



17 August 2021

Submission to Parliamentary Inquiry into
Loneliness and Social Isolation in Queensland

Dear Secretary

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

The Redland Community 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.

Redland Community Centre welcomes 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. The Centre performs outreach to highly vulnerable regions like the Southern Moreton Bay Islands to enable greater connections.

Redland Community Centre offers a range of programs, projects, events and activities that align to unmet community need. Our programs are for everyone in the community from homeless to housed, youth to aged and every demographic in-between; including domestic and family violence. What other service provides this level of inclusivity?

Amongst these programs the Centre provides important wrap around supports to our community. The Centre does not turn people away because our 'funding agreement' doesn't cover us to provide a service. We work towards achieving positive outcomes every day via collaboration and partnerships.

The Centre at Capalaba has provided a FREE counselling service for our community for nearly 4 years – UNFUNDED. This one program has delivered over \$500,000 in counselling sessions and yet it remains unfunded.

Decisions around which projects/programs/events can be delivered have to be balanced with the ability to raise revenue to pay for electricity, employee on-costs and general operating costs like printing and stationery; plainly put we could do more if our funding was adequate.

'Building Resilience, Community Wellbeing and Capacity'

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 have demonstrated they are over numerous years.**

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

Adequate 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,



Allison Wicks
CEO