

**Management of pressure sores  
(04HDC08400, 21 December 2005)**

*Rest home ~ Registered nurse ~ General practitioner ~ Pressure sore management ~ Adequacy of care ~ Scope of practice ~ Information and support systems for nurses ~ Vicarious liability ~ Rights 4(1), 4(3)*

A complaint was made about the care provided to a 94-year-old woman who required much assistance with her general care, and whose condition deteriorated in a rest home. In particular, she developed severe pressure sores by the time she was transferred to another facility, where she died shortly afterwards.

It was held that although the registered nurse provided nursing care to the woman, she did so at a very basic level and did not respond appropriately to her deteriorating condition. There is no evidence that she sought advice from another health professional with respect to the choice of treatment for the woman. By failing to provide appropriate nursing care she breached Rights 4(1) and 4(3).

The rest home was found vicariously liable for the registered nurse's breach of the Code, as they employed her in the knowledge that she was working outside the scope of her practice.

The GP was found to have provided satisfactory care, and did not breach the Code.

The matter was referred to the Director of Proceedings, who decided to issue proceedings before the Human Rights Review Tribunal against the rest home, the manager, the licensees and the nurse. Prior to the hearing of the matter, all of the defendants agreed to declarations being made by consent that the nurse, the rest home, the manager and the licensees had all breached the Code.