

Community Support and Services Committee

From: Director | ENC [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 16 August 2021 5:19 PM
To: Community Support and Services Committee
Subject: Re : Neighbourhood Centres and the Parliamentary Inquiry into Loneliness and Social Isolation

Dear Secretary,

Re: Neighbourhood Centres and the Parliamentary Inquiry into Loneliness and Social Isolation

The *Emerald Neighbourhood Centre* is one of 140 Neighbourhood and Community Centres (NCC's) around Queensland responding to loneliness and social isolation in our local communities. Neighbourhood Centres are place-based social infrastructure that foster connection, belonging, participation and inclusion.

Neighbourhood Centres welcome everyone, regardless of race, gender, sexuality, religion, age or social status and by their very nature build connections between individuals and organisations, particularly those who are isolated, vulnerable and disenfranchised.

Our Emerald Neighbourhood Centre provides :

- Emergency Relief support (which includes supporting our homeless, Victims and Perpetrators of Domestic Violence) ;
- Drought Emergency Relief (Central Highlands and Woorabinda)
- Community Connect Program;
- Continuity of Support Program;
- Get Set For Work Program;
- Positive Plus. A program I designed to meet the needs of our Super Seniors, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and people who experience mental health challenges and are not eligible for NDIS;
- Come to the Table – A healthy 2 course meal donated by Volunteers and our service for People in Need within the community;
- Linking Alms for Christmas and Adopt a Family (supporting families who are experiencing financial hardship at Christmas);
- Second Bite (Coles)
- Food Rescue Program (Woolworths)
- Good 360
- Local Bakery Support;
- Volunteers Program;
- Visiting Services -
 - Womens Health (Sexual Assault Counsellor)
 - CQ Rural Health (Psychologist)
 - Carers Qld - NDIS
 - Community Meetings
 - Joblife
 - Carers Gateways
 - Cherrish Life
 - Cancer Support Groups
 - Redcross Disaster Management Support for Indigenous Community
 - Parents Next
 - Family Drug and Alcohol Support Group
- our aim is to support any person who enters our Neighbourhood Centre, to leave feeling more empowered, more informed and more positive than when they came in!

In considering how to reduce loneliness and social isolation in Queensland, the Queensland Government needs to adequately resource Neighbourhood Centres as the key pieces of social infrastructure they are.

Our centre supports the Queensland Families and Communities Association (QFCA) submission to this inquiry. QFCA is the peak body of Neighbourhood Centres in Queensland and recommend:

- **Increase Neighbourhood Centre Investment** to a minimum of 2.5 workers plus overheads per centre to ensure adequate resourcing of place-based pro-connection responses
- **Strength Based Awareness Campaign emphasising the key role of NCC's**, creating increased awareness of centres as hubs of connection for social isolated individuals
- **Enhance Neighbourhood Centre Digital and Physical Infrastructure** to connect isolated individuals in communities using hybrid online and in-person methods
- **Resource QFCA to deliver additional NCC sector support** including implementing a NCC Reporting Framework which measures social isolation and loneliness.

Additional resourcing by the Queensland Government can further enhance the Neighbourhood Centre sector's capacity to invest in community-led, place-based solutions to the problem of loneliness and social isolation in our state.

Kindest regards,

Jeanelle Horn

Jeanelle Horn | Director

Emerald Neighbourhood Centre

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W <https://emeraldneighbourhoodcentre.org.au>

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Follow Us on <https://facebook.com/emeraldnc>



Our Mission – To support and enrich the social wellbeing and connectedness of our local community

We acknowledge and pay our respects to the traditional Custodians of the lands on which our Centre is placed and their continuing connection to the land, sea and community. We also acknowledge and pay our respects to Elders, past, present and future.