

Media Release
Friday, 30 July 2021

ARAS responds to the closing of Annie Lockwood Court at Kindred Living (Residential Aged Care Facility) in Whyalla

ARAS acknowledges that the closing of Annie Lockwood Court at Kindred Living in Whyalla is deeply distressing for residents and family members, and the community of Whyalla.

The circumstances surrounding the closing of Annie Lockwood Court raises the issue of the lack of a suitably qualified regional workforce in the future, particularly for residential aged care and community care. This difficult issue was echoed in the final report of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, which recommended an appropriate and equitable distribution of health professionals and care workers to meet the needs of the aged care sector, particularly in regional, rural and remote regions, to ensure that ongoing services and care is delivered to older people.

Carolanne Barkla, Chief Executive of ARAS, says, “ARAS is always concerned about the wellbeing of older people, who deserve safe and consistently high-quality care and service. The lack of a suitable workforce compromises the ability of older people to remain living within the Whyalla community where they wish to live and receive high quality care and services. The loss of approximately a third of Whyalla residential aged care places will also likely impact the local hospital and older people who may be awaiting residential aged care. ARAS also understands there is significant regional pressure to obtain Registered Nurses and aged care staff just beyond the Adelaide metropolitan area. The impact on the mental health and wellbeing of older people and their families when they are unable to be located within their community and close to loved ones is likely to be significant. Workforce shortages in rural, regional and remote areas need to be addressed as a matter of urgency.”

Ms Barkla adds ARAS intends to support and work with the residents and their representatives, ensuring their rights, entitlements and options are upheld during this difficult time. ARAS believes that all older people should have equity of access to safe, high quality aged care services.

If you need advocacy support or information, please contact ARAS on (08) 8232 5377 or toll-free 1800 700 600 or visit www.sa.agedrights.asn.au.

ARAS has been supporting older people in South Australia to uphold their aged care and human rights since 1990. ARAS is the South Australian member of the Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN).

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