SEXUALITY & PRIVACY
In Residential Aged Care

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How does New Zealand address couple privacy?

What can Australia learn?
Aged 65+  
3,263,300

with disability  
1,171,300 (52.7%)

in private dwelling  
2,950,900 (90.4%)

in cared accommodation  
180,100 (5.5%)

without disability  
1,542,700 (47.3%)

in other non-private dwelling  
132,500 (4.1%)

DEATHS in AUSTRALIA
104,443 people aged 65+

32% RAC (NZ 38%)
33,421 p.a.

54% in hospital
(NZ 34%)

14% at home (NZ 28%)

334,210 people over a decade

165,804 Permanent Residents aged 65+

Average Stay 34.5 months

20% >5yrs

AIHW. (2015). Residential Aged Care and Home Care 2014-15 residential aged care supplementary data tables
2014-15:

51,444 married or de facto residents
(30% of permanent residents aged 65+)

Sexuality is “a central aspect of being human throughout life”

World Health Organisation, 2006
HEALTH BENEFITS

Couples in healthy relationships enjoy

- Better physical health
- Better mental health
- Better sleep
- Longer, better quality life
Charter of Residents’ Rights
1990-2016

- personal, civil, legal and consumer rights
- dignity and respect
- personal privacy
- safe, secure and homelike environment
- select and maintain personal relationships
- control over his/her daily life
“Sexual conduct involving only consenting adults acting in private is not to be subject… to any arbitrary interference with privacy”

Human Rights (Sexual Conduct) Act 1994
labelling

- gossip
- intrusions
- no private space
- no knocking
- no locks

- separation
- surveillance
- doors kept open
COUPLES: what are the privacy needs of partnered aged care residents?
STUDY DESIGN

Phase 2
Review of parliamentary documents & print news 1974 - 2015

Phase 1
semi-structured interviews
29 participants (purposive sampling)

Phase 3
anonymous online survey
168 participants (volunteer sampling)
“…beyond the negative conception of privacy as freedom from unwarranted intrusion…to include the positive right to establish, develop and fulfill one's own emotional needs.”

Simon Bronitt, 1995, re the European Convention on Human Rights
IMPLICATIONS for PROVIDERS

- Resident Feedback
- Resident Needs Assessment
- Staff Training
- Double beds
- Built Environment
- Policies & Practices
Any Questions?

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