



Speech by

**Shane Knuth**

**MEMBER FOR CHARTERS TOWERS**

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## **CHARTERS TOWERS CLUB 20**

**Mr KNUTH** (Charters Towers—NPA) (9.16 p.m.): I rise to speak on an urgent need for funding to provide Charters Towers Club 20 with valuable resources to continue its admirable work within the community. Club 20 serves as an outlet for those with mild mental disorders to make contact with others like themselves and to become involved in a wide range of activities. The club seeks funding of \$25,000 in total, \$5,000 being for core expenses and the remainder to employ an industry experienced activities coordinator on a part-time basis. This coordinator would be able to utilise his or her extensive experience to benefit the members of the club and to help them become involved in a variety of activities suited to their needs.

Since the implementation of Project 300, people with what is considered as a mild mental illness are left to fend for themselves and to try to re-enter the world without so much as a helping hand. Queensland has one of the highest rates of mental illness and one of the highest rates of suicide. Considering those facts, it is surprising to see that we trail every other state and territory in terms of per capita spending on specialist mental health services.

Club 20 is an integral part of the community and assists those who are often forgotten or overlooked. Members generally start off by socialising and graduate to assuming responsibilities. For those affected by mild mental disorders, this is seen as a huge feat in the long road that is ahead of them and provides a sense of belonging and self-worth.

The independent club gives its members the feeling of mutual acceptance, confidence and of being valued. A lot of members lack life skills and Club 20 is a place they can go to re-establish or build on those skills so that they can improve their quality of life. I call on the government to allocate funding—only \$25,000—to this group so that they can employ a part-time coordinator to assist with their self-help activities. The group has exhausted many avenues trying to access funding, only to have their applications denied. The fate of Club 20 will be decided by the outcome of this application.