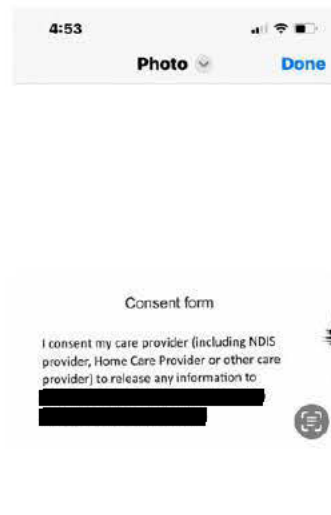


## **Inquiry into the provision and regulation of supported accommodation in Queensland**

**Submission No:** 12  
**Submitted by:** Ann Darcy  
**Publication:**  
**Attachments:**  
**Submitter Comments:**

From: Ann Darcy [REDACTED]  
Sent: Wednesday, January 10, 2024 4:59 PM  
To: qai@qai.org.au  
Cc: Community Support and Services Committee <CSSC@parliament.qld.gov.au>  
Subject: Complaint Submission to the committee Supported Accommodation



Hello,

I am writing in relation to the inquiry into Supported Accommodation [REDACTED] [REDACTED] in Queensland and I am providing you with a submission to the committee.

My brother resides in [REDACTED], Accredited Level 3, Supported Accommodation, at [REDACTED]. My brother has a diagnosis of intellectual impairment, schizophrenia and Generalised Anxiety Disorder. I am his legal guardian and Power of Attorney.

As far as I am aware, level 3 Accreditation relates to the following access to residents:

- human resource management
- access to externally provided support services
- financial and clerical support
- assistance with medication
- health care
- clothing
- hygiene management
- preservation of social networks
- choice and decision making.

A new owner purchased the supported accommodation, [REDACTED], towards the end of last year, 2023. After having a meeting and discussion with the owner on Monday 08 January 2023, in relation to the lack of services being offered at the accommodation since the takeover, the new owner admitted she had 4 hours training and no experience in the matter of running supported accommodation, disability, NDIS choice and control, human rights, administering medication, CPR, First Aid or Health and Safety.

The new owner of [REDACTED] provides assistance with medication and currently allows access to external NDIS and aged care providers only; however, this is something that I have been advised will be changing as the owner wants to provide their own internal supports, removing the freedom of choice and control of the residents. I believe there have been medication errors which have not been documented.

The owner has informed the residents that there are strict rules in relation to their day-to-day activities and tasks. There has been no formal written documentation of 'Resident Rules'. Only verbal by the owner and they change from day to day. The rules that I am aware of are:

- No one is allowed to sit down during the day in the lounge area because the owner advised that the carers/NDIS support workers must take the residents out of the accommodation daily.

- Residents must tell their carers/Support workers that they must do the residents clothes washing.

My brother has been told by the owner that he must collect the other residents from their rooms or from the lounge area at mealtimes. This is not my brother's responsibility. He has also been informed by the owner that he must teach the other residents how to use the washing machine because she doesn't know how to use it. My brother was scorned by the new owner for advising her that he wasn't feeling well and wasn't able to collect the residents for their meal. This heightened his already provoked anxiety.

My brother does not have the capacity to complete these demands and it is not his task to complete. The residents have been informed by the new owner that they must complete their own washing however, many of the residents do not have the cognitive ability to complete this task.

My brother was forced to sign a document provided by the owner, to agree to the owner contacting all the current disability support agencies and other external providers to disclose his personal and confidential information to the owner. (Document attached). My brother was told that by signing this document, "it would make him happy". Many of the residents residing at [REDACTED] do not have the cognitive ability to understand what they are being forced to sign.

The owner manages the property by herself and has no staff assisting with cooking, cleaning or any other tasks. The owner has advised that she will not be advertising for staff on job advertising apps because she will then have to pay staff the award wage. This is concerning because I am wondering whether the owner will employ untrained paid help to assist in supporting the 15 to 19 vulnerable residents who reside at the property, or whether she will continue to work alone at the accommodation which I feel is placing the residents at risk of harm. From personal observation, there doesn't appear to be any duty of care or responsibility taken by the new owner.

The new owner has new intakes into the accommodation, who are not supported by external providers, and I believe that one of the new residents has a criminal history and has bragged about his current criminal activities. This person does not appear to have a disability or any support workers. When asking the new owner whether she completes police checks on new intakes, the owner changed the subject and never answered the question. After the above-mentioned meeting, I came away with no clear answers in relation to moving forward with managing the accommodation.

The residents look very unwell, pale in pallor and aren't eating the meals because they aren't edible. The residents look as though they have lost weight. A few of the cognitively able purchase take away food after meals times as they are still hungry, and I supply extra food so that my brother doesn't go hungry or become malnourished. Some of the resident's order uber meals because they are still hungry from eating non-nutritious food, small portions, served on a side plate.

In summary I want to raise your awareness by making the following points as my submission to the enquiry:

- Non nutritional food served on small side plates (see attached photo)
- Rationing breakfast (cereal) tea and coffee and toilet paper.
- Residents have been informed if they waste food they will receive less for the next meal.
- Strict Rules prohibiting client's freedom of choice and control (nothing in writing).
- No Personal Care is provided
- No cleaning is completed
- Residents have no access to food after designated mealtimes
- Residents are forbidden to enter the kitchen (to make a drink or access food) or to complete recreational activities such as baking.
- Forced to sign illegal documents (my brother has no understanding of what he was forced to sign) (copy of document is attached).
- Owner demands all private and confidential information from support workers (owner threatens to prohibit my brother's support worker from entering the building unless her personal information is provided).
- No police checks completed on new residents.
- I believe a person with a criminal history has recently moved into the property.
- Owner is rationing toilet rolls (my brother has to buy his own).
- One resident required immediate anti-biotic medication, however owner refused to assist with this, informing them they would have to wait for the medication to be delivered by the pharmacy, which was one week away.
- Owner refuses to give any written formal documentation stating services offered or accommodation rules.
- Owner has stated she has a Special Licence from the Council stating she does not have to perform tasks on Level 3 Accreditation. When asked to view the document she refused saying it was Private and Confidential.
- Owner informed me that she bought the business as an investment, expecting to sit at home thinking the business would run itself, however, finds herself with a business and with no knowledge or experience with disability, and is only interested in paying off the mortgage and not concerned for the well-being or welfare of the residents concerned.
- Owner has suggested that anyone who is not satisfied should find alternative accommodation asap and has stressed this several times to various residents. Owner has been transparent in saying that no changes will be made in relation to the welfare and well-being of the residents. The meals will remain as they are (small portions with minimal protein) served on side plates.
- The form of authoritative communication towards the residents with immense and debilitating anxiety and low cognitive ability is extremely distressing, anxiety provoking and is becoming very apparent with some of the residents' showing clear signs of distress, including crying and withdrawing. Some of these residents have no outside family supports and are completely

vulnerable and are fully reliant on support workers, who are only available to them for limited hours on a weekly basis. In the absence of support workers, the new owner dismisses any issues telling residents to seek help with their supports, which may not be available to them for some days to come.

The people residing at this supported accommodation have no voice, they are being given restricted practices with their choice and control being removed. Under the NDIS, choice and control is the most significant part of empowering individuals to reach their best outcomes. [REDACTED] appears to have completely removed the residents' choice and control. I have arranged a meeting with my local government member on the 19 January 2024 to raise awareness and discuss the concerns I have regarding the quality of meals, health and safety, hygiene, restricted practices and the general well-being and welfare of the vulnerable residents.

I have spoken to Queenslanders Disability Network (QDN), who referred me to Queensland Advocacy for Inclusion (QAI). I have spoken to my brother's Support Coordinator and his support workers about the current situation, and they have been advocating for my brother, however the new owner's response is to encourage me to move my brother from the supported accommodation. My brother has resided at this supported accommodation for 18 years. I have never seen him this distressed from the management's behaviour, and he is now ringing me daily in utter turmoil. One of my brother's support workers contacted the NDIS Safeguards Commission to report the situation and was advised that they are not able to intervene or offer help because the supported accommodation is not registered as a NDIS provider, albeit my brother is a NDIS participant.

**I would like to see a legislation in place, or governing bodies who are able to ensure the protection of the marginalised and vulnerable persons in supported accommodation and in communities. I would like to see immediate action taken at [REDACTED] as a matter of safety and wellbeing of its residents.**

I would like to thank you for receiving my submission.

Kind Regards

Ann Darcy