



Speech by

**Mike Horan**

**MEMBER FOR TOOWOOMBA SOUTH**

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## **TOOWOOMBA COMMUNITY CARE TRANSPORT**

**Mr HORAN** (Toowoomba South—NPA) (9.31 pm): Since 1996, the Rotary Club of Toowoomba has run an absolutely magnificent service called the Toowoomba Community Care Transport Inc. In that time, with the assistance of HACC funding and through Transcare, which is a subset of the Anglican diocese of Brisbane, they have provided transport to elderly people throughout the city who are unable to access public transport or unable to get to medical appointments. This service has become necessary because the role of the Ambulance Service has changed dramatically over the last decade or two. Years ago, the Ambulance Service would pick up people and run them to the doctors and so forth; that no longer happens.

This service has been underway for all that time, and it is an absolutely fantastic service. I can attest to the work that these volunteers do. The volunteers and drivers do a marvellous job; they even provide their own vehicles. This is the sort of basic community service that makes a city, town or community come together and look after their elderly members who have done so much for the community in the past and need a helping hand in their senior years.

The most recent contract through Transcare has been changed from the normal period of one year to only three months. It appears now that the HACC funding will no longer be provided to Toowoomba Community Care Transport through Transcare and they will have to simply run on their own funds until the service runs out.

I would like to give the parliament some statistics on Toowoomba Community Care Transport. Every year, they do approximately 4,000 HACC referred transports, for which they have been reimbursed \$18,200 each year by Transcare. Each of these transports involves an average distance of 11 kilometres and requires an average of 55 minutes of volunteer time. The estimated value for each service is \$25.35. Therefore, HACC through Transcare have been the recipient of \$100,000 worth of service for only \$18,200, courtesy of the organisation and their volunteers. In addition, they are getting 18 to 20 extra referrals per month from HACC and they also receive referrals from elsewhere.

I call on the minister to give urgent and serious consideration to this group to ensure that HACC funding is provided. This is a preventive service that helps old people keep healthy and looks after those people who deserve it. It is provided by volunteers, who give hundreds of thousands of dollars of benefit to the government and our community through their work and by using their own cars. I plead with the minister to look into this as a matter of urgency and see that this minuscule amount of funding continues to be provided to Toowoomba Community Care Transport.