

## Submission on Aged Care 2025 progress report on the implementation of the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Age Care Quality and Safety

Office of the Inspector-General of Aged Care Reply Paid 83426 Woden ACT 2606

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Written by Susan Watts

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Dear Inspector General of Aged Care

Please find below and attached my submission on Aged Care 2025 progress report on the implementation of the recommendations of the Royals Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety

My husband died on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2024 last year in a Residential Aged Care Facility that admitted non-compliance regarding environmental restraint. To be precise they locked him up for 2 weeks in a unit of 8 people, even though he didn't have Covid. This meant he was prevented from going outside for sun or air within, going without physiotherapy even though he needed it to keep him mobile as he had parkinsons. As a result he became suicidal. Being locked up with others who eventually contracted COVID, he himself caught Covid and at the end of being Environmentally restrained for 2 weeks he had to be put in bed, then went on palliative care and died 3 weeks later

So, in answer to the question,

Have the changes led to a Paradigm shift that the Royal Commissioners called for ?

A resounding **NO**

## Lived Experience

I have lived experience of both Residential Aged Care (RAC), via being a carer for my husband who had dementia and parkinsons, who lived in a RAC for 3 years, as well as for myself having been in receipt of a Home Care Package for nearly three years.

Having pursued three complaints through the ACQSC I can say, as so many others have via various communications with DoHAC, ACQSC and the Minister's for Health and Aged Care, that there is NO confidence that RAC Providers who commit abuse, harm and neglect will be held to account. The watered-down deterrents in the Aged Care Act 2024 mean nothing to them. Boards, and senior management MUST KNOW THAT THERE ARE SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES THAT WILL BE APPLIED TO THEM FOR THE ABOVE, AND THAT THEY WILL BE HELD TO ACCOUNT.

I handed over the care of my husband, as so many do each day, to a RACF and its staff. The stress of trying to get him the care that he had a RIGHT to was unbearable. Management work 9-5 M-F. Aged Care is a 24/7 industry.

They didn't do the right thing by him and as a result he died, at only 73.

I was going to write so much more to you but as I proceed with submission, I find myself so overcome with grief and stress. Trying to pursue a complaint for 8 months with the ACQSC, only for it to be closed unsatisfactorily, and dealing with my husband's affairs has been beyond any stress I've experienced in my life

And now as I need to lean into the aged care system more myself, now that I am on my own with no family, I am faced with co-payments that I cannot afford. And so many exclusions in the services we can get that many will end a burden on the hospital system and likely end up in aged care early at the hands of the hungry privatised Aged Care sector

It's a mess. Shame on a Government that takes money from older Australians that, like me, have no superannuation and struggle each week on a small pension.

If you would like further information or input please reach out to me. There is more to say, but I'm physically and emotionally exhausted and feeling unheard.

