

Question on Notice

No. 902

Asked on 22 August 2023

MR A PERRETT ASKED MINISTER FOR HEALTH, MENTAL HEALTH AND AMBULANCE SERVICES AND MINISTER FOR WOMEN (HON S FENTIMAN)—

QUESTION

With reference to funding cuts to palliative care services in Gympie—
Will the Minister advise (a) if Queensland Health has undertaken a review of additional services needed at Gympie hospital for palliative care patients who no longer can access outside care services and (b) what new arrangements have been made to provide additional support services and extra beds at the Gympie hospital?

ANSWER

High quality and accessible palliative and end-of-life care is an essential part of the health system. Ensuring every Queenslander has choice towards the end of their life is a priority. It is anticipated that demand on palliative care services will continue to increase in the Gympie region, and across Queensland.

That is why the Palaszczuk Government has committed an additional \$171 million across 2021-22 to 2025-26 to reform and strengthen palliative care services. The funding investment is guided by the new *Palliative and End-of-Life Care Strategy* and the *Queensland Health Specialist Palliative Care Workforce Plan*, which were released in October 2022.

I am advised there have been no funding cuts to the direct provision of palliative care services in the Gympie region.

Gympie Hospital has two designated Palliative Care beds with care provided by local Senior Medical Officers and registered nurses. Support is provided to those local staff by the Sunshine Coast Specialist Palliative Care Service.

The Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service also provides a Palliative Care Rural Telehealth service, that collaborates with rural non-government organisations to provide telehealth consultations and enables consumers to remain in their home and receive specialist palliative care. This service was recently expanded to meet growing demand in the region.

The Palaszczuk Government also continues to provide funding, through the Department of Health, to non-government organisations for the delivery of community-based palliative care services.