

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

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Committee Secretary  
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RE: INQUIRY INTO THE PROVISION AND REGULATION OF SUPPORTED  
ACCOMMODATION IN QUEENSLAND

Dear Committee Secretary`

The following is a summary of the presentation made to the SAPA Conference in 2023 by Grant Kelly, CEO of Christine Court Assisted Living and Secretary of Industry Peak Body - The Supported Accommodation Providers Association.

The purpose of the presentation was to highlight the benefits that Supported Accommodation (Level 3 is the subject case study) offers. The issues raised show that the offering that Level 3 Supported Accommodation represents is for many people an optimal service at a affordable price but it needs funding.

If we agree that Supported Accommodation has relevancy then its value needs to be considered against costly alternatives and the efficiency of the Free Enterprise Market must be considered over its more cumbersome and costly Charities or Government organisations

Many Level 3 Supported Accommodation Homes are self-contained ... citizen communities

The second point I'd like to raise relates to funding ... supported accommodation needs facility based funding.

You may be aware ... our family owns and runs Christine Court Assisted Living (CCAL) after several years of improvement

- building renovations ...
- Our move away from shared rooms to single rooms ...
- And programs we run.

The result ... last year Christine Court lost \$146,000 ... if CCAL loses money ... I don't get paid. Our family business does not get rewarded for the effort and the risk of supplying the services. Details below.

### **Rehab Centre succeeds as Rehab Community**

To demonstrate the point, that Supported Accommodation is more than a building focused accommodation supply we offer two living examples of self-supporting kindred community.

**The BATTERY is drug rehab centre** near Byron Bay it had its 50<sup>th</sup> birthday the other day ... HOOD DOO GURU BASS GUITARIST ... Rick Grossman ... gave credit for his recovery to the supportive community ... to everyone not just the staff or the programme or the live-in therapeutic building ... the supportive community is the building, the programs, the esprit de corp.

This highlights the first part of my message today.

- That supported accommodation provides a home environment ... a citizen community that looks out for one another. The benefit is highlighted during crisis. Crises do not occur on schedule and can't be scheduled into a timetable ...

### **Family Example**

I grew up in a big family ... As kids we never knew why Grandpa would get lost, we just knew if he seemed at 6's and 7's we should shadow him ... At CCAL we have the same dynamic ... Staff ... clients ... residents looking out for one another. For many years PG disabled through intellectual and schizophrenia would knock on neighbours door IW, brain injury, and shadow him to the dining room if he had forgotten.

To further support this point last night ...

### **ABC Four Corners Report (2023)**

MENTIONS ... The man, who had a history of severe mental health issues, ... had been coerced to move from a boarding house with support services to a house in outer Melbourne, away from everyone he knew.

This is the key issue ... away from everyone he knew.

"He was ... frightened of staying, but he was also frightened of leaving because, in his words, he was like, 'I'm too old to be homeless. If I leave here ... I have nowhere else to go.' So he was really trapped."

Opportunists had promised him great food and caring support workers but instead, residents were sometimes left alone and told to defrost frozen sandwiches for their meals. The opportunists see the client as a source of income.

We deal with these situations daily. Care or support services are separate, and the Level 3 service offer provides support or attention where the gaps exist, and there are always gaps.

It highlights the core issue ... Our clients are local they are part of the local community, and they are part of our citizen community.

And to move them from that environment is deplorable even where the move is to a lovely house isolated in the back of an estate. This story highlighted social conflicts that arise when people are offered small group home share accommodation, where there is nowhere to hide when they just don't get on.

Larger citizen communities are socially dynamic allowing connections to grow and wain.

### **Sustainability Issues**

- The most common objections I come across speaking to colleagues is ... 'We do unpaid work ... work we are not responsible for ... hunting the streets late at night.
- We fill the gaps in care ...
- Take clients to appointments.'

And to balance the books

- shared rooms are a necessity.

- Maintenance is overlooked.

Importantly ...

- **Properties** are accounted for **at historic cost**
- AND to survive ... owners inject capital ... borrow money ... or sell assets.

When I first came into this business my vision was to create

- efficient systems
- cost effective work practices.

I found that staffing costs were inflated by 30% given the nature of the work we do.

I separated the building fit-out and cleaning and maintenance ... and staff scheduling from the people.

While up to a point this planning was very successful, the overall feel of the building and the community suffered. It felt more like a shutdown swimming pool in the middle of winter than a home.

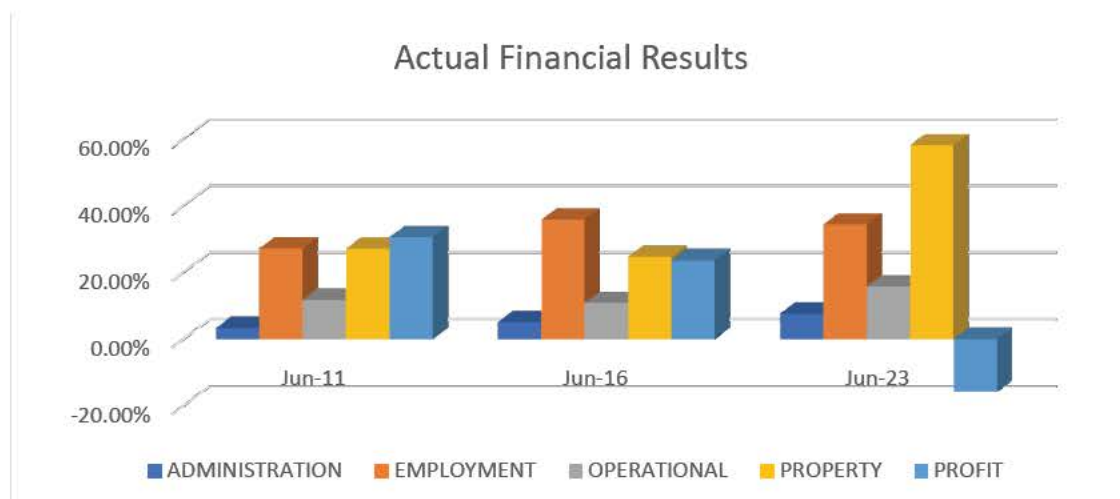
That was many years ago and we've changed significantly. Today we've nurtured a citizen community, one which looks out for itself ...

... a kind of a kindred family or entourage.

### Actual Trading Figures

The figures are real and to make them relevant to everyone they're presented in percentage terms.

The figures show a decline from an acceptable profit to a significant loss.



In 2011 We had efficient building management ... 60% of the rooms were shared.

In 2016 ... TWO factors impact performance ...

1. by Reducing the number of Shared, Rooms we reduced our income.
2. Property costs fall ... property costs fell because they are based on historic value and falling interest rates.

By 2023 we are losing money ... again for 2 reasons

1. The transition to single rooms is complete.

## 2. Property Costed at Market Value

To maintain Christine Court as a viable service it needs \$23.62 per day per resident.

The alternative to funding Supported Accommodation is the fall in supply and increase in demand for housing. If we shut Christine Court today our position does not change ... that's right ... we lose money either way, but we as a community lose Christine Court ... we as a family are in the same position without the stress and worry.

One more set of numbers to highlight or give context to Christine Court



### Detailed Financials

PER ANNUM	Christine Court per person	Group Home 4 B/R rental 700	Group Home per person
<b>LEVEL 2 &amp; 3</b>			
ADMINISTRATION	2,354	3,876	1,292
EMPLOYMENT	6,992	230,732	76,911
OPERATIONAL	3,210	14,444	4,815
PROPERTY	11,538	52,832	17,611
MANAGEMENT	2,273	6,818	2,273
Risk RETURN	7,232	55,566	18,522
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>33,598</b>	<b>364,269</b>	<b>121,423</b>
Resident payments 80% of the DSP including rent assist	24,977	74,930	24,977
<b>Sustainability Funding per person</b>	<b>8,621</b>		<b>96,446</b>
	284,508		
<b>Recurring expenditure to replace Christine Court</b>	<b>3,182,731</b>		

### Public Advocates Report

While many Level 3's meet or exceed suggested benchmarks

This report highlights the case for funding.

... the report recommends raising standards ...

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we all agree with the goal ... but who pays the bill??

We agree that the NDIS has injected dignity and equity into disability care however its individual focus clouds the need for facility-based funding.

On the surface, individualized funding is ideal but it is based on timetables and care plans.

Providing Scheduled Care in an unpredictable world is difficult.

The NDIS funding does not cope with crisis ... but we do ... we fill the gaps ... and we fill them without pay

So, I leave you with this: let's look beyond buildings and food safety and fire safety and compliance ... lets look at the value of humanity the value of our citizen community, our kindred family ...

Let's recognize its value and work together to make it financially sustainable.

Together, let's commit to building a future where supported accommodation isn't just an option, but a long-lasting, sustainable solution for those who need it most. Thank you.

### **A Final Word**

The financials presented reveal a market driven environment that partly explains the contraction in supply of Supported Accommodation and the change in the standards and reduction in competition. The required subsidy will create higher standards and greater competition while at the same time relieving the pressure on the Health System, Policing, QAS etc.

The important but overlooked dimension in this debate is the intrinsic value of the self-supporting community, a pseudo family that engenders in congregate living environments. Christine Court Assisted Living does not suit everyone, but it is a worthwhile contributor to the community. We offer both staff and clients an extremely stable work / living environment.

While many will argue that when given the option of a service delivery to a client or an additional profit, private and free enterprise will take the profit, but history shows us that is not the case. Our economy, our wealth and our standard of living in Australia is built on a model of capitalism that champions moral productivity. That is not to say that our corporates can self-regulate but it does underline a default position of integrity across the economy where a market is competitive.

This submission identifies the need for a \$25.00 per day per resident based on our trading figures and risk / return parameters. Competitive markets across Australia suggest that the required subsidy across the industry that will attract new players and standards is somewhere between \$25.00 and \$50.00 per resident per day.

**Grant Kelly**

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