

PALLIATIVE CARE ADVISORY GROUP

Statement by Minister for Health

MR KUCERA (Yokine - Minister for Health) [12.10 pm]: I wish to announce the formation of a palliative care advisory group. This advisory group will support the Labor Government's election commitment to develop quality palliative care services around the State with the allocation of an additional \$8 million over four years. It will also ensure alignment with the national palliative care strategy released by the Commonwealth in October 2000. The terms of reference for the advisory group will ensure that I am kept informed on palliative care issues and matters relating to strategic service development. I will soon be able to confirm the chair of the palliative care advisory group and its membership. The group will include a broad mix of people with different types of palliative care expertise, and it will have consumer representation.

The role of the advisory group is to inform the Department of Health about palliative care issues. Funds need to be allocated efficiently and fairly so that Western Australians who are dying can access appropriate services. The group will also make sure that there is training and support for staff and volunteers, which is especially important in rural areas. The palliative care advisory group replaces the previously established palliative care reference group. It will report to the Minister for Health through the Director General, Department of Health. The advisory group is expected to meet quarterly.