

Aged care home Edenfield Nerrilda fails repeated audits, continues to face no sanctions

ABC North and West SA / By Sowaibah Hanifie

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A Port Augusta nursing home has failed five of eight audit standards including failing to report abuse allegations. (ABC News: John Gunn, File Photo)

A nursing home in regional South Australia has failed five of its eight assessment standards and has had two years of its accreditation stripped after an audit by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (ACQSC).

An unannounced January audit of the Port Augusta facility Edenfield Nerrilda found the home did not provide appropriate protection and safeguards for residents.

The provider, El-Jasbella Nerrilda Pty Ltd, was issued a notice of non-compliance in 2018 for a nearby facility.

Last year, Edenfield Nerrilda was also issued a notice of non-compliance after it failed nine out of 44 outcomes.

In one case a family complained [their mother's bed sores were so deep her bone was exposed](#).

Some of the same standards failed in 2019 were found non-compliant in 2020.

Key points:

- The Aged Rights Advocacy Service urged the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission to consider if further sanctions were necessary
- Edenfield Nerrilda was issued a notice of non-compliance after it failed nine out of 44 outcomes in 2019, and some were still not compliant in 2020
- The commission expects facilities to improve all areas of non-compliance and ensure they work to return to full compliance

Assessors found in the January audit that staff failed to record two reportable alleged assaults according to legislation, and a third incident was not recorded in the non-reportable incident register.

The home's response was that it was aware of three incidents, however "[it] was unable to provide a reason why [they] were not documented in line with legislated requirements and the service's processes".

ACQSC also found the home failed to respond to three alleged incidents of abuse of the same customer and did not implement measures to ensure the staff member in question did not attend to the resident.

Aged Rights Advocacy Service (ARAS) chief executive Carolanne Barkla urged the commission to consider if further sanctions were necessary.

"I would urge the commission to review this report and make sure all residents at this facility are receiving safe quality care," she said.

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"I'm quite concerned about the overarching management or risk to the older people living in the facility."

Nine staff, including five clinical staff had not undertaken mandatory training in elder abuse in 2019.

Accreditation shortened

The review found the service did not re-assess a resident for impact on their physical and mental health after three incidents.

When it came to clinical care, staff were not always documenting schedule eight controlled drugs or telephone-ordered medication.

The latest ACQSC review has now stripped two years off its accreditation, meaning it must be re-accredited by April 2021.

In a statement, commissioner Janet Anderson said the length of re-accreditation varies based on the level and risk of non-compliance found.

"The commission can re-accredit services up to a period of three years at a time. A shortened accreditation period means the commission will return sooner to conduct a comprehensive site audit," Ms Anderson said.

When approached for comment, the nursing home said:

Carolanne Barkla said she's concerned about the safety of some residents in the home. (ABC News: Nicola Gage)

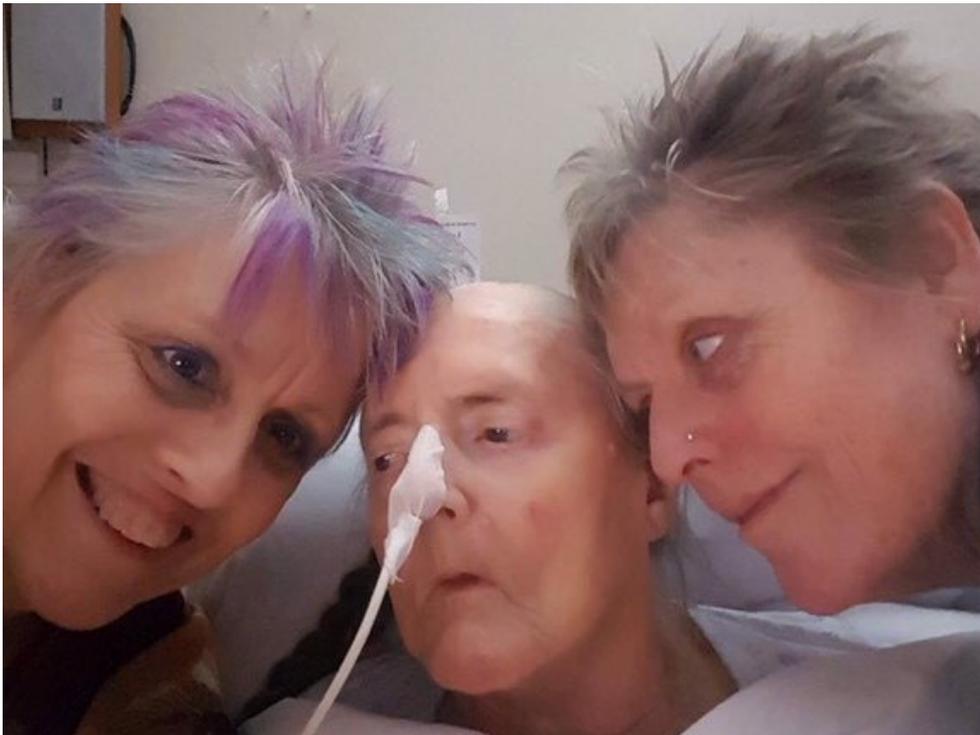
"At this point in time, El-Jasbella Nerrilda Pty Ltd has no comment to make in respect of the matters raised in your email of April 20, 2020."

Inadequate care leading to calls for new management

South Australian senator Rex Patrick said if the home cannot consistently meet standards, its management needed to change.

"Given it is not the first time an audit has revealed problems, the commissioner will need to engage in much more frequent oversight of the facility," Senator Patrick said.

"If all the standards can't be met consistently, an appropriate response would be action that led to a change of management or transfer of ownership."



Sylvia Mullan (left) and Catherine Loran say their mother's nursing home has restricted their visits. (Supplied)

Further findings in the report include that the home's staff did not see beds being lowered to the floor as a physical restraint and they did not consistently document alternative strategies before using chemical restraints.

ACQSC found residents' care plans were not reflective of their needs and some consumers sampled said they "did not consider they receive personal and clinical care that is safe and right for them".

Residents requests for a female nurse for personal hygiene were not met because the home had difficulties recruiting female staff for night shift.

Ms Anderson said Edenfield was expected to improve all its areas of non-compliance and ensure it was working to return to full compliance.

"Should the service be found to have further non-compliance, the commission has a number of regulatory mechanisms available including to vary or revoke the service's accreditation," she said.

Regional residents left with no other options

Federal Member for Grey, Rowan Ramsey, said it was essential the home improved because it was Port Augusta's only aged care facility.

He said there were some positives in the report, including feedback from some customers that they are treated kindly and with respect.

Edenfield is the [third nursing home in regional South Australia to be stripped of full three year accreditation](#) in the last eight months.

"It's a disappointing result, I must say. Edenfield will have to measure up and get their care in order and I expect them to do that," Mr Ramsey said.

"We need them to continue, there is not a viable alternative in Port Augusta.

"The alternative is around 100 kilometres away and those facilities are probably close to full anyway."

Rowan Ramsey said Edenfield had to improve its standards because Port Augusta residents had no alternative nursing homes. *(ABC News: Jed Cooper)*