

Tandara Lodge Community Care Inc.

10 NIGHTINGALE AVENUE

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Fair Work Commission

s157 Application to vary a modern award

Aged Care Award 2010

Matter No: AM2020/99

STATEMENT OF Paul Crantock

I, Paul Crantock, of [REDACTED] state as follows:

Personal Information

- 1. I am the CEO of Tandara Lodge Community Care Inc. a residential aged care provider located in Sheffield Tasmania. I am a qualified chartered accountant and have been employed in various accounting, finance and management roles with small and large businesses since 1981. I have held the position of CEO at Tandara for 16 years.*

Employment History

- 2. I have worked in the Accounting, Mining, Agriculture, Printing and Fishing/Aquaculture industries prior to commencing work in aged care. My previous employment has included a range of different employment types including private businesses to large corporate groups. I chose to work in aged care partially in order to be of service to people and to the community but also because it was an opportunity to secure a management role utilising the skills and experience I had gained thus far in my career I was also aware that it would be a varied role covering many different operational areas (this has certainly proven to be the case). I additionally worked for 6 years on a part time bases as finance manager of another residential aged care facility in Northwest Tasmania.*

Current Employment

- 3. I am a current employee of Tandara Lodge Community Care Inc. (Tandara)*
- 4. Tandara is a nongovernment organisation (not for profit, incorporated association) in the Aged Care Industry whose primary function / focus is the provision of residential and community care to the aged, rural and remote and financially disadvantaged within the Kentish Municipal Region of Tasmania.*

Employer

5. *Tandara employs 83 staff. The composition of the staff is 1 full time; 66 part time; 16 casuals; 77 female and 6 males.*
6. *Detail the services they provide.*
 - a. *Residential aged care services comprising 46 bed facility (43 permanent; 3 respite).*
 - b. *CHSP Adult Activity Day Centre 2 days per week.*
 - c. *48 Independent living units.*
7. *Carers require minimum Certificate 3 qualifications and are then provided with additional on the job training and professional development. We are finding it increasingly difficult to attract staff possibly because we are considered as a rural and remote area and are some distance from a major town. As a result of these difficulties, we have taken on numbers of school leavers and trainees to help us build up staff numbers.*
8. *We are the only provider of residential aged care in this municipal region and have been providing care since 1978. Our occupancy is historically very high, and we maintain healthy waiting lists. Being a smaller sized facility, our staff have greater flexibility in their roles and often work across a variety of roles within the home. E.g. carer, kitchen, laundry. This flexible approach has resulted in our staff adapting well to the changing aged care environment. A large proportion of our staff live in the local area or within close proximity to Sheffield. We experience very low staff turnover with a high number of our staff having worked with us for many years, 10 staff have more than 20 years' service; a further 21 staff have over 10 years' service and a further 22 staff have more than 5 years' service, (one staff member has 41 years of service). We are the second largest employer in the municipality.*
9. *We are accredited by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission which undertakes annual targeted reviews and three yearly full re-accreditation (accreditation is a requirement of continuing to maintain Approved Provider status). We aim to exceed all required Aged Care Quality and Safety standards.*

Work

10. *Our current resident's range in age from 50 to 98 with the average age being. The mix is roughly 70% female and 30% male. We have noted an increasing level of acuity of incoming residents and a general increase in the incidence of dementia. Our staff are trained to care for all residents including those younger residents, those with challenging behaviours, dementia, personal care, a range of health issues as well as providing palliative care.*

Expectations of clients and their families has changed over the years with an expectation of "on demand" hotel like services, higher levels of health needs due amongst other things to increasing levels of obesity, mental health issues and with residents entering care later in their lives generally higher acuity. Additionally, increasing levels of regulation and scrutiny require more time spent on

paperwork, documentation and producing evidence. Much of the work is physically demanding and whilst aids are available for some roles, it is not always possible to use these in every circumstance.

As an employer we attempt to look after our staff as best we can. This task is made increasingly difficult when our annual funding increases have not kept pace with inflation. We are restricted in the fees we can charge as these are regulated by Government. Government funding comprises approximately 66% of our funding with the remainder coming from residents' fees (as set by Government). Our income is regulated but our costs are not. Wages and associated on costs comprise approximately 80% of our total running costs.

Generally, our staff work longer hours than they are paid for. They do this voluntarily, because they do not want to see residents miss out and they take pride in their work.

Covid changes & concerns where relevant

- 11. The impact of Covid has been a requirement to undertake increased training, particularly in the areas of Infection control. Additionally, staff have been under extra pressure with requirements regarding entry processes, mask/PPE wearing, vaccinations and general concerns of the community, residents and their families. Adverse media representations and reports arising from the Aged Care Royal Commission which do not in any way reflect the activities at Tandara or the care provided by our staff to our residents, have also negatively affected staff.*
- 12. Practice changes - Increasing levels of documentation and the requirement to provide evidence of practices and performance has added to the duties required of staff. Whilst technology has assisted in some functions, generally there is a need to spend more time in front of screens rather than in front of residents. Increasingly there is a need to justify and record every action taken. Government reporting has increased exponentially with seemingly every few months a new requirement to report more details, weekly, monthly, quarterly or annually on various aspects of operations.*
- 13. Social isolation of clients. Restrictions on visitors and the ability of people to visit has negatively impacted residents and this has required staff to help to "fill the void" spending more time with residents. This additional time is often done in their own time.*

Earnings & budget information

- 14. As mentioned previously, as an employer we are caught between reducing revenue and increasing costs. We pay what we can although we believe our staff are worth more and should be better remunerated, we cannot fund this under the current arrangements without impacting our viability.*

Work value matters

15. *The nature of the work has changed over time, becoming, by necessity and due to time constraints, more health focused and less social support. The growing levels of acuity of residents has also required changes in the way staff approach their roles. While aids for things such as lifting and some of the other physical requirements of the job has been of assistance to staff, generally workloads and expectations have increased.*
16. *The skills required to undertake aged care is on an increasing trajectory, Not only do staff have to be skilled in social aspects, they need technical skills related to care and technological skills for reporting and operating complex equipment.*
17. *The requirement to document everything is increasing this has undoubtedly placed extra demands on the time staff have to perform their core duties. This puts them under pressure and assumes that technology will help them to work more efficiently.*
18. *The majority of our staff work at Tandara, doing the work they do, certainly not for the low pay rates they earn, not because they enjoy many of the duties they are required to do, or for their fortnightly pay, but because they genuinely care for the residents and will do anything necessary to make sure that the lives of those residents are the best they can be.*



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