

Question on Notice

No. 1151

Asked on 12 October 2021

MRS D FRECKLINGTON ASKED THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND AMBULANCE SERVICES (HON Y D'ATH)—

QUESTION

With reference to the Kingaroy Hospital—

Will the Minister clarify (a) where is the dedicated palliative care suite at Kingaroy Hospital, (b) are there dedicated palliative care staff (i.e. Nurses) for palliative care, (c) are staff at Kingaroy Hospital providing the form 'Supporting Care in the last days and hours of life' to families of palliative patients and (d) have administrative staff, including volunteers at Kingaroy Hospital, been made aware of the palliative care suite at the Kingaroy Hospital so they can direct guests to where this room is located?

ANSWER

With respect to the Member's questions, I have been advised as follows:

(a) where is the dedicated palliative care suite at Kingaroy Hospital

Kingaroy Hospital has a single room specifically designed for palliative and end of life care for patients and their families. To facilitate a quieter environment, this room is located at the end of a corridor with the least amount of staff and patient/visitor traffic.

(b) are there dedicated palliative care staff (i.e. Nurses) for palliative care

Kingaroy Hospital does not have dedicated palliative care staff on the wards. However, as Kingaroy Hospital has a mixed medical/surgical ward, nurses are required to have knowledge and skills across a wide variety of patient types, including palliative care.

A community-based Clinical Nurse Consultant (CNC) – Palliative Care is employed by the Darling Downs Hospital and Health Service to provide palliative care support for residents of the South Burnett area. The CNC is available to consult and provide advice for medical, nursing and allied health staff. Patients can be referred to this palliative service for support in the community. The CNC provides ongoing monitoring, advice and support including hospital visits and discharge planning support when the clients are inpatients.

Additionally, the treating team at Kingaroy Hospital can liaise with the Gold Coast Palliative Care Team for specialist support regarding palliative patients, including medication ordering and symptom management. With a referral from their treating medical officer in the South Burnett area, all patients can access clinical advice, support and telehealth consultation through the Gold Coast Palliative Care Team.

Kingaroy Hospital clinicians can also contact the PallConsult 24 hour telephone advice hotline with two numbers available:

- for doctors and nurse practitioners with access to a specialist palliative care medical consultant; and
- for nursing and allied health staff with access to a specialist palliative care nurse.

(c) are staff at Kingaroy Hospital providing the form 'Supporting Care in the last days and hours of life' to families of palliative patients

The 'Supporting Care in the last days and hours of life' information sheet is part of the Care Plan for the Dying Person clinical pathway. The Care Plan for the Dying Person is a multidisciplinary document for use in the last days of life. Kingaroy Hospital staff provide families of palliative patients with the information sheet when completing the Care Plan to facilitate discussions and allow for a better understanding of what to expect.

(d) have administrative staff, including volunteers at Kingaroy Hospital, been made aware of the palliative care suite at the Kingaroy Hospital so they can direct guests to where this room is located

Administration staff at ward reception are aware of the location and the intent of the palliative care room. Kingaroy Hospital utilises discreet palliative care-specific alert posters to inform staff of any room occupied by a palliative patient.

Furthermore, the State Government this week announced \$54.8 million in funding for community-based care for individuals with a life-limiting illness in regional, rural and remote Queensland. Submissions are now being sought from non-government organisations to apply for a share of this \$54.8 million, which forms part of the government's \$171 million Palliative Care Reform Program.

As part of this initiative, Queensland Health has released an Invitation to Offer (ITO) commissioning service providers for community-based palliative care services, across Queensland, outside of the South-East corner, from 1 October 2022.

For more information, visit <https://statements.qld.gov.au/statements/93730>.