

## Port Augusta nursing home in breach of industry standards by aged care regulator

ABC North and West SA / By Declan Gooch

Posted Fri 4 Feb 2022 at 2:24pm, updated Fri 4 Feb 2022 at 4:48pm



Inspectors visited the facility in November. (Pixabay: sabinevanerp)

The aged care regulator has determined that a nursing home at Port Augusta in South Australia's north poses an "immediate and severe risk" to residents.

The Ramsay facility run by Edenfield Family Care was found to be non-compliant with each of the eight industry standards by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission after an inspection in November.

The commission found a range of care, governance, staffing and facility problems and that staff were in need of additional training.

Edenfield was ordered to appoint an adviser, provide additional training for staff and banned from receiving federal subsidies for new residents for three months.

### Key points:

- An aged care facility in Port Augusta has breached all aged care standards
- The regulator found some residents were locked in or out of rooms
- The facility operator disputes some of the findings and will provide additional training

### Concern about psychoactive medication

One resident who was suffering from an itchy rash was administered psychoactive medication almost a dozen times in 17 days for "agitation and calling out", the report said.

"Documentation shows staff administered psychotropic medications when a prescribed skin cream was ineffective.

"Progress notes do not show a medicated cream prescribed for the rash was applied prior to administration of additional psychotropic medication."



The Ramsay aged care facility in Port Augusta. (Supplied: Edenfield Family Care)

Another resident was found to have been administered psychoactive medication six times in a fortnight for "wandering behaviours".

"Three staff confirmed administration of psychotropic medications prior to trying non-pharmacological interventions," the report said.

In response, the operator said the dangers of chemical restraint had been discussed with the medical officer and that medication for some residents had been stopped.

### **Residents' rooms locked**

The report found staff would lock residents in and out of their rooms to prevent some residents who liked to wander from entering.

On the third day of the inspection, the assessment team found five bedroom doors locked while residents were outside their rooms, and that night four residents locked inside their bedrooms.



The facility was found to be in breach of all eight aged care standards. (Supplied: Google Maps)

The commission concluded residents were not able to move around freely and the practice put "the safety of those [residents] being confined to their rooms at risk".

Edenfield disputed the inspector's assertions about doors being locked and said a staff member who provided information about the practice to the inspector had been misinterpreted.

### **Unresponsive resident's vitals not recorded**

The report also said that a staff member who entered a resident's room in August found the resident unresponsive.

"Progress notes did not include any information describing the time of clinical event ... neurological observations were not recorded and only one set of vital signs were noted," it said.

A promotional photo of a room at the Ramsay facility. (Supplied: Edenfield Family Care)

Two months later, the resident was found unresponsive again.

"There is only one progress note in relation to the event indicating a head-to-toe assessment was undertaken, but the outcome of the assessment is not noted; vital signs and neurological observations were checked but the findings are not noted," the report said.

"There is no record of the medical officer attending the service to review the [resident]."

In response, Edenfield said it would provide training on how to recognise clinical deterioration.

### **Staff concerns**

More than half of the 21 nursing staff told the assessment team that staffing levels were not sufficient to provide an appropriate level of care and services.

Staff members also raised concerns about training.



The inspection uncovered problems with staffing, care, training and complaint handling.  
(Pexels: Matthias Zomer)

"Care staff said they have not received formal training regarding early identification of pressure injuries, but would let the clinical staff know if they saw anything different about a consumer's skin condition," the report said.

It noted, however, that "seven clinical and care staff said they do not have sufficient time to attend to [residents'] pressure area care every two hours as directed".

"All five clinical staff felt they need more guidance and training in relation to pressure injuries and wound management."

Edenfield Family Care managing director Jesse Selvarajah said the organisation was "both surprised and devastated" by the findings.

"We are working closely with residents, families and staff to rectify any shortcomings that have been identified and to ensure that we continue to deliver the quality care that our residents deserve and expect," Mr Selvarajah said.

"This has included engaging an external advisor to assist in auditing our systems and providing additional professional development to staff."