

MORAN HEALTH CARE GROUP, KALGOORLIE NURSING HOME

535. Mr TEMPLEMAN to the Minister for Health:

Is the minister aware that Moran Health Care Group Pty Ltd has announced that it is closing its 60-bed Kalgoorlie nursing home at the end of this year?

Mr KUCERA replied:

I thank the member for his question, and for the work he does for the aged care industry in his electorate. I am aware, and also very concerned, that the Moran Health Care Group has decided that it cannot continue to operate its Kalgoorlie nursing home. Unfortunately, this is a direct outcome of the aged care policy of the federal coalition Government, which is increasingly hurting rural and remote communities in Western Australia. I do not intend to allow the Commonwealth to simply walk away from its responsibilities to older Western Australians, particularly those living in Kalgoorlie and other remote areas of this State.

Mr Birney: They were not making enough money; that is why they pulled out.

The SPEAKER: The member for Kalgoorlie!

Mr KUCERA: I am glad that the member for Kalgoorlie said that, because his party is responsible, at the federal level, for this issue. I suggest the member talk to his federal member. There is also a very real risk that what is happening in Kalgoorlie will be replicated in other parts of the State, as the cumulative effects of this flawed aged care policy come home to roost. I will be taking up the Kalgoorlie situation and the declining state of commonwealth funding for rural aged care services with the new federal Minister for Health and Aged Care as soon as he or she is announced. In the meantime, in regard to the looming crisis in nursing home accommodation in Kalgoorlie, I have requested the Department of Health to consult urgently with the aged care service providers and community leaders in Kalgoorlie and provide advice on available interim measures to ensure access to nursing home care for residents of the northern goldfields region. I am aware, and I am concerned.