

9 July 2020

Mr Chris Tallentire MLA
Chair
Joint Select Committee on Palliative Care in Western Australia
Legislative Council Committee Office
18-32 Parliament Place
WEST PERTH 6005

Dear Mr Tallentire MLA

Submission on the terms of reference for the Inquiry into Palliative Care in Western Australia

Thank you for your invitation and the opportunity to provide a submission on the terms of reference for the Inquiry into Palliative Care in Western Australia (WA).

Amana Living is one of WA's largest providers of accommodation, care and services to older Western Australians. Originally established as Anglican Homes in 1962, we deliver a comprehensive range of aged care services across 13 residential care facilities, 2 transition care sites and home care services through a variety of programs. We serve over 5800 customers each year across all programs.

Delivering quality palliative care is a significant component of the care we provide to older Western Australians, primarily in residential care and also for recipients of high level home care packages, and we welcome this inquiry into the delivery of palliative care services in WA. The End of Life Choices Report noted that palliative care was the single largest issue examined during their inquiry. There was recognition that further work needs to be done in this area due to the existing barriers and limitations to effective end of life care, and 12 recommendations were made specifically addressing palliative care in the report.

We have considered the terms of reference for this Inquiry in line with the recommendations in the End of Life Choices report and the strong focus on palliative care, noting the importance of quality end of life care to the WA community. Outlined below are some suggestions for changes to the terms of reference.

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TERMS OF REFERENCE

(2) That the Joint Select Committee inquire into and report on -

Existing Term of Reference

(a) the progress in relation to palliative care, in particular implementation of recommendations of the Joint Select Committee into End of Life Choices

In addition to examining the progress with implementation of the recommendations in the End of Life Choices report, it is suggested that the Joint Select Committee also review the effectiveness of these recommendations in addressing the issues associated with palliative care that were identified in the report. This will ensure a more thorough and comprehensive examination of the recommendations and the extent to which they have addressed the key issues. Therefore, it is recommended that this term of reference be modified as follows:

Proposed Term of Reference

(a) the progress in relation to palliative care, in particular implementation of recommendations of the Joint Select Committee into End of Life Choices *and their effectiveness.*

Existing Term of Reference

(b) the delivery of services associated with palliative care funding announcements in 2019-2020.

The palliative care funding announcements in 2019-2020 made available \$41 million which was allocated by the WA government to regional areas through the WA Country Health Services (WACHS), for consultations and for a residential palliative care facility in Carnarvon.

The End of Life Choices report highlighted the importance of end of life care and identified gaps in the delivery of palliative care. Although the National Partnership Agreement for Comprehensive Palliative Care in Aged Care Consultative meeting on 14 February 2020 identified challenges and opportunities to address issues with the delivery of palliative care services in WA, it is unclear how the funding allocated to date has, or will be, directed to addressing these issues.

The key challenges that have been identified in WA include:

- The ability to access palliative care services only through a GP referral. The engagement, capability and training of the GP workforce has been identified as impacting on the ease and promptness of accessing palliative care in WA. Access to services should be expanded to include referral via a nurse practitioner and capacity for self-referral;
- Choice of a palliative care service provider is restricted, as there is only one community palliative care provider in WA – the Silver Chain Association. There should be more options available to consumers to support and facilitate choice and ease of access to palliative care services;

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- Resourcing of palliative care including access to services, choice of provider, availability of qualified personnel and level of expertise of providers.

Therefore, it is recommended that this term of reference be expanded and that the Joint Select Committee review:

Proposed Term of Reference

(b) the current resourcing for palliative care, including the effectiveness of funding allocated in 2019 -20 in addressing gaps in service delivery.

Existing Term of Reference

(c) the delivery of palliative care services into regional and remote areas

As a provider of residential and home care services in Kalgoorlie and surrounding areas, we have first-hand experience of the complexities associated with accessing adequate and appropriate palliative care services in remote areas, which include level of expertise, 24/7 coverage, timely access to care and the availability of culturally appropriate services for Aboriginal people. We fully support this term of reference and suggest that it is expanded to take into consideration both:

Proposed Term of Reference

(c) the delivery of services and the adequacy of funding of palliative care services into regional and remote areas.

Existing Term of Reference

(d) the progress on ensuring greater equity of access to palliative care services between metropolitan and regional areas

Equity of access is a major issue for the delivery of palliative care services in WA and is impacted by a multitude of factors including adequacy of funding, unmet and/or growing demand, models of care and their suitability, reach to more consumers. This is reflected in several recommendations in the End of Life Choices report pertaining to palliative care that refer to access related issues, such as:

Recommendation 8: *'adequate funding to provide for growing demand'*;

Recommendation 9: *'accessibility of each of the models (inpatient, consultative and community) across the state'*;

Recommendation 10: *'unmet demand for palliative care.....with the aim of making those services available to more Western Australians'*;

Recommendation 13: *'ensure regional palliative care to be adequately funded to meet demand'*.

Equity of access should be examined at a broader and more holistic level. It should be considered in the context of location, that is metropolitan and regional service provision, as well as across the main palliative care service sectors of health, aged care and community

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care. Location and sector delivery both impact on equity of access and it is recommended that this term of reference be expanded to:

Proposed Term of Reference

(d) the progress on ensuring greater equity of access to palliative care services *across the health, aged and community care sectors* and between metropolitan and regional areas.

CONCLUSION

The Government is committed to ensuring the highest quality end of life and palliative care for all Western Australians. The Inquiry into Palliative Care in Western Australia presents an excellent opportunity for the Joint Select Committee to conduct a review of the current status of palliative care services in WA, including examining existing barriers and gaps to the delivery of quality end of life and palliative care.

The changes to the terms of reference that are suggested in this submission are aimed at enabling a more comprehensive examination of the strategies that have been implemented and the funding that has been allocated, to improve palliative care service delivery in Western Australia, in line with this objective.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments and recommendations. I agree to the publication of this submission from Amana Living Incorporated.

Yours sincerely



STEPHANIE BUCKLAND
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

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