

THE DEMAND FOR RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE BEDS

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Mallacoota needs a Nursing Home that supplies residential aged care beds. Since the 1990s, Mallacoota Inlet Aged Care (MIAC), formerly Miva-Miva Aged Care Inc, has conducted numerous surveys and analyses of supply and demand for aged care residential beds in Mallacoota. These are in addition to the Home Care packages that MDHSS provide. In 2018, the most recent study, commissioned by CHIR, confirms Mallacoota's gap in aged care residential beds.

The 2018 Hilvert Advisory Demand and Supply Analysis:

In April 2018 a new report *Mallacoota and Surround: Regional Aged Care Demand and Supply Analysis* by Daniel Hilvert from Hilvert Advisory, found the absence of Residential Aged Care beds in the Mallacoota area was an "anomaly".

It noted that Mallacoota sits on the boundary of two geographically massive Aged Care Planning Regions (ACPRs) – The Southern Highlands (NSW) and Gippsland (Vic).

Both of the ACPRs are so big they border Australia's two major cities, Sydney (which is 567k away) and Melbourne (526k away). In each case, Mallacoota was the most remote corner of the two Aged Care Planning Regions.

"Accordingly, it's easy to see how Mallacoota could 'slip through the cracks' of the Commonwealth Aged Care System," the report noted.

The Hilvert report defined the 'Mallacoota Region' as people living in the three post-codes 3892, 3891 and 3890. Mallacoota, Wangarabelle and Cann River. And the Orbost region as comprising Postcodes 3889, 3888, 3886.

Combined, the three Orbost postcodes and the three Mallacoota postcodes, comprise Far East Gippsland, Victoria.

The Federal Government's target is 78 Aged Care Residential beds per 1000 people aged 70 years and over. The three Orbost postcodes have 58.5 residential beds. (19.5 beds short), Bega has 70.5, (8 beds short).

The Mallacoota region has a population of 1493, (2016 Census) and although 321 people in this area are over 70 years old, Mallacoota has **nil** residential aged care beds. It is 25 residential beds short. Thus Hilvert calls it an "anomaly".

The current demand is further confirmed by the 35 people from Mallacoota currently (April 2018) alive in Nursing homes many hours from home, who were effectively forced to leave Mallacoota as there are no Nursing Home beds here.

The 2016 Census recorded the Median Age of Mallacoota people as 59 years as compared to the median age for

Victoria being 37 yrs. There were 321 people aged over 70 years in the Mallacoota area and 271 live within the town. Within the town:

- 102 were aged 70-74 yrs – 9.6% of the population
- 65 were aged 75-79 yrs – 6.1 % of the population
- 45 were aged 80-84 yrs - 4.2 % of the population
- 39 aged 85 yrs and older. - 3.7 % of the population

Totals: 23.6 % of the Mallacoota township population are aged over 70 yrs as compared to the average for Victoria being 14 %. Almost ¼ of Mallacoota residents, (one in four people), are aged over 70 yrs.

The report concluded that having Nursing Home Beds in Mallacoota would not only benefit Mallacoota as a whole, but would help alleviate the bed shortages in both the Bega and Orbost districts. This would be a win for everyone concerned.

FOUR SURVEYS CONFIRM THE DEMAND FOR RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE BEDS IN MALLACOOTA (2004-2018)

The Hilvert Advisory conclusion of the huge demand and lack of supply of aged care residential beds in Mallacoota, confirms three other studies conducted between 2004 and 2016 and numerous ones conducted by the MIVA-MIVA Project and MIAC from 1985-2003. All point to a huge gap and increasing demand for Aged Care Residential beds in Mallacoota.

In 2004 Mallacoota Inlet Aged Care (MIAC), (formerly MIVA-MIVA Aged Care Inc), with Doug Sewell as President, submitted an application for Federal funds for a stand-alone hostel of 15 beds.

This grant application failed. In 2005 Minister Peter McGauran was asked by local resident, Wilma Becker why the grant application was rejected. Minister Peter McGauran suggested that MIAC work with MDHSS on the need for a hostel.¹

This resulted in the MIAC 2005 survey: On McGauran's advice MIAC commissioned a survey of all MIAC members and the wider Mallacoota community to identify the need for an Aged Care facility.

184 people responded that there was an "urgent need" for such a facility and that ideally it would cover high care and dementia, low care, and respite. A further document seeking authority to present these survey sheets to any necessary body was requested, and 142 were returned. Its analysis indicated that by 2015, Mallacoota would need a 30-bed hostel. (This was confirmed to be accurate in 2015)

As required, MDHSS acknowledged that it would seem,

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from the 144 responses to the survey questions, that respondents perceive a need for an aged care facility in Mallacoota. The findings were reported to Minister Peter McGauran in the hope that authorities would grant funds for a residential aged care facility in Mallacoota.²

The Boyd Feasibility Study: In 2006 MIAC were encouraged by a change in Federal government policy for more funding of Aged Care Residential facilities in rural and remote areas.³

However, because they could not depend on government funding, MIAC employed Dennis Boyd Consultants to produce a feasibility study on costs to build and operate a retirement village, including Nursing beds, without government funding.⁴

The Boyd feasibility study offered five options:

- Fund raising for a stand-alone hostel;
- A retirement village with no government funding;
- Twinning with an established Nursing Home group such as BUPA;
- Overnight care beds manned by nurses, as Cann River currently had, (referred to as the Cann River model); or
- Partner with a local organization (such as MDHSS).

Fund raising and overnight care beds manned by nurses, based on Cann River model, (three houses to supply residential Nursing beds to the aged) were favoured.⁵ So MIAC moved its aim from establishing a low care hostel for the aged, to establishing residential nursing home beds.

The Dench, McLean and Carlson Feasibility Study: In 2013, MIAC commissioned Dench McClean and Carlson⁶ to do yet another study into Residential Aged Care in Mallacoota. Its report found the community overwhelmingly in support of the proposal to establish Residential Aged Care in Mallacoota. The survey had 210 replies, this being a 30% response rate, which is much higher than the usual survey response of 5-10%.

Highlights from the survey found “more than 90% support the need” and “more than 80% believe that the existing services were not adequate for the Mallacoota community.” (P 12)

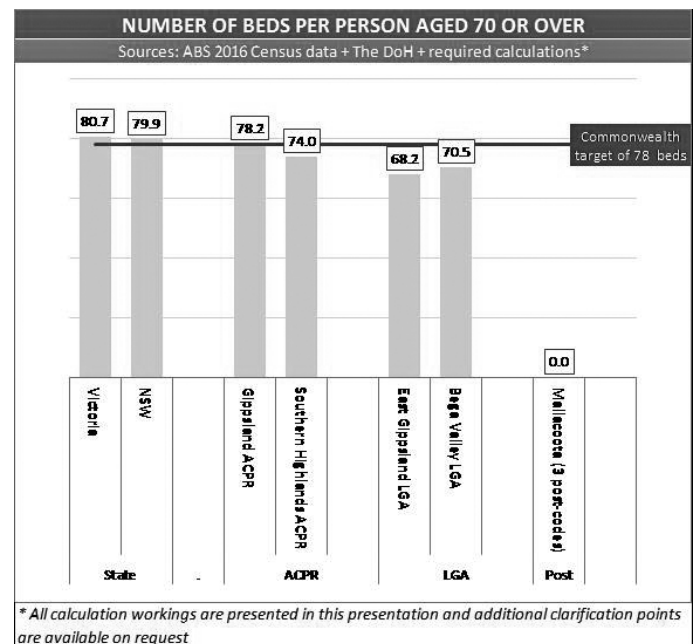
In April 2018, the *Mallacoota and Surround: Regional Aged Care Demand and Supply Analysis*, by Hilvert Advisory, commissioned by CHIRF, concluded that as recorded by the Census 2016, the Mallacoota region has a population of 1493, and although 321 people in this area are over 70 years old, Mallacoota has **nil** residential aged care beds. It is 25 residential beds short considering the

government guideline of 78 residential aged beds per 1000 people aged over 70 yrs. Hilvert calls it an “anomaly”.

Having Nursing Home Beds in Mallacoota would not only benefit Mallacoota as a whole, but would help alleviate the bed shortages in both the Bega district and Orbost district, so it would be a win for everyone concerned.

Given the huge gap in Aged Care Residential Beds in Mallacoota and the dire need, the next question is how can we achieve this?

For links to these feasibility studies, and past history of Miva- Miva, and the quest for Aged Care Residential beds in Mallacoota, go to CHIRF.org.au



References:

1. MIAC Minutes President Doug Sewell's report 29th Sept 2005
2. MIAC minutes dated 28th Sept 2006
3. MIAC minutes 7 Sept 2006
4. MIAC minutes 6 April 2006, Feb 1st 2006 MIAC plans, 6th July 2006
5. MIAC minutes 7 Sept 2006
6. <https://chirf.org.au/wp/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Dench-McClean-Carlson-report.pdf>

Mallacoota is 1 hour 50 mins drive from Orbost, Vic, and one hour 10 minutes' drive from Eden, NSW. Melbourne is 526km away, and Sydney is 567 km. This is one reason Funding bodies have forgotten it.

