



Speech by

**KAREN STRUTHERS**

**MEMBER FOR ARCHERFIELD**

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Hansard 24 November 1999

### **NURSING HOME PLACES**

**Ms STRUTHERS** (Archerfield—ALP) (10.07 a.m.): Members of this House with elderly parents would probably know how difficult it is to find a suitable placement in a residential aged care facility if the need arises. The Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care has the main responsibility for funding placements in residential aged care. The Federal Government works to a very tight funding ratio. Frankly, their funding target does not hit the mark. It falls well short of demand. The Federal Government funds 100 places per 1,000 people aged 70 years and over. This is made up of 40 high-level nursing home places, 50 low-level care/hostel-level and 10 community-based places.

Forest Place Nursing Home in my electorate provides an excellent standard of supported living for seniors. It receives Federal funding for 25 places but has cut its waiting lists now to 70. It cannot go beyond that, because it will already take many years to get through that waiting list. I want to commend Mr Clive Penfold, a Forest Place resident, for his persistence and initiative. After having prolonged difficulty finding a place for his frail wife, he has now rallied to draw further public attention to this major gap in Federal service provision.

The State's Minister for Health, Wendy Edmond, has been lobbying hard to the Federal Government on the matter. I will be doing my bit to call the Federal Government to task on this area of need. It is appalling that the Federal Government boasts a \$5 billion surplus when so many people do not have a decent roof over their head and adequate support.

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