



MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday, 2 October 2024

PEAK ADVOCACY BODY: MANDATED CARE MINUTES “THE BARE MINIMUM”

The Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN) has described reports that aged care providers are failing to meet mandated care minute targets as “deeply troubling”.

“It’s been a year since the mandatory target of 200 minutes of direct care per day per aged care resident came into effect,” said OPAN CEO Craig Gear OAM.

And now from 1 October, it is expected that aged care providers increase their care minutes to an average of 215 minutes per resident, per day, including at least 44 minutes of care provided by a registered nurse.

“These care minutes should be seen as the bare minimum,” Mr Gear said. “They make a significant difference to the lives of older people living in residential aged care.

“We are aware that providers in regional and remote areas are grappling with workforce challenges, but the data shows compliance is disproportionately low in metropolitan areas.

“Compliance rates of aged care homes run by for-profit for providers are also much lower than those for not-for-profit providers.

“There needs to be transparency around where the money is going. And there has been a long-held concern on the part of older people and their families that investment in aged care is going to some providers’ bottom line rather than to care.”

Mr Gear said it was important to hold providers who were not doing the right thing to account.

“Where providers aren’t making genuine efforts to meet their direct care minute targets, the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission must take action.”

According to Mr Gear, the new Aged Care Act, scheduled for 1 July 2025, has the capacity to deliver greater protections and consequences (including civil penalties) for providers who do the wrong thing.

“We look forward to working with the government and other sector stakeholders to ensure the legislation has the necessary teeth.”

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IMPORTANT NOTICE TO MEDIA FOR STORIES RELATING TO OLDER PEOPLE

It is critical to provide older people with an avenue to get support when covering stories about aged care. We strongly encourage you to include the following message in your story to enable older people to seek support:

For information or support regarding aged care, please call the Older Persons Advocacy Network on 1800 700 600 or visit opan.org.au