

Question on Notice

No. 393

Asked on 20 April 2021

MR S ANDREW ASKED THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND AMBULANCE SERVICES (HON Y D'ATH) –

QUESTION

With reference to a recent Amnesty International report which highlighted injustices suffered by elderly residents in UK aged care facilities, including the 'imposition of Do Not Resuscitate orders on care home residents without due process'—

Will the Minister advise whether such 'Do Not Resuscitate' orders exist for elderly residents at aged care facilities in Queensland?

ANSWER

Across Queensland's public health system, teams and individuals work every day to get better health outcomes for their older patients.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Statewide Older Persons Health Clinical Network developed a statement on the potential impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the older population. The statement was published in March 2020 to provide guiding principles underpinning the assessment and management of older people with suspected or confirmed COVID-19.

The Statement recommends that clinical decision-making be informed by a variety of factors including: the person's clinical status; an understanding of co-morbidities and pre-morbid frailty; and the person's advanced care planning wishes. To ensure equity of medical treatment, the statement calls for the avoidance of assumptions that a person's chronological age or perceived place of residence correlates with their frailty or health status.

Proactive advance care planning was endorsed by stakeholders, especially in those with moderate to severe frailty or significant pre-existing medical conditions. Advance care planning provides an opportunity for people to think, discuss and plan for the medical treatment they would prefer in the future. It is an ongoing process that requires:

- Introducing choices to people about future care;
- Thinking about values, priorities and preferences for care;
- Identification of a substitute decision maker; and
- Clearly documenting decisions so they are easily accessible.

This principal intends to enable greater autonomy of older people in relation to the health care they receive in the event of a severe acute health crisis. Imposition of Do Not Resuscitate orders was not included as a recommendation.