




Speech By  
**Hon. Dr Steven Miles**  
**MEMBER FOR MOUNT COOT-THA**

---

Record of Proceedings, 30 August 2016

## ADJOURNMENT

### NeuroCare Network

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef) (9.01 pm): Progressive neurological diseases can devastate the lives of far too many Queenslanders, but they do not have to anymore. The term 'progressive neurological disease' can be used to describe multiple sclerosis, motor neuron disease, Parkinson's disease, Huntington's disease, epilepsy, muscular dystrophy and Alzheimer's. It is estimated that around 135,000 Queenslanders live with these chronic diseases, including my very good friend Gary Allen. That number does not include the families, carers and friends of those people who can also face insurmountable hurdles and obstacles in their daily lives.

There is no shortage of evidence that a person staying safely in their own home can be vital for their physical, mental and emotional wellbeing; that a person remaining in the workforce is fundamental to their sense of connectedness and dignity; and that addressing those needs serves a powerful public good for Queensland's communities and for the economy. The challenge for a responsible and socially engaged government is to identify how best to support those Queenslanders and how to do so in a way that is sustainable.

A group of 11 Queensland based progressive neurological disease support organisations, led by MS Queensland, is working hard to ensure that there is a coordination of supports and services, a sharing of ideas and successful strategies, a combined advocacy voice and a complementary approach across all progressive neurological diseases: it is called the NeuroCare Network. I am very proud to have played a very small early role in connecting the NeuroCare Network with the Queensland government and I am thrilled that the Palaszczuk government has committed \$150,000 for the trial of a coordinated approach in Townsville.

Progressive neurological diseases are not limited to a particular geographic region, nor are they limited to individuals who vote for a particular party. That is why it is great that the NeuroCare Network has received bipartisan support and why it is essential to support their efforts right across Queensland. The effective rollout of the National Disability Insurance Scheme in Queensland will provide further options and life-work assistance to people living with the terrible impacts of neurological diseases. The NeuroCare Network will help Queenslanders access the information and identify the providers to fully enjoy those benefits. The NeuroCare Network is the first such effort in Australia. We should be proud of that, but I hope that Queensland's approach can provide a powerful model for the rest of the country.