



SUNDALE

CREATING COMMUNITIES SINCE 1963



1800 786 325



enquiries@sundale.org.au



PO Box 5202 SCMC,
Nambour QLD 4560

ABN: 33 436 160 489

ACN: 164 270 946

To the Sundale community,

A confronting [Interim Report](#) was released by the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety was on 31 October 2019.

Titled: [Neglect](#), the Interim Report labelled the industry a “sad and shocking system” that “diminishes Australia as a nation”.

In summary, the Interim Report found Australia’s aged care system fails to meet the needs of its older, vulnerable, citizens, does not deliver uniformly safe and quality care, is unkind and uncaring towards older people and, in too many instances, neglects them.

Reading the Interim Report, I was overcome with emotion, but also disgust, that Australia’s most vulnerable residents have been neglected by a system which should have been supporting them.

The Royal Commissioners identified three key areas which need “immediate” reform in the Interim Report. They are the waiting list for home care, an “over-reliance” on chemical restraints for aged-care residents and stopping the flow of young people with a disability into aged-care homes.

The Interim Report found Australia’s aged-care services are underfunded, mostly poorly managed and all too often unsafe and seemingly uncaring.

The Royal Commissioners said Australia had developed an “ageist mindset” towards seniors and a public discourse that was about “burden, encumbrance, obligation and whether taxpayers can afford to pay for the dependence of older people”.

The three volume, Interim Report also found the aged care system needs fundamental reform and redesign and identified systemic problems in aged care with a system which:

- Is designed around transactions, not relationships or care;
- Minimises the voices of people receiving care and their loved ones;
- Is hard to navigate and does not provide information people need to make informed choices about their care;
- Relies on a regulatory model that does not provide transparency or an incentive to improve;
- Has a workforce that is under pressure and under-appreciated and that lacks key skills.

The Interim Report also focused on the sector’s workforce and found the quality of care people receive depends very much on the quality of the paid carers, their working conditions, their leadership and engagement.

There’s no denying the Royal Commission’s assessment of the sector is brutal; however, I completely embrace their recommendations. It also makes me even more determined to play a proactive part in reform and sector change.

Caring for older Australians is an issue of national importance and is too important not to get right.

It's essential older Australians can access exceptional services, not just today, but into the future.

I'm extremely proud of [Sundale](#) and the progressive steps we have already taken as an organisation, particularly our renewed focus on exceptional clinical care.

In the past year, we've introduced a raft of proactive changes, improved structures to cater for the changing needs of clinical care and increased staff-to-resident ratios, so we remain a provider of choice and continue to support the residents and clients in our care, irrespective of their needs or circumstance.

This commitment to exceptional clinical care was recently highlighted at our first assessment following the implementation of the new Framework and Standards, where the assessors shared stories of positivity, best practice, glowing consumer and staff feedback which included the exceptional care Sundale provides, our new model of care, consumer dignity and choice, the positive change in culture and the responsiveness of management.

This amazing achievement would not have been possible without Sundale's incredible workforce who have embraced and celebrated change over the past year.

As an organisation we've also invested considerable time and resources to ensure we remain a positive example to the sector.

Sundale's recently crafted Strategic Plan outlines a clear vision for the organisation and identifies four priority areas:

- A focus on the replacement of assets;
- An improved organisational structure to cater for the changing needs of clinical care;
- The refurbishment of facilities;
- Reinvesting in staff.

The [Strategic Plan](#) will allow Sundale to continue to meet the needs of its residents and care recipients for years to come. We've already increased staff numbers, invested in learning and development programs to empower staff and approved plans to redevelop existing sites.

The Interim Report released by the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety can be viewed by clicking the below link.

<https://agedcare.royalcommission.gov.au/publications/Pages/interim-report.aspx>

If you have any questions, you can email privacy@sundale.org.au (anonymously) or contact me directly at feedback@sundale.org.au.

Finally, I'm extremely proud of Sundale's entire workforce and their kind, caring and compassionate nature towards our residents and care recipients.

I'm also grateful for their hard work and the countless hours they dedicate to the people that we care for.

I'm confident Sundale's entire workforce will continue to form relationships with our residents and care recipients, so they feel safe, listened to and part of our Sundale family.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'DM', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Danielle Mackenzie
Chief Executive Officer