



[Home](#) / [News](#) / [Politics](#)

Aged care royal commission: Summer Foundation aims to amplify younger voices

By **Lucas Baird**

Updated 22 Jan 2019 — 1:08 PM,
first published at 21 Jan 2019 — 12:17 PM



A push is underway within disability advocacy circles to ensure younger voices are heard during the [aged care royal commission](#) to speak for the 6000 younger people who are pushed into aged care facilities because there is no other institution that can care for them. Over 50 people under 65 enter these facilities every week.

Summer Foundation, a non-profit advocacy group for young people in aged care, chief of staff Carolyn Finis said that over 6000 younger people in these facilities have traditionally been a "very hard population to reach".

She said it became clear to her that these people - often forced into facilities from hospital beds when their homes are no longer accessible - needed help after they sent a callout for those wanting to tell their stories.

Aged care commissioners Richard Tracey and Lynelle Briggs will probe the sector's approach to people with a disability including younger people. KELLY BARNES



"I think we got a single email reading 'I would like to come' and just signed with a first name," she said. "We know the majority of young people who go into these facilities don't come out ... it's a frustrating problem."

That's why the foundation has now committed itself to hosting workshops across the country between February and April to overcome these problems, asking stakeholders to "tell the government why young people shouldn't be pushed into aged care".

Ms Finis said the aim was to reassure residents daunted by the task, focus the submissions, and help with online submission forms to "prioritise quality when it comes to getting people in front of the royal commission".

"Professionals working in the finance industry still found it daunting," she said in reference to the banking royal commission. "It's going to be a lot worse if you have a significant disability."

The terms of reference for the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety do ask commissioners Richard Tracey and Lynelle Briggs to examine the sector's approach to people with a disability, including younger people.

"[The nursing home is] geared for people over 60," he said. "A young person in a nursing home is a high risk of frustration, depression, and social isolation and that's no fault of the nursing home.

"It's so frustrating seeing one of your best friends share a room with an 80 year old ... sometimes he looks at me and says, 'I'm f...ed'."

Mr Wintle said there is an "urgent need" for more disability accommodation aimed at those aged between 20 and 60.

It's these sort of experiences Ms Finis and the Summer Foundation intend to amplify. She said it was critical the commission "focus beyond Aged Care for younger people and examine why young people are going into these facilities".

"We need really clear options that are going to prevent young people going into the aged care sector in the first place," she said.

"This is a great opportunity for the royal commission to fast track a solution to the problem."