



Royal Commission
into Aged Care Quality and Safety

Statement of Natalie Sonya Smith

Name: Natalie Sonya Smith

Date of birth: [REDACTED]

Address: [REDACTED]

Date:



1. This statement made by me accurately sets out the evidence that I am prepared to give to the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety (Royal Commission). This statement is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.
2. The views I express in this statement are my own based on my own knowledge, except where they are based on information I have received. Where I rely on information, I believe that information to be true.
3. Where direct speech is referred to in this statement, it is provided in words or words to the effect of those which were used, to the best of my recollection.

Background

4. My full name is Natalie Sonya Smith. I am 39 years old. I live in [REDACTED] NSW and I am a Supply and Inventory Manager.
5. My Dad, Terance Reeves was born on [REDACTED] 1946 in Sydney, Australia. Dad is currently 73 years of age.
6. Dad married my Mum, Lillian Reeves on 18 October 1974. Together they had three children – Michelle, Ian and myself.
7. On 1 May 2018, Dad checked into Garden View Nursing Home ("Garden View"), located at 124 Paton Street, Merrylands NSW.
8. While Dad was at Garden View, I visited him on a regular basis. We had agreed that between the family, someone would visit every second where possible.
9. I am aware that my sister, Michelle McCulla has made a statement to the Royal Commission. This statement is not a comprehensive account of all my visits to Garden View. It is limited to my visit on 11 May 2018 and a conversation I had with a nurse on that day whose name I do not know, and limited to observations regarding physical restraints being used on Dad after this date.

Physical restraints

10. On 11 May 2018, I visited Dad at Garden View. I found Dad strapped to a chair in physical restraints. This was the first time that I had seen Dad in physical restraints and I



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STATEMENT OF NATALIE SONYA SMITH CONTINUED

- was shocked. I took him out of the restraints. I did not think he should be strapped down while I was there sitting with him. A nurse approached me and said "I need to talk to you, we have some forms for you or your Mum to sign". I told the nurse that I would deal with the forms at the end of the visit.
11. On my way out, a nurse gave me the Restraint Authorisation form. From memory, this was the same nurse that I refer to above. She told me that I needed to sign the form. I was concerned about what the form meant and I told the nurse I did not feel comfortable signing it. She told me I had to take it home and have Mum sign it.
 12. In the same conversation, the nurse explained to me that there were only a few times they would need to put a restraint on Dad. She explained that the reason they may require a restraint was that during peak periods such as the medication rounds, it may be possible that they don't have a staff member on hand to supervise for that short period. She assured me that the use of restraints was thoroughly policed and they can only use them for a short amount of time. The nurse pointed out that on the top of the form it said that restraints would only be used as a complete last resort after all other options had been exhausted. She kept reiterating to me that the restraints were to make sure Dad was safe and that it was in his best interests.
 13. I asked the nurse how long the restraints would be used. The nurse said that it would be minimal, only 30 minutes or one hour. She said that by law, they were required to have our authorisation in order to be able to restrain my Dad for very short periods of time. She said she was getting us to sign the form so that if there was an occasion when they needed to use restraints, they would have paperwork in place.
 14. I took the form home. Mum and I discussed what the nurses had said. We thought that the circumstances and use that they had described seemed reasonable. My Mum had her own separate conversations with Garden View staff about the form. On 13 May 2018, Mum signed the Restraint Authorisation form.
 15. After my visit on 11 May 2019, I also sent a text message to my Mum, sister and brother. I texted "He's strapped to the chair again and they want you to sign the consent papers. He seems ok though. Moments of conversation then back to slippers on, slippers off".
 16. I attach a photograph of this text message (MMC.0001.0001.0006). I note that the entry in the photograph titled "Dad" is actually Mum.

Observations about Dad's physical restraint

17. Almost every time I visited Dad (more than 20 visits and no more than 3 days apart), I would arrive to find he was restrained in a chair in the East wing, often without shoes or a jumper and on some occasions having wet through his pants or smelling as though his had needed a change of clothes or incontinence pad long before my arrival. I would also often find him in the East wing with only one staff member present who was on many occasions only a student.

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STATEMENT OF NATALIE SONYA SMITH CONTINUED

18. I would usually visit Dad when I had finished work. At first, I thought that I was finding him in restraints because it was dinner time. I then noticed that he was still in restraints even during the day on the weekend.

Signed: Natalie Smith *Dault*

Date: 26/4/2019

Witness: CLINTON GOODWIN *[Signature]*

Date: 26/4/2019

Signature	<i>Dault</i>	Witness	<i>[Signature]</i>
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