



Speech By  
**Mark Robinson**


**MEMBER FOR OODGEROO**

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**PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT**

**Palliative Care, Hummingbird House**

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Oodgeroo—LNP) (2.48 pm): James Simpson from Redland Bay was in grade 9 at Calvary Christian College when he developed a cough that he just could not clear. Sick with worry, his mum, Julie, took him to the Children's Hospital. After some further investigations it was discovered James had acute lymphoblastic leukaemia, a form of childhood cancer. Although this form of cancer is often very curable, unfortunately for James, despite treatment, his cancer continued to be prolific. He had many complications and this led to him needing help with his breathing and he was paralysed from his neck downwards. After four months James became palliative.

Having spent most of his four months in the intensive care unit and his care being very complex, being transferred home to die was not an option and James was transferred to Hummingbird House for end-of-life care. He spent his last few weeks surrounded by his siblings and his much loved cat. His friends visited him as well as his favourite teacher from school, who was living in London at the time. He flew back to Brisbane to surprise him.

Hummingbird House provided space for them all to eat home-cooked meals together, watch movies and swim—to just be together as a family. After James passed away very peacefully surrounded by his family, Hummingbird House provided a peaceful space for the family to grieve and supported them in preparing for a beautiful personal funeral at his school, where his schoolmates provided him with a guard of honour.

Stories like that of James Simpson of the Redlands coast are incredibly sad, and they serve to highlight the critical need that children and families have for the support and services that Hummingbird House provides. Hummingbird House is Queensland's only children's hospice, specialising in providing care for children who are likely to die with hours, days, weeks, months, or a few years. Their service provides short stays, family support, creative therapies and care at the end of life for children aged from newborn to 18 years.

Hummingbird House is fully accredited under the national healthcare quality standard AS/NZS ISO 9001, making Hummingbird House the only privately licensed paediatric palliative care facility in Australia. The team now includes nurses, personal care workers, social workers, nurse practitioners, doctors, family support workers, housekeepers, occupational therapists, cooks and an art therapist. Since operations commenced, Hummingbird House has received over 200 referrals and is actively involved in supporting around 18 families. Hummingbird House is very well respected and leads the way nationally in many aspects of care.

The challenge Hummingbird House faces today is a shortfall of some millions of dollars. This is very important, and I appeal to governments to increase their funding and for corporates and individuals to make regular donations.