



# Trish Doyle MP

## Member for Blue Mountains



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### **New South Wales Parliament Legislative Assembly**

### **Palliative Care in Orange NSW**

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I support the petition on palliative care services from the people of Orange and thank the member for Orange for bringing this matter of public importance to this place.

We cannot stress enough the importance of holistic palliative care to provide the best quality of life possible up to the point of death. There is concern about the inadequacy of existing palliative care services across the State but in particular in outer urban and regional areas, such as Orange.

Palliative care aims to provide relief from pain and suffering and provide care and support to the affected person to enable him or her to live as actively as possible. At the heart of palliative care is a person-centred approach. Best practice involves multidisciplinary engagement where the team members work with affected persons, their families and carers to achieve a result based on each person's wishes.

Many Australian surveys demonstrate that the majority of people wish to die at home in the presence of their loved ones. Unfortunately, far too many people are denied this opportunity, with less than 15 per cent of people in New South Wales able to access the support and care needed to die at home.

The answer lies partly in providing access to adequate and well-funded palliative care. Far too often we are told that there are no resources to provide the level of care that our ageing population requires. Yet a NSW Health report entitled "Fact of Death Analysis" shows that on average in their last year of life a person will spend 40 days in hospital at a cost of \$1 million.

For the third or fourth time in this place I acknowledge Dr Yvonne McMaster, who has been working with her palliative physician and data analyst colleague Dr Anthony Ireland to show how an investment in community-based palliative care would provide net savings for the State and at the same time offer dying people the end-of-life care they are calling for.

I cannot take part in this discussion without noting the wonderfully skilled and caring staff in palliative care within my community at the Blue Mountains Palliative Support Service and at Nepean and Blue Mountains hospitals.

I pay tribute to the people I met in Orange: Sue Duchnaj, Bernard Fitzimons, Joe Maric, Annette Mears, Robyn Maw, Peter and Helen Brown, Gail Pringle and all other locals for their relentless campaign to secure a designated palliative care unit in Orange.

I implore the New South Wales Government to make a direct and targeted investment in palliative care for the long suffering people of Orange and everyone in outer urban and regional areas to ensure better outcomes for the dying and relieve pressure on our already over-stretched emergency departments.