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Dementia peak body speaks out against restraints at Parliamentary inquiry

The overuse of physical and chemical restraint and the lack of dementia specific training within the aged care workforce continue to be significant issues within the residential aged care sector, according to Dementia Australia.

Speaking at the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights, Dementia Australia called for greater scrutiny of the overuse of antipsychotics as a form of chemical restraint and the confusion surrounding the roles and responsibilities of providers, prescribers, consumers, families, carers and highlighted the ongoing confusion around restraint. Workforce training and education in understanding dementia and avoiding restrictive practices is vital given more than half of people living in residential aged care are diagnosed with dementia.

"We have heard from multiple sources the devastating impacts of the use of physical and chemical restraint," Dementia Australia CEO Maree McCabe said.

"We are concerned that the legislation does not sufficiently challenge or prevent the inappropriate use of chemical and physical restraints and the experiences related to Dementia Australia hear from people with dementia, families and carers on an all too regular basis."

"We are also concerned that there is a lack of consent requirements for the use of chemical restraint".

"In 2019 there is an estimated 447,000 Australians living with dementia and without a significant medical breakthrough, we can expect there to be almost 1.1 million people living with dementia in Australia by 2058."

"There needs to be a commitment from all stakeholders to dementia education to eliminate the over use of antipsychotic medication, and to improve the health and care outcomes for people living with dementia."

"With more than 50 per cent of people in residential aged care living with a diagnosis of dementia, it is essential that a minimum level of dementia specific training becomes a national prerequisite to work in aged care across all parts of the system," Ms McCabe said

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Dementia Australia is the national peak body and charity for people, of all ages, living with all forms of dementia, their families and carers. It provides advocacy, support services, education and information. An estimated 447,000 people have dementia in Australia. This number is projected to reach almost 1.1 million by 2058. Dementia Australia is the new voice of Alzheimer's Australia. Dementia Australia's services are supported by the Australian Government.

National Dementia Helpline 1800 100 500

Interpreter service available

(The National Dementia Helpline is an Australian Government Initiative)

Dementia is a National Health Priority Area

www.dementia.org.au

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When talking or writing about dementia please refer to [Dementia Language Guidelines](#).