

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

### WRITTEN QUESTION

Mr Guyula to the Minister for Territory Families:

#### **Review of the NT Pensioner & Carer Concession Scheme**

During the review of the Pensioner and Carer Concession Scheme will there be consideration given to the higher needs of pensioners in certain very remote areas, such as Nhulunbuy?

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As part of the review of Northern Territory Pensioner and Carer Concession Scheme (the Scheme) during July and August 2017, Territory Families held a community forum in Nhulunbuy. The forum was attended by 12 people.

In addition, Territory Families staff conducted discussions with people in 12 remote communities across the Northern Territory including, Hermannsburg, Palumpa, Lajamanu, Kalkarindji, Peppimenarti, Ti Tree, Yuendumu, Ngukur, Gunbalanya, Angurugu, Maningrida and Wurrumiyanga regarding their experience with the current Scheme.

Staff asked the following questions:

- Are you a member of the Scheme?
- If you are a member, what concessions do you get?
- What ideas do you have for concessions that may help people in remote communities?
- How can we make it easier for people in remote communities to access concessions?
- Is there anything else you would like to say about concessions?

Feedback from remote communities included:

- Most people selected Power and Water as the two concessions they receive.
- Food and groceries should be included.
- The need for intrastate travel, including the Bodhi Bus and ferry (Tiwi).
- The need for people to have more information about the Scheme that is provided in local language.
- Online information is hard to access.
- Many of the benefits offered through the Scheme are not relevant to people in remote areas.
- Many people do not have the required identification to join the Scheme.

Territory Families is drafting a report on feedback from the consultation process that will be used in preparing advice to Government on reforms that can be made to the Scheme. Consideration will be given regarding the uptake and targeting of concessions in remote communities as part of this review.