



**Australian Government**

**Australian Aged Care Quality Agency**

From the Office of the Chief Executive Officer



16 May 2018

Ms Ali Frazer  
Coroner's Registrar  
Coroner's Court of Victoria  
65 Kavanagh St  
Southbank 3006

**Court ref: 2015 001527**

Dear Ms Frazer

**Response to recommendation 53 of the investigation into the death of Margaret E Barton**

The Coroner recommended that:

53. That the Australian Aged Care Quality Agency (AACQA) review this case, pertaining to:
- The adequacy of clinical governance administration at Park Hill Gardens RACF, which ceased operations in December 2014.
  - The inappropriate administration of medication ('as required' Oxazepam) by multiple nursing staff at MPH.
  - The adequacy of communication between RACFs.

Under Section 2.30 of the Quality Agency Principles 2013, the Quality Agency conducted an assessment contact of mecwacare Park Hill on 10 May 2018, for the purposes of assessing the current aged care provider's performance against the Accreditation Standards. The assessment addressed the broad issues identified in the Coroner's report, and specifically assessed expected outcome 1.8 Information systems and expected outcome 2.7 Medication management. The Quality Agency assessment team considered the findings and recommendations of the Coroner in assessing the provider's performance against the Accreditation Standards.

**Recommendation 53 (a)**

- The adequacy of clinical governance administration at Park Hill Gardens RACF, which ceased operations in December 2014.

The Transport Friendly Society Ltd was the approved provider of Parkhill Gardens Residential Aged Care Facility until its transfer to a new approved provider mecwacare on 1 December 2014.

The Quality Agency Principles describe the purpose of an assessment contact. This includes assessment of the provider's performance against the Accreditation Standards. The assessment contact at mecwacare Park Hill was conducted to assess the current performance against the Accreditation Standards, and to consider improvements made at the home since Ms Barton's death.

In its assessment contact of mecwacare Park Hill, the Quality Agency assessed the information systems (expected outcome 1.8 of the Accreditation Standards), including actions taken since mecwacare took over operations in 2014. The following information system improvements were noted:

- revised protocols for admission and transfer of care recipients from other aged care homes or from hospital;
- revised admission checklists;
- the employment of a full time clinical manager position;
- new decision making process regarding suitability of new admissions;
- regular communications with medical officers
- an after-hours resource folder
- regular meetings with allied health

The Quality Agency assessment team also reviewed records in relation to a recent transfer to the home including the communication of care needs.

The Quality Agency found that the home met expected outcome 1.8 for effective information systems.

### **Recommendation 53 (b)**

- a) The inappropriate administration of medication ('as required' Oxazepam) by multiple nursing staff at MPH.

In its assessment contact of mecwacare Park Hill, the Quality Agency assessed the approved provider's performance against expected outcome 2.7 Medication management, which requires that care recipient's information is managed safely and correctly.

In assessing this expected outcome, the team considered whether management can demonstrate care recipients' medication is managed safely and correctly; that there is staff compliance with the medication management system and that the system is safe, according to relevant legislation, regulatory requirements, professional standards and guidelines.

While the team did not specifically look at the administration of Oxazepam as part of the assessment of this expected outcome, the home's medication management systems were assessed with a particular focus on care recipients for whom 'as required' medication orders were in place.

The home was able to demonstrate that since 2014 they have revised their medication policies, procedures, documentation and training for staff.

The assessment team reviewed the clinical files of care recipients who receive 'as required' medications to view evidence of the policies and procedures in practice.

The Quality Agency found that the home met expected outcome 2.7 Medication management.

**Recommendation 53 (c)**

At the Quality Agency's assessment contact visit at mecwacare Park Hill, the home's system for admitting care recipients was assessed as part of the assessment against expected outcome 1.8 Information Systems.

Improvements were initiated at the home in response to the Coroner's recommendations in respect of communication with care providers when care recipients are being transferred from other aged care facilities.

These improvements included:

- the revision of protocols for the admission and transfer of care recipients from other homes or hospital, with requirement for detailed written care plans and/or verbal handover from the transferring facility or hospital;
- improved communications with medical officers through an electronic system;
- an after-hours resource folder containing pertinent policies, protocols and flow charts at all times;
- and regular meetings with the physiotherapist, clinical manager and facility manager to assess and review the mobility and equipment needs of all new care recipients/ care recipients identified as high risk of falls or who has been involved in a fall.

The Quality Agency found that the home met the expected outcome 1.8 Information systems.

Thank you for providing us with your findings and recommendations in relation to this aged care facility. The Quality Agency continues to monitor mecwacare Park Hill's performance against the Accreditation Standards and continuing improvement, including through the delivery of an unannounced visit program.

Yours sincerely



**Nick Ryan**  
**Chief Executive Officer**