

COLLIE CRISIS AND TRANSITIONAL ACCOMMODATION SERVICE

**905. Mr D.T. PUNCH to the Minister for Community Services:**

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's ongoing commitment to investing in services that support victims of family and domestic violence and those experiencing homelessness. Can the minister outline to the house how this government's new crisis and transitional accommodation service in Collie will support vulnerable Western Australians and fill a critical service gap in the area?

**Ms S.F. McGURK replied:**

I thank the member for Bunbury for that question. I know that he is a great member for his electorate. He has experience in not only social policy and working with community organisations, but also economic development, so he has been a great resource in his area. Another great advocate for his electorate, and no-one can fault his passion, is the member for Collie–Preston. As distinct from the opposition that only discovered homelessness in the last three or four months, the member for Collie–Preston has been aware of the need for some immediate relief housing and emergency accommodation in his electorate. Sometimes it is not appropriate, for instance, to have a full women's refuge, because people experiencing violence need to move away from the area where they might come into contact with the perpetrator. People might need services if they are experiencing violence and need to have a break or if the victims can stay at home and the perpetrator can move out, but usually it is the former. They might also apply if someone is experiencing homelessness and needs a bed for a night or two while they get in touch with services either in Collie or further afield. It was an election commitment that the member for Collie–Preston took to the 2017 election that two transitional accommodation houses would be available to people in the Collie area, and we are very happy that they have now been set up. There are two properties owned by the Department of Communities and they can accommodate two families with up to six adults across both of those properties. One of them is for short-term emergency housing relief for people who need to put a roof over their heads, and the other will provide clients with transitional accommodation. The service provider is AccordWest. It is important that people are not only given that accommodation, but also linked in with the service should they need it in order to find out what they need to do. That is certainly where the financial counselling model has come along in leaps and bounds. We are able to link over 80 per cent of the people ringing up for the hardship utility grant scheme and financial counselling with other services, which is really important. We have call centres both in Armadale and now in Bunbury doing some of that work. I thank members on this side of the house who I know are passionate about those who are most in need for not politically exploiting their situation, for not calling them meth zombies and for not denigrating them, when we know that the vast majority of women experience homelessness because they are experiencing family and domestic violence. Members on this side of the house show a bit of compassionate —

**Mr A. Krsticevic** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Carine!

**Ms S.F. McGURK:** The member for Carine might actually learn something about people experiencing hardship, which he might not learn at Government House.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Members!

**Ms S.F. McGURK:** He might learn about people experiencing domestic violence, for instance. These are real people with real issues—

**Mr A. Krsticevic** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Carine, I call you to order for the first time.

**Ms S.F. McGURK:** — and they deserve that members in this house take the time to understand their problems and to provide a bit of compassion to the situation they are in.