



Hon. Mark McGowan MLA
Premier



Hon. Roger Cook MLA
Minister for Health

MEDIA STATEMENT

Thursday, 10 October 2019

Massive boost for palliative care services across Western Australia

- McGowan Government invests a record \$224 million for palliative care services
- An additional \$17.8 million invested to enhance palliative care services; comes on top of the extra funding delivered in the 2019-20 State Budget
- 10 additional inpatient palliative care beds funded, a 15 per cent increase to metropolitan inpatient beds for palliative care
- \$6.3 million has been allocated to improving metropolitan and regional community based services, for care closer to home
- Regional staff bolstered with an extra 61 FTE to strengthen palliative care services

The sickest and most vulnerable Western Australians will be further supported following the McGowan Government's record investment to strengthen palliative care services.

An additional \$17.8 million to enhance palliative care services, which delivers on the recommendations of the Joint Select Committee Report on End of Life Choices, includes:

- \$9 million towards an additional 10 inpatient palliative care beds in the northern metropolitan suburbs;
- \$6.3 million for the expansion of community based services across both metropolitan and regional Western Australia to better meet demand; and
- \$2.5 million for enhancing rural and regional palliative care services by improving governance.

The McGowan Government is dedicated to expanding services in rural and regional WA and providing care closer to home with a boost to community based services, provision of in-home palliative care support and ensuring palliative care on-country visits are delivered.

More than 61 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff will be employed over a phased approach across regional Western Australia as part of the McGowan Government's \$41 million end of life choices and palliative care services package as included in the 2019-20 State Budget. This will triple the staffing arrangements for palliative care support in regional WA.

This includes the establishment of new specialist district palliative care teams comprising of medical, nursing, allied health and Aboriginal health workers across all regions.

As part of the package, \$3 million will enable 24-hour support via the WA Country Health Service telehealth hub which will ensure staff, patients and families have access to nursing care for patients who wish to die at home.

Over four years, the investment for regional palliative care services builds on current service arrangements.

INVESTMENT	REGION	CURRENT FTE	ADDITIONAL STAFF	TOTAL STAFF AFTER INVESTMENT
\$3.6 million	Goldfields	4.1	8.35	12.45
\$3.5 million	Great Southern	3	8.45	11.45
\$4.4 million	Kimberley	3.5	9.95	13.45
\$4 million	Mid-West and Gascoyne	2.7	10.85	13.55
\$4.9 million	Pilbara	1.65	11.80	13.45
\$2.5 million	South-West	11	5.90	16.90
\$2.7 million	Wheatbelt	5.3	6.15	11.45

*Final FTE and configuration will be determined as the models of care are established.

An extra \$2.5 million has now been committed to enable the WA Country Health Service to enhance rural and regional palliative care services by improving governance to refine models of palliative care and roll-out the services, ensuring they best support the needs of rural and regional patients.

The boost to governance means an additional 3.2 FTE will be employed to ensure high-quality palliative care in the regions that is patient centred and provided in the patient's place of choice.

The McGowan Government has earmarked \$6.3 million to fund community based services to be delivered predominantly through non-government organisations across the State.

Of this, \$2 million will be dedicated to rural and regional Western Australia to fund care services for patients who have a potential risk of admission to hospital or residential aged care requiring domiciliary homecare services.

The additional \$9 million investment will fund an extra 10 inpatient palliative care beds - filling an immediate gap in the northern metropolitan suburbs.

This will provide better access for patients and brings the service in line with levels available in the eastern metropolitan suburbs, and delivers on a recommendation from the Joint Select Committee Report on End of Life Choices.

Already in progress is a purpose-built, 38-bed residential aged and palliative care facility in Carnarvon, which the McGowan Government has allocated \$16.6 million towards.

Comments attributed to Premier Mark McGowan:

"The Government's expansion of palliative care services and inpatient beds will better support people of all ages with a life-limiting or terminal illness to live their lives as fully and comfortably as possible, giving them the best of end of life care and choice.

"We want to ensure our sickest and most vulnerable Western Australians are cared for comfortably, with dignity and close to home during their final stages of life.

"This is particularly reflected in the significant commitment to boost services in regional and remote Western Australia.

"I also recently visited Carnarvon Hospital where we've committed \$16.6 million towards a contemporary residential aged and palliative care facility for the Gascoyne, and I look forward to seeing its progress as it complements the service and care offered in the regions."

Comments attributed to Health Minister Roger Cook:

“The McGowan Government’s funding commitments mean we can engage clinicians across all regions to form specialist district palliative care teams where there is service need.

“This will see additional medical, nursing, allied health and Aboriginal health workers dedicated to providing palliative care on-the-ground in country WA and will enhance community based support across the State.

“We know it’s important for those in the final stages of their life to be surrounded by family and friends and that’s why \$3 million of this funding will be allocated to provide 24-hour nursing care via Telehealth.

“For those in regional areas, this funding will particularly ease the burden on travelling and discomfort, and enhance services and technology for better care at a community level.”

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