

CONSTITUENT QUESTION

House of Assembly

ASKED BY: Janie Finlay MP

ANSWERED BY: Hon Jacquie Petrusma MP
Minister for Health

QUESTION:

My question is from a constituent in Bass, Rob Hammond, a true gentleman, a warrior and icon of the north-east. Unfortunately, Rob lives with neuroendocrine cancer. He has been campaigning for years for a NET (neuroendocrine tumour) nurse in Tasmania. Rob shared with me last week with deep sadness that Australia's NET nurse, Joyce Bonello, has suddenly passed away. She was a loved NET nurse and an extraordinary person. She had an enormous heart and had unwavering care for NETs patients across Australia. With her passing, Rob and others in Tasmania now feel alone and continue to feel misunderstood. Neuroendocrine cancer is the seventh most common cancer in Australia, yet many people, including healthcare professionals, are unaware of it and misdiagnose, leading to delays of up to seven years for some patients to be diagnosed. The question from Rob is: when will you do the right thing and implement a NET nurse for Tasmanians?

ANSWER:

I would like to express my sincere condolences on the passing of Joyce Bonello. As a Registered Nurse myself, I understand how important nurses are for patients, especially for those suffering from cancer. I also acknowledge Mr Hammond's ongoing advocacy for patients with neuroendocrine cancer.

The Department of Health is currently developing a statewide Tasmanian Cancer Plan to guide the development of Tasmanian cancer services and support the future needs of the community over the next five years.

The plan will assess current service, workforce, and infrastructure provision, and establish the priorities and future direction for cancer services across all domains including prevention, screening, diagnosis, treatment, research, and palliative care.

Importantly, this will consider provision for all cancers, including rare cancers such as neuroendocrine.

Community and stakeholder consultation has now commenced, providing an opportunity for people to have their say and share their experiences and suggestions.

We want to hear from anyone who is involved in cancer care, including key organisations representing specific cancer types, clinicians, researchers, people that have or had cancer, and their friends and family.

This feedback will be essential in ensuring the State's cancer services support the delivery of the right care, in the right place, at the right time.

For further details on the Tasmanian Cancer Plan and to provide feedback, visit www.health.tas.gov.au/tasmanian-cancer-plan.

Development of the plan is being guided by the Tasmanian Cancer Network, which was established this year and brings together key clinical and health leaders from the public, private and community sectors.

It will also align and respond to the Australian Cancer Plan released last year by the Federal Department of Health and Aged Care setting out a national strategy for cancer care.



Hon Jacquie Petrusma MP
Minister for Health

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