

25 January 2021

## Regis Nedlands Update

We would like to acknowledge our residents and families who attended the meetings on Friday and Saturday at Regis Nedlands with Paul Cohen, Executive General Manager Operations, Stephen Wicks, General Manager Regis Nedlands and Julie Adebowale, Regional General Manager.

We would all like to thank you for your patience during the meetings and for your honest feedback. The team at Regis Nedlands and our broader Regis team are dedicated to working together with you to resolve any concerns and ensure that residents consistently receive care that is provided with kindness and respect and to the highest possible standards.

Our focus in today's letter is to provide you with an update. Regis is committed to communicating transparently with you. We will ensure you are informed throughout the investigation process and will provide regular updates on our progress via email in addition to the discussions and meetings in the Home. In this letter, we are providing answers to questions raised at the resident and family meetings so that everyone has the same information. We are also providing information about the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (the Commission) assessment. Once we have feedback from the WA Police, we will provide that information too.

### **Information about the allegations**

Regis received two allegations about the care of two residents on Wednesday 13 January. Immediate steps were taken including an assessment of these residents, mandatory reporting to the WA Police and the Commission and standing down of the staff member involved in both of the allegations, pending an investigation.

On the afternoon of Friday 15 January, Regis received further allegations about the care and treatment of residents, with 17 mandatory reports (involving an additional 14 residents) lodged with the WA Police and the Commission. Immediate steps were taken including calling the families of these residents (Friday evening and Saturday morning), arranging ten Registered Nurses from other Regis sites to assess all residents and contacting the residents' General Practitioners to arrange medical assessments. We also took the proactive step of appointing an external Clinical Advisor.

The allegations were made by one or more students who had been on site from Monday 11 to Thursday 14 January, and were provided to us in the form of a written account by their university. The allegations were about poor care, lack of respect and dignity, rough handling and inappropriate conduct.

Our commitment, and our professional and legislated obligations, mean that we will provide specific information directly to those residents and families where indicated in the allegations. We will provide summary information, which is not subject to resident privacy protections, to the rest of the Nedlands community. Our immediate actions will always be centred on ensuring the safety of our residents by conducting and facilitating relevant clinical assessments and by reporting incidents to the WA Police and the Commission, with an investigation to substantiate the allegations coming as a secondary step.

### **Information about the investigations**

There are three separate processes underway.

1. Regis commissioned investigation – this investigation has been commissioned by the Regis Clinical Governance and Care Committee. The Committee is chaired by a Board Director and

reports directly to the Regis Board of Directors. The investigation team consists of an external and independent lead investigator, two Regis Executives and an independent consumer representative. We anticipate this investigation will take four weeks to complete – including interviews (with residents, families, staff, students, General Practitioners) and review of data and information from our systems including clinical information, incident reporting, complaints, correspondence etc. As per our commitment in the recent resident meetings, we will share the Terms of Reference with you this week, and also the findings when they are available.

2. WA Police investigation – reviewing the circumstances surrounding the deaths of two residents last week. We await their report.
3. The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission – conducted an unannounced visit following the mandatory reports Regis submitted in relation to the allegations.

It is important to note here that any allegation must be appropriately investigated. To date, the most serious allegations have not been substantiated.

The early parts of our normal quality review processes have found information that indicates some poor and outdated practices, particularly related to manual handling and staff not recognising and reporting incidents as they occur.

It is critical that the investigations are completed in a diligent and robust manner so that we can have confidence in the findings.

#### **Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission**

The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (ACQSC) has assessed Regis Nedlands and deemed the Home as non-compliant in several Standards.

The Standards deemed non-compliant are Personal Care and Clinical Care, Human Resources and Organisational Governance. Please find linked a letter (PDF) from the Commission directly to our residents and families.

Regis accepts these assessments and they are consistent with the issues identified in our early quality review.

The Commission advised Regis on Saturday evening that it is imposing both a Notice to Agree and a Sanction on the home. The Notice to Agree includes the following requirements:

- (a) appoint, at your expense, an eligible adviser to assist you to comply with your responsibilities in relation to care and services and governance and business operations.
- (b) provide, at your expense, training for your officers, employees and agents as specified below and to demonstrate that you have provided that training.
- (c) participate in weekly teleconferences with the Commission also involving your appointed adviser, and ensure a weekly written report is prepared and provided to enable the Commission to monitor your progress towards returning to compliance.

The Sanction means that Regis Nedlands will not be funded to take new admissions for a period of six months.

Again, Regis accepts these regulatory actions and will continue to cooperate fully and transparently with the Commission.

**Next steps**

Our first priority is taking all necessary actions to ensure resident care is delivered to the highest possible standards.

The Home continues to be supported by senior clinical and management staff from the Regis network. The appointed external Clinical Advisor is also on site to provide further clinical oversight, training and support in the Home.

We are supporting our staff through the difficult processes of the investigations. While it was only a small number of staff named in the allegations, the impact has been felt by the whole team and we have arranged additional support for team members.

As discussed in the meeting, the allegations in the student report have been discussed with relevant employees. We have also arranged meetings with the primary contact of each family where a resident was identified in the report. These meetings will give us an opportunity to discuss the details of the allegation and what we have found so far in response.

We expect to conclude our staff investigations this week.

Stephen is recruiting additional staff and has made changes to the rosters. We will ensure that any new staff members are onboarded carefully.

**Communications**

Thank you again for your feedback in the meetings and directly with staff. We encourage you to continue sharing feedback with us and we are committed to supporting our families.

Our team is happy to speak with you at any time. While we would encourage you to call the Home and speak with our new General Manager of Regis Nedlands, Stephen, we have other senior managers available. Please call the Regis Advice team on 1300 998 100 who will transfer you onto a senior staff member who will be available to support you.

We are grateful for the presence of the [Advocare](#) representatives. They are also here to help you and can assist with information, support and advocacy. They can be contacted on 1800 655 566.

Advocare is a member of the [Older Person's Advocacy Network \(OPAN\)](#). OPAN has many helpful resources. You can call OPAN by phone on 1800 700 600, from 6.00am-10.00pm, seven days a week for support.

We will continue to discuss the issues and improvements with you openly. Regis follows an open disclosure framework. Information about open disclosure can be found on [here](#).

Yours sincerely,

**Linda Mellors**

Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer

and

**Stephen Wicks**

General Manager, Regis Nedlands