



Bowen Community Council  
ABN 74 116 939 538  
20 Williams Street, PO Box 1035  
Ph: (07) 4786 2111



Dear Secretary,

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

The Bowen 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 centre offers

Soup Kitchen which is funded by the Community  
Nils Loans which is a no-interest loan scheme.  
Shed Shop affordable or free furniture to the community  
Emergency Relief program  
Assistance with filling out forms  
Dv court support  
housing support and advocacy  
Laundry and showering facilities for the homeless and those in need.  
Referrals  
Drug and Alcohol Counselling Visiting service  
Mingle and Move (Social isolated group)  
Parenting Groups  
Playgroups  
Support Groups  
Stand alone care  
Baby Drop in Clinic  
School holiday program  
World Cafe (new)  
English Class ( new)

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.

Kind regards,



Stephanie Cora

Coordinator

Bowen Neighbourhood Centre

