



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA

Senate Community Affairs References Committee

**Senate inquiry into aged care quality  
assessment and accreditation**

The Chair of the Senate Community Affairs Committee, Senator Rachel Siewert, has today called for additional submissions to the committee's inquiry into the effectiveness of the aged care quality assessment and accreditation framework for protecting residents from abuse and poor practices.

"The interim report for this inquiry focused on shocking incidents at the Oakden Older Persons Mental Health Facility in South Australia. That report examined the aged care regulatory failures that contributed to the substandard, and in some cases criminally abusive, aged care provided to residents at Oakden," Senator Siewert said.

"Since the publication of the committee's interim report, a number of changes to the aged care regulatory environment have been proposed. The Australian Government has merged the various aged care standards into a single set of Aged Care Quality Standards, the Senate is currently conducting an inquiry into the Australian Government's proposal to merge the Australian Aged Care Quality Agency and the Aged Care Complaints Commissioner into a single commission, and the Prime Minister has announced a Royal Commission into Aged Care," Senator Siewert said.

"To complement the work of these other inquiries, our inquiry will focus on the regulation of medical, nursing and allied health services within the aged care context. Evidence received so far shows that medical care in an aged care facility has a far lower level of regulation than the same medical services provided in other contexts. This is particularly true of services relating to mental health and cognitive impairment," Senator Siewert said.

"The committee is calling for further submissions on the issue of how medical, nursing and allied health services are regulated in aged care residential facilities and aged care services delivered in a person's home. In order to properly inquire into this important area of aged care services, the committee will also be seeking an extension to our reporting date, until February 2019," Senator Siewert said.

The committee proposes to hold further public hearings, with dates and locations yet to be determined.

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**DATE REFERRED**

13 June 2017

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**SUBMISSIONS CLOSE**

30 November 2018

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**NEXT HEARINGS**

Further hearings to be advised

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**REPORTING DATE**

Seeking extension to February 2019

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**COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

Senator Rachel Siewert  
(Chair)

Senator Lucy Gichuhi  
(Deputy Chair)

Senator Kristina Keneally

Senator Steve Martin

Senator Louise Pratt

Senator Murray Watt

**Other Senators**

**participating:**

Senator Stirling Griff

Senator Helen Polley

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**CONTACT THE COMMITTEE**

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## **Making a submission**

Written submissions can still be provided to the committee by emailing [community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au](mailto:community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au)

If you would like to make a submission you may find it helpful to read the guide to making a submission available on the Senate website: [Preparing a submission to an inquiry](#)

If you have questions, or need more time to write your submission, contact the secretariat.

Further information about the inquiry, including published submissions and hearing programs, is available on the committee website: [www.aph.gov.au/senate\\_ca](http://www.aph.gov.au/senate_ca).

## **Attending a public hearing**

Most committee hearings are held in public and anyone is welcome to come and listen. The audio and video of each hearing will also be broadcast live on the internet:

[www.aph.gov.au/News\\_and\\_Events/Watch\\_Parliament](http://www.aph.gov.au/News_and_Events/Watch_Parliament)

Further information about what to expect when attending a Senate committee hearings is available on the Senate website: [Attending a public hearing](#)

## **Inquiry Terms of Reference**

### **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**

On 13 June 2017, the Senate referred the above matter to the Senate Community Affairs References Committee for inquiry and report:

- a. the 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;
- b. the adequacy and effectiveness of complaints handling processes at a state and federal level, including consumer awareness and appropriate use of the available complaints mechanisms;
- c. concerns regarding standards of care reported to aged care providers and government agencies by staff and contract workers, medical officers, volunteers, family members and other healthcare or aged care providers receiving transferred patients, and the adequacy of responses and feedback arrangements;
- d. the adequacy of medication handling practices and drug administration methods specific to aged care delivered at Oakden;
- e. the adequacy of injury prevention, monitoring and reporting mechanisms and the need for mandatory reporting and data collection for serious injury and mortality incidents;
- f. the division of responsibility and accountability between residents (and their families), agency and permanent staff, aged care providers, and the state and the federal governments for reporting on and acting on adverse incidents; and
- g. any related matters.