



Speech by

CHRISTINE SCOTT

MEMBER FOR CHARTERS TOWERS

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DISABILITY SERVICES, FLINDERS SHIRE

Mrs CHRISTINE SCOTT (Charters Towers—ALP) (2.38 p.m.): Today I draw the attention of the House to a very special group of people—a group of people who live in the heart of the Flinders shire and who have shown that they have the interests of their community at heart. These 15 wonderful people—eight from the Flinders shire HACC program and seven from the Flinders Disability Support Service—have undertaken a combined training initiative to obtain their certificate 3 in Community Services (Aged Care). They are such a very special group of people that I want to list their names in the House today.

From the Flinders Shire and Community Care program were Cheryl Crighton, Gladys Douglas, Vera Grant, Rachel Greenaway, Frances Grevsmuhl, Pam Hunt, Valmai Mitchell and Margaret Steadman. From the Flinders Disability Support Service were Evelyn Corney, Val Corrigan, Tracey Pollett, Ann Hosken, Margaret McGuffie, Jenny Murphy and Michele Steadman. I actually met a number of these people in 1998 when I travelled to Hughenden to teach many of them their very first senior first aid course, which was really the beginning of the study that they completed. Mrs Barbara Dennis was the training facilitator, and her training and experience within the aged care was invaluable to all concerned. I also commend the Flinders Shire Council for its supportive attitude and for providing vital logistic support. The training initiative was the introduction and delivery of a training program to provide the staff of the council's community care program with the skills and training commensurate to their peers and to industry expectations in less remote locations. When they undertook this course, the women involved were required to adapt their lives, cope with changing values and ideals as well as face the fear of the unknown. That each was successful in this challenge has given them increased confidence, an enhanced sense of self-value and a greater recognition and respect from the community. These people believe that by undertaking and completing this course they are personally and actively working towards maintaining the viability of their local community to provide services which are industry current, appropriate and of high quality. The increased self-confidence shown by these people is evident in their readiness to implement their knowledge in advocacy on behalf of their clients. They now have the skills, supported by theory and practice, to look beyond the immediately apparent in order to make valid contributions to client care planning. The initiative can be seen as an exemplar. The implementation of this program in the Flinders shire should be seen as an inspiration to other groups and organisations in regional, rural and remote areas who believe the implementation of training events are too difficult, impractical or irrelevant because of their isolation. Above and beyond anything else, this program has enhanced the care the elder and disabled citizens of our community receive. It is vital that we as a society do everything we can to help the aged and the disabled in our communities to retain their dignity, autonomy and sense of self-worth. As citizens of a modern democracy, a democracy which values each and every member of society, regardless of their age or social status—

Time expired.