

Australian Medical Association Limited

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AGED CARE RESIDENTS NEED MORE NURSES, MEDICAL CARE

Australia's aged care homes urgently need more qualified nurses to provide residents with the care they deserve, the AMA said today.

The AMA has been consistently calling for a minimum ratio of registered nurses to residents be made an aged care Accreditation standard.

"It is vital that more nurses are employed in aged care homes to provide elderly people with the care that they need and deserve," AMA President, Dr Rosanna Capolingua, said.

"It is not good enough for nurses to be replaced with personal care workers who provide a very important, but different role."

Dr Capolingua praised the Australian Nursing Federation's *Because We Care* campaign for more skilled nurses to be employed in aged care facilities and for aged care nurses to receive fairer rates of pay.

She said extra funding for nurses should be part of a broader Government strategy to ensure elderly people in residential care received high-quality nursing care and had ongoing access to doctors.

"As well as nursing care, residents need access to doctors," she said.

"The Federal Government should put in place a specific Accreditation standard for aged care homes to ensure their residents have ongoing medical care.

"Specific Government funding is needed to assist homes to ensure doctors can provide on-site care to residents.

"This includes maintaining medical records, access to electronic records and establishing properly-equipped treatment rooms where doctors can examine patients privately in an appropriate environment."

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