



AUSTRALIAN  
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HUMAN RIGHTS

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## Media release

For immediate release 19 March 2015

### Get the young out of aged care

ALHR have provided a submission to the Senate Inquiry into the appropriateness of residential care for young people with disabilities. ALHR addresses the adequacy of aged care for young people with serious and/or permanent mental, physical or intellectual disabilities and the options and consequences of de-institutionalising those people from residential care.

In 2010, there were 6465 young people with disabilities living in nursing homes in Australia. Life in a nursing home fails to provide young people with adequate living standards, access to social inclusion and education opportunities. These hallmarks of a young person's life are denied to young people with disabilities by being placed in care set up for people in the end stages of life.

ALHR submitted to the Inquiry that the aged care system is not only inappropriate for young people with disabilities but that it is in violation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

But simply removing young people from aged care is not enough. There is a risk of further violating the rights of young people with disabilities as a consequence of their de-institutionalisation. International law provides for the right of participation and inclusion in the community by people with disabilities. Steps must be taken to ensure the preservation of this right when young people are de-institutionalised, ensuring that they are able to participate and be included in the community.

ALHR has grave concerns regarding the adequacy of existing residential care arrangements especially the use of aged care facilities including nursing homes as places of residence for young people with disabilities. Existing residential care arrangements are not consistent with the rights of people with disabilities to live independently or access adequate standards of living and are a breach of international human rights obligations which must be rectified immediately.

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ALHR (Australian Lawyers for Human Rights) is a network of Australian lawyers active in practising and promoting awareness of international human rights standards in Australia. ALHR has a national membership of over 2600 people, with active National, State and Territory committees.