



Legislative Assembly for the
Australian Capital Territory

Select Committee on Social Policy

Submission cover sheet

Inquiry into Petition 017-25 and E-Petition 005-25: Closure of Burrangiri Aged Care Respite Centre in Rivett

Submission number: 01

Submitter: The Salvation Army, Australia

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Mr Thomas Emerson MLA
Chair
Standing Committee on Social Policy
ACT Legislative Assembly
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**Inquiry into Petition 017-25 and E-Petition 005-25:
Closure of Burrangiri Aged Care Respite Centre in Rivett**

Dear Chair,

The Salvation Army is grateful for the opportunity to make a submission to this Inquiry.

The Salvation Army Aged Care commenced operations at the Burrangiri Aged Care Respite Centre in Rivett ACT (Burrangiri) in partnership with the ACT Government in 1989.

For over 30 years, it has been our privilege to serve the Canberra community by providing quality and much needed respite care. Burrangiri provides an invaluable service to those caring for an older loved one at home, when the carer has needed a break, or they themselves have required hospital care.

We have been overwhelmed by the strong community support for Burrangiri's respite services - as evidenced by the community petitions informing this Inquiry - and encouraged by the awareness raising conversations about the ongoing need for improved access to respite care support in the ACT.

Closure of Burrangiri will leave very limited options for the many Canberrans who need temporary respite care, including for the two types of respite care currently delivered at Burrangiri - a day centre service and a 15-bed overnight respite centre.

If available, the opportunity to consider transitional arrangements for Burrangiri's respite services would be welcome.

Day centre service

The day centre provides a supportive and caring community environment for participants, staffed by a trained and skilled aged care and lifestyle team. The day centre service promotes independence and facilitates wellbeing with participants engaging with a program of social and recreational activities tailored to their interests and needs. Day programs cover exercise, music, art, cooking, story-telling, armchair travel and more. A nutritious cooked lunch and morning tea are also provided.

Each month there are around 140 day centre attendances.

“

I really enjoyed spending time at the day centre, with the wonderful staff and other lovely people I meet.

”

Tony - Burrangiri client

“

He calls it holiday camp.

”

Yes, it is. It's like a holiday camp.

It's not such a big institution.

Doug and Gail - Burrangiri client and carer

The day centre and overnight respite services are highly valued by clients and their carers. For the carer, it is a time that allows a break from the demands of caring, to relax and attend to other tasks.

“

I loved everything, everything!

”

She is just confident here. And I think that's what's important.

And I'm confident that she gets the care here.

Kath and Lee - Burrangiri client and family carer



“

It was really nice that I could have Tony come [to Burrangiri] when he wanted this to happen. Our geriatrician could see the advantages and benefits of him attending.

”

Maureen and Tony - Carer and Burrangiri client

Overnight respite centre

The Burrangiri overnight respite centre supports individuals transitioning from hospital, and those who might need additional temporary care and support admitted directly from home. A Registered Nurse is available 24 hours per day, supported by a skilled and trained Aged Care team, all of whom undertake worker screening. Our catering team provides nutritious meals, cooked fresh on site, with the menu overseen by a dietician.

Over 4,500 overnight respite days are provided across the 15-bed facility each year. On average we admit 25-30 new residents each month, with the average length of stay being between two and four weeks. Of our overnight admissions, 40% resulted in either reduced hospital length of stay or hospital avoidance. Over 90% of all admissions are safely discharged back to home and this assists residents to achieve their goals of being able to live in their own homes for as long as possible. Should a client not be able to return home, we work to ensure an appropriate discharge destination is identified.

John's Story*

John* had been frequently admitted to hospital, and was at risk of homelessness because the hospital was unable to find suitable accommodation for him. Burrangiri was able to accommodate John, for 16 weeks, until the Centre Manager was able to find him a permanent residential aged care place.

The hospital Social Worker messaged the Burrangiri Centre Manager:

"Diah, thank you to you and all the team at Burrangiri for your care and advocacy for John. It's a huge relief to have a warm and permanent home for him. I hope he makes some good connections there. I'll let all my colleagues know of this success. Jenny"*

**Name has been changed*

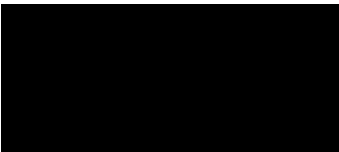


Transitional arrangements

Of upmost importance to The Salvation Army is for the ACT community to be able to continue to access quality respite services without a reduction in available services.

The Salvation Army would welcome the opportunity to discuss the content of this submission should any further information be of assistance. Further information can be sought from government.relations@salvationarmy.org.au.

Yours sincerely,



Bruce Harmer (Major)

Head of Government Relations

The Salvation Army Australia

12 May 2025

The Salvation Army acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters throughout Australia.

We pay our respect to Elders and acknowledge their continuing relationship to this land and the ongoing living cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across Australia.

We also acknowledge future aspirations of all First Nations peoples. Through respectful relationships we will work for the mutual flourishing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and non-Indigenous Australians.

We commit ourselves in prayer and practice to this land of Australia and its people, seeking reconciliation, unity and equity.

