

MEDIA RELEASE

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PLEA FOR GOVERNMENT TO “WAKE-UP”

Ruth Forrest MLC today expressed her confusion as to why sleep apnoea pensioners on the North West Coast were being questioned about pre-paid funeral plans by the Department of Health.

“I find it difficult to relate the relevance of a pensioners financial situation to the degree of prepaid funeral money, particularly when even the Federal Government exempt pre paid funeral plans from asset tests” said Ms Forrest.

“This whole situation has gone too far. To consider the existence of a pre-paid funeral plan, money which cannot be withdrawn for any other purpose, to be eligible for State Government Assistance for their sleep apnoea is ludicrous” said a puzzled Ms Forrest.

“Now that the State Government Election is over the Government must act to provide eligible persons on the North West Coast and West Coast with the same State Government Assistance that it provides to those living in the South and North of the State” said Ms Forrest.

“The Labor Government have acknowledged this situation has been known to them for four years – four years is a long enough period in which to fix this discrepancy” Ms Forrest said.

Robyn Long has just been diagnosed with sleep apnoea and has contacted the Health Department about her eligibility to obtain a CPAP machine. She has been questioned by the Department as to whether she has a pre-paid funeral plan or not as part of the criteria to ascertain whether she is eligible for State Government Assistance or not. Mrs Long’s husband, Ralph, has also been diagnosed with sleep apnoea and after a long dispute with the former Health Minister, David Llewellyn he has been provided with a CPAP machine. Mrs Long’s husband is at a loss to understand why and how the State Government can differentiate between him and his wife.

Robyn and Ralph can be contacted on 64911872 and are willing to speak with the media concerning this.

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For further information, please phone 0419 879 524.