



## Residents, facilities feel the pinch

GAWLER Council's decision to cut rate rebates for aged care facilities will hinder services and add stress to residents, local members say.

Last week, Eldercare representatives met with shadow ageing minister and member for Schubert Ivan Venning, and candidate for Light Cosie Costa to discuss the issue at its Evanston Park facility.

As reported by *The Bunyip* last month, Gawler council is the only one in South Australia to not provide a 75 per cent rebate to the charity's residential care service.

Eldercare's general manager of corporate services David Ferrier said while this amount would be taken off the organisation's "bottom line", it would affect the quality of the facility.

"What it ultimately means is reduced hours on the floor; a reduction in services," Mr. Ferrier said.

"We need to make people aware just how important aged care is. It's a person's home; people love it

here because everything is new and maintained at a high standard.

"In a few years time, we're not going to be able to pay for those things that need replacing."

Residential site manager Sue Krake said the organisation already struggles to make ends meet.

"There is a lady living here, in Gawler, living in a shed, and we can't offer her a bed," Ms Krake said.

"We couldn't get (commonwealth) funding because she's not at a stage where she can get the funding."

Changes to the Local Government Act in December require councils to give community housing organisations a 75 per cent rebate. However, council's finance manager Paul Horwood said he does not believe the changes would affect Gawler's rates.

Member for Light Tony Piccolo has also written to council asking them to reconsider their decision, after receiving numerous complaints from aged care residents.



Gawler Community House board members Belinda Grisbrook and Aaron Phillips with the new guttering and fascia board at the Gawler Community House.