




Speech By  
**Peter Russo**  
**MEMBER FOR TOOHEY**

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## ADJOURNMENT

### Australian Bone Marrow Donor Registry

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (7.18 pm): Tonight I want to talk about being an influencer and being able to influence the odds for the better for people with blood cancers. I urge every member of this House to reach out to their communities and encourage people from the age of 18 to 35 to register as bone marrow donors with the Australian Bone Marrow Donor Registry. People with ethnic or Indigenous heritage are under-represented on the Australian Bone Marrow Donor Registry. There is a lot of misconception around the process of being a donor. However, it is as simple as donating blood.

Cancer is a disease that affects the lives of many Queenslanders, either directly or indirectly, with tens of thousands of people diagnosed with cancer each year. I recently attended the event hosted by the amazing people at Simply Human—Superheroes without Capes. They shared their story and they also explained that when many of us hear the words cancer, leukaemia, bone marrow and other medical terms we do not really understand them. Organisations like Simply Human offer support to diverse communities including overseas students, the elderly and the vulnerable.

Prerna Pahwa, the founder of Simply Human, knows there is a lack of understanding surrounding blood stem cell—also known as bone marrow—transplants. She realised that a person's ethnic background has a big impact on finding a match. Simply Human meets a gap in support systems. They provide ongoing and needed support to patients and their families in Australia, knowing that no-one should go through the trauma of dealing with cancer alone. Simply Human is about being human, our similarities as well as our differences. Facing hardship in difficult times can bring out the humanness and the kindness in us all.

I urge everyone to be a superhero, with or without a cape, and help save lives. I repeat: I ask you to be an influencer—an influencer in your community to encourage people to get on the Australian Bone Marrow Donor Registry.