

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

WRITTEN QUESTION

Mr Guyula to the Minister for Health:

Aged Care and Palliative Health Services and Facilities in Nhulunbuy

- 1. Please advise of the current provision of aged care facilities and services within Nhulunbuy for residents of the Nhulunbuy community and future proposals to improve them, including a timescale for any improvements.**

Top End Health Service (TEHS) Primary Health Care provides Aged Care Assessment, Community Allied Health Services, and Community Equipment services.

Staff Resourcing dedicated to the East Arnhem region includes:

- one Team Leader
- one physiotherapist
- two occupational therapists, and
- two speech pathologists

All six staff members provide general community allied health services including completing assessments and prescribing mobility and Activities of Daily Living equipment and overseeing home modifications for aged clients residing throughout the East Arnhem region.

The use of telehealth technology is currently being trialled by ACAT assessors in order to determine the impact on timeliness of assessment and related service responses in the Laynhapuy Homelands.

Gove District Hospital is funded by the Commonwealth to provide the Multi-Purpose Service – integrated residential respite care to aged and disability patients. Patients can be admitted to the respite unit at Gove Hospital for a duration of up to two weeks, this allows carers and the care recipient a short-term break from their usual care arrangements.

- 2. Please advise of the current palliative care options and any plans to improve the availability of palliative care within Nhulunbuy for residents of the Nhulunbuy community.**

TEHS Territory Palliative Care services coordinate the following options for East Arnhem residents with a strong preference to have patients/client at home for end of life care.

- Community based palliative care nurse (business hours) to assess and assist in comfort care plans
- After hours phone service to both medical teams and families for assistance where required
- When Gove District Hospital has capacity, and appropriate supports are available, admission to the General Ward is also an option
- Telehealth is utilised for family or community counselling or debriefing sessions.

Both the TEHS Aged Care and Palliative Care Services have no plans to change the current arrangements, however, once the Nhulunbuy Flexible Aged Care Facility, funded by the Australian Government and operated by Australian Rural and Remote Community Services (ARRCS) is operating, services will need review.