



Health and Disability Commissioner  
*Te Toihau Hauora, Hauātanga*

**Care home and nurse practitioner breach Code for failures in  
wound management of elderly woman  
20HDC00038**

The Deputy Health and Disability Commissioner has found Bupa Care Services, and a nurse practitioner (NP), breached the [Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights](#) (the Code) for failures in their management of an elderly woman's wounds.

Rose Wall found they breached Right 4 – tautikanga; the right to services of an appropriate standard of care. She said the NP failed to assess, document and escalate management of the woman's wounds appropriately – breaching the woman's right to services provided with reasonable care and skill. In Bupa's failure to follow up the woman's referral to a wound clinic, and in not escalating her wound care to specialist services, it failed to provide the woman with quality care and continuity of services.

The NP has formally apologised to the woman and her whānau. She has also provided HDC with evidence of completing almost 130 hours of additional professional development including almost 40 hours focussing on wound management.

Ms Wall recommended the Bupa care home formally apologise to the woman's whānau and amend its policies to include clarification on when and how digital images are used to assess wounds; documentation of clinical discussions on wound management; escalation and referral processes for chronic wound management; and documentation of chronic wounds. She also recommended it consider making wound management course – Ko Awatea – compulsory for all registered nurses in parts of the country where the course is available.

The care home advised HDC that since these events it had ensured all registered nurses complete refresher wound care training, and has undertaken an audit on the skin assessment of residents. It has also supported those nurses who hadn't undertaken Ko Awatea training to do so.

**26 February 2024**

***Editor's notes***

The full report of this case will be available on HDC's [website](#). Names have been removed from the report to protect privacy of the individuals involved in this case.

The Commissioner will usually name providers and public hospitals found in breach of the Code, unless it would not be in the public interest, or would unfairly compromise the privacy interests of an individual provider or a consumer.

More information for the media, including HDC's naming policy and why we don't comment on complaints, can be found on our website [here](#).

HDC promotes and protects the rights of people using health and disability services as set out in the [Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights](#) (the Code).

Health and disability service users can now access an [online animation](#) to help them understand their health and disability service rights under the Code.

In 2021/22 HDC made 402 recommendations for quality improvement and providers complied with 98% of those recommendation.

Learn more: [Education](#)