




Speech By
Sandy Bolton

MEMBER FOR NOOSA

Record of Proceedings, 28 October 2022

ADJOURNMENT

Palliative Care

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (12.49 pm): Dying, and death, is not something I wish to speak about today. However, as with birth and the life in-between, there are costs associated that must be advocated for to state and federal governments which means we must talk about it. For many in our community, they have a preference in their last days to pass in their own bed, with the smells and sounds they are familiar with, beloved family and pets by their side. Sometimes it is not possible for a multitude of reasons, and that is where our incredible palliative care hospices come in. One is our very own and much loved Katie Rose Cottage in Noosa—a wonderful property surrounded by gardens with the smell of baking treats, sounds of visiting grandchildren, love from volunteers and palliative care nurses. I have fought for Katie Rose on many fronts successfully. However, I am now fighting for a sustainable funding model for it and all hospices in Queensland. These facilities are an essential component of our palliative care. With a hospital bed costing triple that of a hospice bed and a desperate shortage of hospital beds, I still cannot comprehend why the need for a sustainable funding model continues to not be addressed. The 2019 Queensland Health Palliative Care Services Review highlighted many issues, including a lack of hospices, respite facilities, after-hours care and residential care.

Demand is outstripping supply, which requires greater investment in service delivery by Australian and state governments. There remain insufficient resources, even with the extra \$17 million allocated by the Queensland government, to allow Queenslanders the choice to die at home or to access hospice facilities at end of life. Queensland should have a desire to become a leader in compassionate communities. To do that we really need to listen to what Queenslanders wish for. That requires hospices such as Katie Rose to be funded more than the current 20 per cent of nursing costs. That is the level of funding—the rest is community borne. Coming up we have further increases in nursing and we still have COVID related requirements. With these not-for-profits reliant on community funding still experiencing the fallout from the pandemic and loss of income from fundraisers, it is time for Queensland to move into a space where death and dying is not a cost we need to be on our knees begging for, just as for our birth, or life. However, that is exactly what I am doing: pleading for a fair and sustainable funding model to ensure our hospices continue to provide choice and the loving environment Queenslanders seek, including the ongoing support after a loved one's passing they are renowned for. That is so important through the grieving process, whether it is for a loved grandparent, parent, child or friend. Thank you.