



Speech by

BONNY BARRY

MEMBER FOR ASPLEY

Hansard 23 October 2002

1,000 FOOTPRINTS WALK

Ms BARRY (Aspley—ALP) (10.24 a.m.): On 13 October, on behalf of the Health Minister I attended a remarkable event—the 1,000 Footprints Walk celebrating the milestone of 1,000 bone marrow transplants done in Ward 9D of the Royal Brisbane Hospital and the Royal Children's Hospital. The event celebrated the work of the bone marrow transplant units and their supporting agencies, the Leukaemia Foundation and the Children's Leukaemia and Cancer Society.

Nearly 2,000 people walked across the Goodwill Bridge—and I have to say that this is a great bridge and it is perfect for this kind of event. The bridge was filled with people who had banners, balloons and T-shirts adorned with the photos of smiling transplant recipients celebrating their new lives. Toddlers and teenagers joined retirees all with the same common goal: to celebrate the work that the bone marrow transplant unit and Ward 9D had done in giving them new hope and new lives.

As a testament to the amazing bond between staff and patients, the families of patients who did not survive the rigorous process of transplantation due to either a lack of suitable donors or, more importantly, the curse of infection came to give thanks to the efforts of the transplant team. Reunions abounded. Fellow patients, nurses and doctors from the past 14 years came. I confess to a number of reunions of my own—of friends, colleagues and past patients. People came from as far as Cloncurry and Cairns. I spoke to many of them. They said that they came not just because 1,000 bone marrow transplants was a fantastic milestone but also to publicly support the staff of Ward 9D who suffered so much distress last year.

I thank the minister for giving me the opportunity to represent her at the walk. I have said in this House before that the minister and I understand the commitment and personal sacrifice that nurses, doctors radiation therapists—all hospital staff—make when they work in cancer units, and perhaps it is a special, professional, personal understanding that other members may not have. As an MP, to share thanking those staff with those people was a real privilege for me. The bone marrow transplant units at the Royal Brisbane Hospital and at the Royal Children's Hospital are world class.

Time expired.