

## Summary

The report begins with an examination of the roles of the public and private sectors in the provision of nursing home type services. It is suggested that the private sector, which has most of the nursing home beds, provide an efficient, effective generic service for the frail aged, but that there are gaps in some specialised areas. The public sector can perform an important role in providing specialised nursing home services to fill these gaps.

Three main types of respite care have been identified:

- post-acute care;
- care of patients awaiting nursing home placement;
- providing a break for the carer/family.

The Australian Geriatric Society has suggested that 20 respite beds are required for a population of 20,000 to 30,000 people aged 65 years and over.

Approximate sector needs, based on this guideline, are:

- Bankstown 20 beds
- Fairfield/Liverpool 20 beds
- Campbelltown/Camden/Wollondilly 10 beds

Options for providing respite care services are:

- Medicare beds in recognised hospitals, eg in geriatric medical or rehabilitation wards;
- small public nursing home units attached to recognised hospitals;
- respite care units in existing public nursing homes;
- respite care units in non-government nursing homes;
- contracts with non-government nursing homes to reserve a proportion of existing beds
- for respite care.

A previously suggested redistribution of public nursing home beds to the non-government sector to provide a service in all parts of the South Western Sydney Area is resubmitted, with recommendations for giving effect to that redistribution strategy.

The provision of nursing home type respite care at the new Homes of Peace hospital a Fairfield has been questioned. It is suggested that beds in the palliative care and rehabilitation units should be classified as Medicare beds and that the 10 beds currently designated for nursing home respite care use be redesignated for sub-acute use, consistent with the other roles of the new hospital.