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BY:

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

Our Ref: 25-17761

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

Dear Mr Hallahan

Thank you for letter of 18 January 2011 regarding the Palliative Care WA submission to the Western Australian State Budget 2011-12. I acknowledge receipt of this submission and the important issues raised and advise that it will be noted as part of the Western Australian State Budget process.

The Government has an ongoing commitment to fund specialist palliative care services in both the public and private health sector. I am pleased to commend the long standing role that non government organisations play in providing palliative care services throughout Western Australia (WA). The Government is indebted to the commitment of these organisations to maintaining quality palliative care services for public patients. I am advised that contractual relationships with all non government organisations are "Commercial in Confidence" and that each organisation can discuss contractual concerns and business case proposals with their respective Area Health Service contract managers.

The blueprint known as the WA Health Clinical Services Framework 2010-2020 (CSF2010) describes the Government's vision of a public health system delivering quality services and meeting the demands of a growing and ageing population. Under this blueprint the Government has committed a total of \$4.1 billion to build new hospitals, upgrade existing hospitals and improve the access to care over the next 10 years. These improvements include the construction of the Fiona Stanley Hospital, the expansion of general hospitals at Joondalup, Swan District, Armadale and Rockingham, and the regional centres of Albany, Bunbury, Geraldton, Kalgoorlie, Port Hedland and Broome, which will provide more services closer to where people live.

I note in your submission that you are proposing for 10 palliative care beds at Rockingham General Hospital (RGH) in the short term and that this could occupy vacant building space. I am advised by Nicole Feely, Chief Executive, South Metropolitan Area Health Service, that this it is not part of the CSF 2010 and there is no vacant space available at RGH. The numbers that you are proposing would therefore need to be incorporated in the future strategic planning of the expansion of services and hospital facilities.

The Palliative Care Network works collaboratively with both the South and North Metropolitan Area Health Services and will co-facilitate a Palliative Care Clinical Service Framework Implementation Planning Workshop in late February. Palliative care clinicians will, at this workshop, have a legitimate opportunity to contribute to future clinical service framework planning.

The State Cabinet approved funding of \$14 million until June 2012 for the Palliative Services Project Fund. Already the six key programs are improving awareness of palliative care needs and access to specialist palliative care services. Of special note:

- the commitment of all seven Western Australian Country Health Service (WACHS) regions to implementing the Rural Palliative Care Model;
- the development of a State-wide paediatric palliative care team based at Princess Margaret Hospital;
- The State-wide implementation of the "Liverpool Care Pathway for the Dying" in both rural and metropolitan hospitals which is empowering generalist health professionals to provide best practice care of people in the last few days of life;
- The work undertaken to establish the Palliative Ambulatory Service based at Bethesda Hospital in the north and SJOG Murdoch Community Hospice in the south. This new service will provide palliative care consultation in secondary hospitals, mental health facilities, correctional services, and residential aged care facilities that lack access to specialist palliative care; and
- a model to guide the care of Aboriginal people in WA, soon for State-wide consultation.

I note that the initiatives of the Palliative Services Project Fund are aligned with the recently AHMC endorsed National Palliative Care Strategy. I anticipate that outcomes of Palliative Services Project Fund programs may inform decisions on best operational models for the future.

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.

Yours sincerely



Dr Kim Hames MLA
DEPUTY PREMIER
MINISTER FOR HEALTH

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