




Speech By
Joseph Kelly

MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES

Record of Proceedings, 31 March 2022

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SERVICES COMMITTEE

Report, Motion to Take Note

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (3.57 pm): I start by acknowledging the terrific work of the chair, the member for Mansfield, in relation to not just this report but also this issue. I am inspired every day by my colleagues and the great work that they do, but the member for Mansfield has identified an issue through her time as an MP, and in her time previously as a principal, and has pursued that doggedly in this place, specifically through this inquiry. She has come up with a report that is based on really sound evidence and makes some really good suggestions on how to go forward. I acknowledge the member for Mansfield for that.

Probably one of the saddest things I ever encountered as a nurse was being with somebody at the end of their life when there was nobody else there for them. Any nurse will have had that unfortunate experience. I have experienced the power of community as a rehab nurse. I want to be careful about what I say because I do not want to identify the patient, but we had a patient from a very small country town who had horrific injuries leading to very significant permanent disabilities that would require very high levels of care. It would have been difficult to discharge this patient back into the community in a metropolitan area but, because this patient had such a strong community around her, both family and friends, even in this really isolated spot we were able to discharge this patient. Many other patients we looked after might have lived in the centre of Brisbane or in Townsville—we were a statewide service—but when we sat down to start to work with them on their discharge planning we found that they had no family and no friends—not a single person in the world they could rely on who was not provided by a government service. Those people were so much more difficult to discharge, because you really do need that interconnectedness, to be part of a community.

We all understand Maslow's hierarchy of needs. We need water, food, oxygen et cetera, but if we really want to live life it is those things higher up the triangle that matter. People being connected into their community—

Mr Healy interjected.

Mr KELLY: I will take that interjection. People being connected into their community gives them a good quality of life. I am sure every MP on this side of the House who does a lot of doorknocking and is always at community events would have met people who are socially isolated. I think the recommendations in this report point to a way forward in trying to respond to that.

I acknowledge the work of the Mount Gravatt Community Centre which is in the member for Mansfield's electorate. I am pleased that they have opened a branch office in Coorparoo and are now providing services in my electorate. I acknowledge the work they do in dealing with social isolation. They have been champions of this issue. They have been well supported by the member for Mansfield. I acknowledge and thank them for all the work they do all the time, but particularly during COVID. With those few words, I commend this report to the House.