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BY:.....

**Deputy Premier of Western Australia
Minister for Health; Tourism**

Our Ref: 25-24495

Mr Will Hallahan
Executive Officer
Palliative Care WA (inc)
15 Bedbrook Place
SHENTON PARK WA 6008

Dear Mr Hallahan

Thank you for your letter of 8 December 2011, addressed to Hon Dr Kim Hames MLA, Minister for Health, enclosing the Palliative Care WA (Inc) submission to the Western Australian State Budget for the year ending June 2013. The Minister has asked me to respond to you on his behalf.

I acknowledge receipt of this submission and the issues raised that will be noted as part of the Western Australian State Budget process. I note the three priority areas: Carers, Volunteers and Advance Care Planning identified for investment.

The "Learn Now Live Well" carers' training program developed and implemented from 2003-2006 with the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing has been recognised by the Department of Health (DOH) as a successful training model for carers. I am pleased to advise that the DOH's WA Cancer and Palliative Care Network has this year allocated funding to an external organisation to review and revive this important carers' training program and is awaiting feedback of the outcomes.

I note your request for funding for palliative care volunteering and specifically for volunteer managers. This Government values the important role of volunteering especially the practical help they provide to people living with advanced illness, their carers and families. I can advise that the DOH has ongoing contractual relationships with non government organisations to provide palliative care services. All contracts are "Commercial in Confidence" but within contractual agreements service providers have the scope to prioritise and employ the mix of multidisciplinary staff team members they require to provide optimal palliative care.

I am pleased to advise that DOH has recognised the need to develop a model for integration of an advance care planning process within the Western Australian health system in both community and inpatient settings. The WA Cancer & Palliative Care Network has dedicated staff time to conduct a project to develop a sustainable model. Funding has also been allocated to an external organisation to pilot an advance care planning project in the community setting.

I note your request for resources beyond June 2012 for the important programs and initiatives of our Government election commitment Palliative Services Project Fund. The outcomes of the service evaluations currently being undertaken of the Rural Model for Palliative Care implementation in WA Country Health Services, the Paediatric Palliative Care service based at Princess Margaret Hospital and the metropolitan palliative care Area Health Teams will inform decision-making about recurrent funding needs.

I note that seed funding was allocated from 2008-2011 to assist Palliative Care WA to establish the organisation infrastructure. I commend the work and achievements of Palliative Care WA to promote and advocate for palliative care in Western Australia.

I wish to assure you that the Government has an ongoing commitment to fund palliative care services so that people with a terminal illness can access quality palliative care and have the choice to be cared for in their local community and in their own homes.

You may like to contact Ms Rhonda Coleman, Director, WA Cancer & Palliative Care Network on 9222 6884 to arrange a meeting to progress discussion about the ongoing need for palliative care in this state.

Yours sincerely



Ian Wight-Pickin
Chief of Staff

- 4 JAN 2012