

24 March 2015

The Hon Jillian Skinner MP
Minister for Health and Minister for Medical Research
Ministerial Office
GPO Box 5341
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Minister

The Country Women's Association of NSW would like to take this opportunity to provide input to the Steering Committee charged with looking into the requirement in the NSW Public Health Act 2010 to have a registered nurse (RN) on duty at all times in nursing homes in NSW.

We understand that an interim arrangement (effective until the end of 2015), requires all nursing homes previously covered under the Act to continue as usual, with a Steering Committee established to consult with the sector.

The CWA believes that it is essential that the requirement for a RN to be on duty at all times is included in NSW legislation to ensure the quality of care to older members of our community in nursing homes.

There are many reasons put forward to support the need for a RN to be on duty 24/7. However the main argument is to ensure a qualified professional is on duty who is able to:

- prevent unnecessary hospital admissions and costly overburdening of the already stretched ambulance and hospital systems
- perform expert nursing procedures
- oversee the administering of medications and any potential side effects
- manage changing or deteriorating conditions
- decide if and when to call in other services.

The CWA supports the campaign to ensure the NSW Public Health Act 2010 continues to require that "*a registered nurse is on duty in the nursing home at all times*" as we believe it is imperative that the current level of care remains.

We trust that following consultation with the sector and feedback from the community, the NSW Government will ensure the best possible care is provided to the aged residing in nursing homes. Having a RN on duty 24/7 is a strategy which will assist this outcome.

Yours sincerely

Donna Wilkins
Executive Officer