

HOMELESSNESS — DEATHS

**1170. Hon STEVE MARTIN to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Community Services:**

I refer to the ABC article published last week that stated that the minister questioned the data from the University of Western Australia's Home2Health project that found that at least 56 people who have experienced chronic homelessness in Perth have died this year up to the end of October.

- (1) Why does the minister doubt the veracity of the figures on the deaths of people who have experienced homelessness?
- (2) When did the minister ask WA Health to investigate these figures?
- (3) What information has the minister received from WA Health?
- (4) Has the minister or her staff taken up the offer to meet with the University of Western Australia's Associate Professor Lisa Wood about the data on homeless deaths made on 5 November?

**Hon KYLE MCGINN replied:**

On behalf of the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Community Services, I thank the member for some notice of the question. The following information has been provided to me by the Minister for Community Services and is quite lengthy.

- (1)–(3) The report authored by the Centre for Social Impact at the University of Western Australia is a broad assessment of how Western Australia is progressing towards ending homelessness. The report recognised the significant resources and effort being made by homelessness services, housing providers and the McGowan government, particularly through the *All paths lead to a home: Western Australia's 10-year strategy on homelessness 2020–2030* and the programs and initiatives flowing from it. I am not aware of the specific methodology behind the Home2Health study being published. Figures relating to the deaths of people experiencing homelessness are estimates only, as mortality rates, life expectancy, causes of death and any death data for people experiencing homelessness are not currently measured in Australia. Following the release of the report, I sought advice from WA Health via the office of the Minister for Health, which advised that there is no robust way to accurately collate information pertaining to homelessness across Department of Health data.
- (4) I asked the Department of Communities to meet with Associate Professor Wood to receive a briefing on this research. On 29 November, the department provided a range of options for that meeting; Associate Professor Wood confirmed the meeting on 7 December 2021.