



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: 04

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To:

[LA Committee - SP](#)

Subject:

Submission to: Inquiry into Petition 017-25 and E-Petition 005-25, Closure of Burrangiri

Not Sick Enough for Hospital, Not Well Enough to go Home

In March 2016 my elderly father Bruce [REDACTED] was admitted to The Canberra Hospital with dehydration and what we thought were complications from his diabetes. While in hospital, it was discovered that he actually had Stage 4 esophageal cancer. Due to my dad's age and preexisting conditions with his heart and kidneys, he made the decision that he did not want to undergo radiation treatment.

Even though he was not actually undergoing any treatment, TCH advised that they could not discharge him to his home. During his hospital stay my father had become weak and now required mobility assistance to go to the bathroom, to shower, to move from his bed to a chair, and he was not mobile enough to cook for himself (prior to his hospital admission he was happily living at home alone).

I began applying for beds at nursing homes, however everywhere was full, and I was advised that there may be a wait of several weeks, or even months.

My father absolutely hated being in hospital. He was in a shared room, with new patients arriving and departing from the second bed at all times of day and night. The room remained lit up at night, and the other patients often coughed or snored or called out in pain. At one point someone died in the bed next to him. Hospital policy required my dad to have his blood sugar frequently tested, and his blood pressure monitored - including over night! He couldn't sleep due to the noise and frequent nursing checks. The hospital was unable to provide pureed food that met both his diabetic and allergy requirements. So instead I purchased baby food pouches for him to eat. My father was very emotional and distressed at the thought of having to remain in hospital for weeks.

Notwithstanding the fact that my father hated the hospital and it wasn't a suitable environment for him - my father was taking up a hospital bed when he didn't need to be in one.

I had never heard of Burrangiri, but the social worker at TCH told me that it was an option for getting my father out of hospital while we waited for a nursing home bed to become available. Luckily for my dad, they had a bed available, in a private room with a shared bathroom. TCH allowed my dad to be discharged to the care of Burrangiri nurses.

My dad LOVED Burrangiri. He said that all of the nurses were incredibly caring and thoughtful. They went out of their way to ensure he was comfortable and happy. They let him sleep throughout the night. The chef cooked fresh meals that were diabetic and allergy friendly, which he then pureed for my dad. My dad said they tasted absolutely delicious. His room was quiet and peaceful and he was able to sleep. Family and friends traveled from interstate to visit my dad, and were able to spend quality time with him in his room. I would like to reiterate that my father personally told me many, many times how happy he was at Burrangiri, and what an incredible and special place it was.

My father stayed at Burrangiri for almost three weeks, before he was transferred to a nursing home for one week, then to Claire Holland House where he passed in April 2016.

Burrangiri shouldn't be closed. If anything, more centers like it should be opened.

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