

## Whistleblower alleges threats

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April 18, 2007 12:00am

**THERE has been a huge cover-up at the Broughton Hall nursing home, a whistleblower said yesterday.**

Five people have died in a food poisoning outbreak at the home.

And two more residents were taken to hospital last night after showing gastroenteritis-like symptoms.

The Health Department last night confirmed a salmonella outbreak.

The whistleblower told the Herald Sun that staff had been forced to sign false documents in secret late-night emergency meetings this week.

The source, who did not wish to be identified, said staff had also been threatened and gagged from talking by the Camberwell home's operators, Benetas.

"Staff were called in on Sunday night to sign clearly mis-dated gastroenteritis safety standards procedure forms," the source said.

"Benetas were warned by health authorities that if it was found that certain food-safety handling documents had not been signed by staff, they would be liable for more than the deaths.

"It was made very clear that to not sign them would result in dismissal, as would conversing at all with the media."

The source said another meeting was held last Tuesday, at which management forced staff to sign confidentiality agreements.

All residents from the home's high-care unit who fell ill had eaten food that had been mashed up in a food processor.

The meal that led to the residents' illness was believed to have been a dish containing three-day-old chicken.

This explained why only the high-care patients fell ill.

Residents in Broughton Hall's low-care unit did not, despite receiving food from the same kitchen.

A report by federal aged care inspectors yesterday identified problems with the management of residents' personal hygiene.

A full audit is being done on the home, which could lead to official sanctions or -- if critical problems are discovered -- its closure.

Federal Ageing Minister Christopher Pyne said yesterday an inspection of the home on Sunday had identified problems.

The *Herald Sun* contacted Benetas early last night and was told that it would prepare a comprehensive statement dealing with the whistleblower's allegations.

They had not issued a statement by press time.

[Click here to read the article on the website](#)

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