ON NOTICE
Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (ACQSC)
Senate Select Committee on COVID-19
Australian Government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic
29 May 2020

PDR Number: IQ20-000369

Staffing issues at Dorothy Henderson Lodge prior or during the COVID-19 outbreak?

Written

Senator: Katy Gallagher

Question

Was the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission aware of any staffing issues at these facilities prior or during the COVID-19 outbreak? If yes, please provide details. If no, why not?

Answer:

Dorothy Henderson Lodge

Regulatory information obtained by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (Commission) (including a self-assessment online survey completed by the provider) did not indicate any staffing issues at the service prior to the outbreak.

During the outbreak, the supply of staff was among the matters discussed at the daily outbreak coordination meetings involving the provider, NSW Health, the Commonwealth Department of Health and the Commission. BaptistCare and the Commonwealth Department of Health responded by providing a surge workforce to the service.

Opal Bankstown

From 1 July to 31 December 2019, the Commission received 2 complaints about Opal Bankstown that related to staffing issues. One was resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant. The second, from an anonymous source, was closed as it overlapped with the issues in another complaint which was resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant.

Regulatory information obtained by the Commission from a self-assessment online survey completed by the provider in late March indicated that the provider was still developing contingency plans in the case of up to 20 to 30 per cent staff absences.

Newmarch House

From July to December 2019, the Commission received two complaints about Newmarch House that related to staffing issues. From January to 9 June 2020, the Commission received four complaints about Newmarch House that related to staffing issues. All six complaints were resolved to the satisfaction of the complainants.

An onsite assessment contact conducted on 5 September 2019 did not identify any staffing issues.

During the outbreak at Newmarch House, the Commission was aware of staffing issues (including difficulty in filling rosters) through participation in the daily outbreak coordination meetings. The Commonwealth Department of Health responded to these issues by providing access to a surge workforce through Aspen and Mable. Newmarch House also advised that eight to ten other agencies were used including the Anglican Community Services own surge workforce, Health Care Australia and E4 Healthcare.

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PDR Number: IQ20-000377

Testing regime for staff and residents

Written

Senator : Katy Gallagher

Question

Was the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission satisfied with the testing regime for staff and residents once the outbreaks occurred at Dorothy Henderson Lodge, Opal Bankstown or Newmarch House? If no, why not?

Answer:

Based on the clinical advice available to the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (Commission), the Commission was generally satisfied with the testing regime for staff and consumers at each of the three residential aged care services.