




Speech By
Joseph Kelly

MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES

Record of Proceedings, 26 May 2021

ADJOURNMENT

National Palliative Care Week; Steve the Cat

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (7.09 pm): This week is National Palliative Care Week. I would like to acknowledge all of the nurses, doctors, physios, speechies, social workers, OTs, chaplains, volunteers, carers and family members who provide support in a palliative care setting. I can tell the House that, as a nurse, palliative care and caring for someone at the end of their life and supporting a family through that time is probably one of the most special things I have experienced. I am sure most other people on that list I just read out feel the same way. You really do need a team of people to achieve it.

I recently did some Palliative Care Queensland professional development courses and there has been a real shift in thinking. For so long, palliative care has been about what you do not want to happen at the end of your life—you do not want pain, you do not want this, you do not want that. What we are starting to focus on now is actually what you do want to happen—how do you want to spend your last moments and time here on earth? That is a great shift.

I have always been a strong palliative care advocate. I want to acknowledge the significant boost in funding from the government for palliative care. There is an area that plays a significant role in terms of end of life and palliative care, and that is the aged-care sector. It is a really big factor. The federal government have had a blueprint laid out for them in terms of the royal commission into aged care and I think the budget shows that they have failed to take heed of that blueprint. Yes, I acknowledge that there has been more money put into the sector, but there really has not been the structural change that many in the sector were looking for. That is really concerning.

We need ratios. We need to make sure that training is improved so that people who are in aged care know how to care for people with end-of-life issues like dementia, poor mobility and swallowing problems. I believe we need nurse practitioners leading the team in aged-care settings. We need to make sure that palliative care is available in all settings—aged care, community care, the home—and is really well integrated with the state systems as well. I do not have time to get onto the My Aged Care system, but it is also another system that is failing people as they grow older. I am proud of what our government has achieved. I call on the federal government to take heed of those things I have pointed out tonight.

In the remaining moments I have left, I want to update the House on the search for Steve the cat that occurred in my electorate. Steve has become a celebrity in the electorate of Greenslopes, and it is a testament to the power of community and social media. Steve went missing well over a month ago and it has been a topic of conversation across many a fence, and I myself have checked out cats walking by to see if they were Steve. I am really pleased to say that Steve has been returned home and is safe and sound after nearly a month away. Well done to our community for coming together and finding Steve. Welcome home, Steve.