



PARLIAMENT OF NEW SOUTH WALES
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT

Notice

19 October 2017

LAKE MACQUARIE PALLIATIVE CARE SERVICES

Ms SONIA HORNERY (Wallsend) (12:09):

I support the motion moved by the member for Lake Macquarie. The motion was placed on the Business Paper at the beginning of the year and, given that the Calvary Mater Hospital is in my electorate, I wanted to speak on it. I read the Business Paper every day and noticed that the motion had fallen off it. However, I am pleased the motion has now been moved, I have an opportunity to speak on it and the speech I wrote six months ago is still relevant. I support not only the motion but also the palliative care round table that was held in my local area.

I thank the Minister for Health because originally I was told that I could not attend the round table. Indeed, I had a disagreement with a Government member—which is unusual—who was not going to allow me to attend despite Calvary Mater Hospital being in my electorate. However, the Minister for Health intervened and other Labor members and I were permitted to attend the palliative care round table held in our area. I thank the Minister for his intervention. The round table was successful—indeed, invaluable—and it would have been disappointing if the Government had not allowed a member to attend a round table held on her own patch.

The member for Lake Macquarie is quite correct in saying that it is great to have a nine-to-five service but that he and his constituents are entitled to equity and should have a 24/7 service. People who live on the Lake Macquarie peninsula miss out on many services. They should have access to the same services as those who live in Wallsend. All members are aware that the Mater hospital is a wonderful facility. It would be the worst news possible for a person and a family to hear a terminal diagnosis. There is an unimaginable flood of emotions when someone is given the news that they will not get better. We would all have had some experience of this with a family member or loved one.

At the Calvary Mater Hospital the specialist palliative care focuses on supporting patients who are approaching or reaching the end of their life and aims to help them achieve dignity, comfort and to maximise the quality of life for the patient and those they love. They are very important words. Specialist palliative care does this by engaging with the primary treatment team, the patient's support network and the patients themselves. They offer their services on an inpatient basis or with home visits if necessary. That is important. People in Wallsend can avail themselves of that service but it is not available to everyone in New South Wales. The former member for Newcastle, Bryce Gaudry, has also suffered. He has stated:

Palliative care really is to ease people on a journey all of us will go on.

Bryce and Barbara have become very involved with this cause, and I am thankful for that as they are great ambassadors for us. I conclude by expressing my support for this excellent motion. I supported it six months ago and I support it now.