

27 February 2008

Ms Helen Walker  
Palliative Care Network Coordinator  
Department of Health Western Australia  
1<sup>st</sup> Floor, B Block  
189 Royal Street  
EAST PERTH WA 6004

Dear Helen

### **Model of Care Discussion Draft – January 2008**

Thank you, on behalf of Palliative Care Western Australia Inc, for providing an opportunity for this organisation to furnish feedback on the *Palliative Care in Western Australia: Model of Care Proposal Discussion Draft January 2008*.

Palliative Care Western Australia Inc is supportive of the Proposal, in particular those elements which speak to improved and more equitable access to quality care for Western Australians through:

- consistent referral criteria and protocols for specialist services
- more equal distribution of service resources within Perth and in rural areas and more transparent and systematic population-based funding structures
- expanding services for those patients with non-malignant life limiting illnesses
- orienting services to address the needs of a range of smaller special-needs populations
- outlining the role of health promoting and preventative interventions
- emphasising the importance of palliative care services working with a range of primary health care providers and other partners within their catchment areas to develop the broader community's capacity to support people dealing with dying, death and bereavement
- suggesting the formation of area health palliative care teams to coordinate services, provide better continuity for consumers and consolidate research and education efforts.

In relation to health promotion, Palliative Care Western Australia Inc feels this is a critical element of any palliative care model of care, and would welcome an opportunity to work with the Department to further develop it.

We are particularly pleased to see that the Proposal recognises the critical role played by regional health management authorities and hope that this foreshadows work to ensure they are committed to the model of care.

The Proposal accurately summarises the issues faced by rural Western Australians in accessing quality palliative care. Palliative Care Western Australia Inc welcomes the roll-out of the Medical Specialist Outreach Assistance Program, but suggests worthwhile development of rural services might best occur in the context of formalised supportive partnerships between rural and metropolitan services, partnerships which facilitate multidisciplinary support for rural clinicians and a right of access to higher levels of service for patients with needs which cannot be effectively met in the country. Metropolitan services may need additional resources to provide this support.

On behalf of all at Palliative Care Western Australia Inc, I congratulate you on this significant piece of work, which has the potential, should it be accepted by the State Health Executive Forum, to establish a sustainable and equitable system of quality of end of life care in Western Australia. We look forward to working with you and the Department to achieve this vision.

Yours sincerely

Will Hallahan  
Executive Officer