



*the bushland shire*

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# **SUPPLEMENTARY BUSINESS PAPER**

## **GENERAL MEETING**

**Wednesday, 15 August, 2012  
at 6:30 PM**

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**13 PALLIATIVE CARE PETITION**

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I have recently been contacted by Dr Yvonne McMaster, a retired palliative care doctor, seeking Council's support in promoting her petition to improve NSW Government funding for palliative care services across the state.

Dr McMaster aims to gain over 10,000 signatures to her petition and have the issue of palliative care funding debated in the NSW Parliament.

Dr McMaster has requested Council's assistance by allowing her to place copies of her petition at Council facilities such as our libraries and community centres.

**RECOMMENDATION**

THAT Council receive and note Dr McMaster's request to promote her palliative care petition.

NICK BERMAN  
Mayor

File Reference: F2004/06066  
Document Number: D01991869

**Attachments:**

1. Palliative care petition - request for Council support

File Reference: F2004/06066  
Document Number: D01991869

**From:** Pall Care 2012 [pallcare2012@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, 28 July 2012 11:34 AM  
**To:** HSC  
**Subject:** Campaign to improve funding for palliative care in NSW  
**Attachments:** Palliative Care Petition 2012 .pdf; ATT00001.htm; Jillian Skinner Palliative care funding - 10.8.11 .pdf; ATT00002.htm; Explanation 9 July .PDF; ATT00003.htm

Mayor Nick Berman  
The Council of the Shire of Hornsby  
HORNSBY

Dear Councillor Berman,

I am writing to ask whether your Council could find a way to support our campaign to improve NSW government funding for palliative care services.

I am a retired palliative care doctor who started to advocate for palliative care when I realised that the services are not able to meet the needs of all patients and families who need their specialised help. I ran a successful campaign last year to have funding returned to palliative care in northern Sydney. This included a petition asking for the return of the funds but **also to improve palliative care throughout NSW**. The community just rose up en masse. The petition collected 24,000 signatures and the State Government responded by restoring the funds and promising to improve services throughout NSW (see attached media release). In the June 2012 Budget the NSW Government gave only \$5M to palliative care. This is less than a tenth of what it will take to provide equitable services throughout NSW.

Whilst people in rural areas are suffering most the entire community requires better funding for palliative care. Due in part to our ageing population the demand for palliative care has increased greatly. Over the ten year period 1999 - 2009, the number of admissions for palliative care increased by 56%. Yet state funding has not increased since 2007, until the tiny boost of \$5M this year. The wonderful palliative care doctors and nurses are stretched to the limit and there are too few community nurses. We also need better community supports to help people to be looked after at home, which is where most people prefer to be and they need 24/7 PC cover. Specialist doctors and nurses must be able to visit acute hospitals and nursing homes to give symptom control and support. We have to persuade the State Government to commit more funds for the care of people with life-limiting illnesses like cancer, motor neurone disease, heart and kidney failure. And we need better bereavement care.

So now we need a big, fast campaign to culminate early in November to convince Treasury that the community really cares about the issue.

The Premier has said that anyone who collects more than 10,000 signatures on a petition will have the problems they raise debated in Parliament. This is how we had the funding restored for northern Sydney, that is how we will get better funding for all of NSW. A huge number of signatures will convince Treasury to release the funds that are needed.

**I am hoping that you will help by collecting signatures in libraries and community centres, and anywhere you think appropriate.** Can you think of anyone you could FORWARD this email on to who might be prepared to help in the same way? Some of Council's staff may well have come in contact with palliative care and may feel able to assist. Any contacts you can give me will help and what we do will be so greatly appreciated by those who

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have so little help as they approach the end of their lives.

I need to find committed people in every suburb and every council area who will help.

I will also contact local papers and local radio stations and Local Members & go & see them. I am writing to you to ask you if you can help, at least just print the petition and sign it and get some others to sign or think who else or how else we could get more signatures.

I am asking people to print out several copies of the attached petition and collect signatures wherever they can.

PETITIONS are only valid if signatures are on the **FRONT OF EACH PAGE** with the Petition Statement and Request at the top. Signatures on extra BLANK sheets are INVALID (as are photocopies, faxes & Scanned or emailed copies of the signed sheets). So it is always best to leave extra copies with each collector and at each site. They must be POSTED back, not faxed or scanned. Petitions should be returned by 24 October 2012. I attach a notice to this effect which may prove helpful.

Anything at all that you can do to help will be greatly appreciated.

The following link gives people an insight into palliative care problems in Tasmania. However the situation in many parts of NSW is far worse than that.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2012-06-15/health-injection/4074226>

I also attach a brief explanation (double clic on this to print it) of why we have to do it all again which can be freely used or adapted.

Here too is our new website which shows the current signature count. It will be exciting to watch how it grows:

[http://morefundsforpalliativecare.wordpress.com/?blogsub=confirmed#blog\\_subscription-2](http://morefundsforpalliativecare.wordpress.com/?blogsub=confirmed#blog_subscription-2)

Warmest regards

Dr Yvonne McMaster

PS: Double-click on each attachment below to open and print it as a separate document.

13/08/2012

**PALLIATIVE CARE FUNDING AND SERVICES – PETITION**

Dear Friends,

You may well ask why we have to do this all again! You remember that last year we mounted a great campaign to have the funds restored for palliative care in northern Sydney? That petition also asked the government to improve services throughout NSW. People worked really hard collecting signatures. In all 24,000 were collected. The Government responded by restoring funding to northern Sydney as requested and promised to improve services throughout NSW.

Since then there was a taskforce on which I sat to advise the government about the needs. We found that the needs are very great. They are greatest in the rural areas but more funding is also needed in metropolitan areas particularly for people in acute hospitals and in nursing homes.

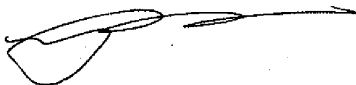
The NSW State Budget gave palliative care only an extra \$5M. That is less than a tenth of what I believe is needed. I understand why they did this. With the great financial stringencies they couldn't justify such a big expenditure when Treasury isn't convinced that it is necessary.

So this time we will be collecting signatures everywhere. All over NSW, in hospitals and palliative care units, in doctors' surgeries and chemist shops, support groups and clubs. I will promote this all over NSW. When the petitions are handed in (October 24) I will separate out the different country towns and Sydney Metropolitan area. This will demonstrate to the government and in particular Treasury that the need is state-wide. The government starts budget discussions in November. Then we will be rewarded in June next year - at last!

Ghandi said: "First they ignore you, then they laugh at you, then they fight you, then you win."

Any help you can give by collecting signatures will be such a help to those living and dying without adequate palliative care.

Many thanks,



Dr Yvonne McMaster  
(Retired Palliative Care Consultant)



**The Hon Jillian Skinner MP**  
**Minister for Health**  
**Minister for Medical Research**

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**MEDIA RELEASE**

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10 August, 2011

**PALLIATIVE CARE FUNDS RESTORED**

More than \$1 million in funding for palliative care services in Northern Sydney Local Health District, cut last year by the previous Labor government, will be restored, the Minister for Health, Jillian Skinner, announced tonight.

The pledge came after a petition, signed by more than 23,000 people, was tabled in Parliament, protesting against cuts to palliative care provided by HammondCare Health and Hospitals.

"I have a very strong personal commitment to the value of palliative care for terminally ill patients and their families – whether it is provided in hospital or at home," Minister Skinner said.

"I am very pleased that we can restore funding for this critical service for our most vulnerable patients," she said.

"I joined my parliamentary colleagues throughout the north shore and northern beaches electorates in fighting these cuts inflicted by the former Labor Government back in 2009.

"I was very disappointed that a government could neglect a service that can improve the quality of the last months of a person's life and allow them to die with dignity.

"Under this government, palliative care will not be disregarded in the same way as it was under Labor, and the first step to fixing this problem is to restore funding to services in northern Sydney."

In addition to restoring the funding for Hammond healthcare services in Northern Sydney, Mrs Skinner committed to increasing palliative care services across the state.

"NSW Health will map current palliative care services against population needs; investigate population planning tools used in other jurisdictions to assist in future service planning; examine the current workforce and identify any gaps, and examine training and resources available to support volunteers, carers and health workers," Mrs Skinner said.

"This is an exciting announcement because it again gives palliative care the importance it deserves in our community," she said.

"People deserve support and services which help them preserve dignity when they are facing end of life issues. This funding should never have been removed by the previous government."

**MEDIA: Kate Benson 0467 735 357**

**ATTACHMENT 1 - ITEM 13**

### PALLIATIVE CARE FUNDING AND SERVICES

The Honourable the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly of NSW.

The petition of residents of New South Wales brings to the attention of the House:

- Gross deficiencies exist in the availability of palliative care services for adults and children in many parts of the State, particularly in regional and rural areas but also in acute hospitals, aged-care facilities and for patients in their own homes.
- There are inadequate funds available to support the training of sufficient palliative care workers (nursing, medical and allied health) to service the existing & rapidly increasing need.

The undersigned petitioners therefore ask the Legislative Assembly to:

- provide for sufficient palliative care services to meet the existing and anticipated future demands for such services in all areas of the State and in all types of institutions or other places where such services are required; and
- Provide additional funds to support training of palliative care workers.

NAME	SIGNATURE	ADDRESS

Please post signed petitions to: Dr Yvonne McMaster 66 Carrington Road, Wahroonga NSW 2076

ATTACHMENT 1 - ITEM 13