

Submission to 'Caring for Older Australians' Public Enquiry '30/07/10

There are two words in 'Nursing Home' nursing and home and that while the ACFI does not, unlike Aged Care accreditation, have separate recognition for Diversional therapy/lifestyle, many Nursing Homes will continue to be administrated on the predominately medical model of nursing. The medical model is necessary but so to is the inclusion of not just the word Home but all that it signifies in everyday life for the residents of a nursing home. Diversional Therapists and lifestyle workers are specifically trained and educated in helping to overcome aged peoples' inertias and/or barriers, be they physical, psychological, intellectual, cultural or mental, to their own 'life spark' of self-expression, self-determination, self-empowerment and their individual pursuits and fulfilment to happiness. And what a buzz the life spark is when you see it happening to someone who, for what ever reason, had been left without it. Sometimes one of the loveliest manifestations of this is when a resident suddenly declares for the first time "No! I don't want to do this. I want to do....."

This very short submission is a plea for the ACFI to give separate funding for the 'Lifestyle' component within nursing homes so that the discipline of Diversional Therapy/Lifestyle can function and be resourced in it's own right thereby utilising and maximising the skills to promote the benefits of quality holistic Caring for Older Australians.

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