



Speech by

Dr Mark Robinson

MEMBER FOR CLEVELAND

Hansard Tuesday, 18 May 2010

PALLIATIVE CARE; DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

Dr ROBINSON (Cleveland—LNP) (10.14 pm): I rise to address some issues in the electorate of Cleveland. The first issue is palliative care. Tonight I call on the health minister to provide a dedicated palliative care unit of 10 beds at the Redland hospital precinct in the 2010-11 budget. The case for a palliative care unit is a strong one. The population of the bayside Brisbane area is expected to be about 220,000 by 2011. According to the peak body Palliative Care Australia, a population of 220,000 would require at least 14 dedicated palliative care beds. In bayside Brisbane currently no unit exists and there are only six beds designated for palliative care for the whole region and they are interspersed at Wynnum Hospital. Therefore, palliative patients in the bayside area are already disadvantaged with respect to such care.

Further to the current need, the demand for palliative care services in the Redlands and wider bayside Brisbane is outstripping supply. As the population in the Redlands continues to grow and age, there is an increasing need for palliative care services and in-patient beds. While some palliative care services can be provided in the home of patients, others need the kind of care that can only be provided by a dedicated unit.

Therefore, today I call on the government in the upcoming budget to commit funding for an in-patient unit at the Redland residential care facility at the Redland hospital precinct. The estimated recurrent cost of \$3 million is a small price to pay to ease the suffering of both those who are dying and their families. The Premier claims that, as a result of the recent COAG, in the new financial year in excess of \$300 million of new recurrent money would become available in Queensland for sub-acute care. This money could be appropriately used to fund the new Redland unit. I appeal to the health minister and the Premier to provide the funding.

The second issue is domestic violence. As I have consistently done in this House since my election in March 2009, I raise the issue of the funding of the Bayside Domestic Violence Initiative. The BDVI is so highly regarded in my electorate that, in my view, it is a potential award-winning organisation for the Queensland government's Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Awards 2010, which are being presented later this month. However, that is not the main point I wish to make.

Yesterday, the shadow minister for women, Rosemary Menkens, visited the Redlands to stand with women to protest the imminent closure of the BDVI due to a government funding cut to the organisation. The government has history in failing to support the women and children who are victims of violence in the Redlands. In mid 2009, under duress, the government provided a pitiful \$20,000 of emergency funding when BDVI was about to close. In recent months we have seen a repeat of that pattern of ambivalence, no money, a challenge in parliament by myself, followed by a miserly contribution—this time only \$10,000—given under duress, then a claim by the government that it does care. This pattern and pittance is an insult to the organisation that provides court support at Cleveland and Wynnum courts for battered women, and it is an insult to the women and children of the Redlands and broader bayside area who have been victims. Again I call on the government to provide substantial recurrent funding while the doors of the BDVI are still open.