



NSW NURSES AND MIDWIVES' ASSOCIATION

# MEDIA RELEASE

General Secretary: Brett Holmes | Assistant General Secretary: Judith Kiejda

📞 (02) 8595 1234 🌐 [www.facebook.com/nswnma](http://www.facebook.com/nswnma) 🐦 [twitter.com/nswnma](https://twitter.com/nswnma)

Monday 6 May, 2019

## Dementia residents suffer under poor staffing numbers

Low ratios of nursing staff in residential aged care facilities is taking a toll on the care provided to residents living with dementia, according to a report released by the NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association (NSWNMA) today.

The report '[Who Cares? Dementia Care in NSW Residential Aged Care Facilities](#)' highlights the importance of safe staffing and skills mix, with 82% of those surveyed stating insufficient staffing ratios within residential aged care facilities increased the risk of abuse.

General Secretary of the NSWNMA, Brett Holmes, said the report revealed many aged care residents diagnosed with dementia had not received the level of care they deserved because staffing was so poor.

"Many of our members working in rural, not-for-profit facilities are worried about the management of residents with behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia or BPSD," Mr Holmes said.

"Often these are large sites, with a staffing ratio of just one registered nurse to between 50 and 100 residents. Nurses working in these conditions are therefore reporting higher incidences of missed care or the use of restrictive practices.

"Incidences of aggression between residents or residents towards staff, is also higher in facilities with low nursing staff to resident ratios."

Mr Holmes said the report found 73% of members surveyed had insufficient time to interact with a resident who was displaying signs of loneliness. Meanwhile, 89% of respondents indicated additional staff would help to improve interactions and 69% said an improved skill mix amongst nursing staff would also assist.

"Not only are some of our residential aged care facilities failing to provide adequate dementia care, many are contributing to the prevalence and symptoms because appropriate nurse staffing is inadequate," said Mr Holmes.

The NSWNMA is calling for urgent minimum staff to resident ratios to be introduced in the aged care sector and is part of a national campaign seeking support for ratios ahead of the federal election on 18 May [www.ratiosforagedcare.com.au](http://www.ratiosforagedcare.com.au).

---

### MEDIA CONTACTS:

Brett Holmes, General Secretary, NSWNMA 0414 550 324

Helen Macukewicz, Professional Officer, NSWNMA 0427 864 637

Gia Hayne, Media Advisor, NSWNMA 0488 015 317