

VOLUNTARY ASSISTED DYING ACT — IMPLEMENTATION

300. Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE to the Minister for Health:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's landmark legislation that will give Western Australians who are terminally ill the right to end their suffering at a time of their choosing. Can the minister update the house on the process that has been underway for the past 18 months to implement voluntary assisted dying, ahead of its introduction next Thursday on 1 July?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

I thank the member for the question. This is the last opportunity we have before the legislation is enacted and comes into play on 1 July. It is a very exciting moment in Western Australia's history. In December 2019, we passed the voluntary assisted dying legislation. Can I just take this moment to note that today, the South Australian Parliament has also passed voluntary assisted dying legislation. It is now the third jurisdiction to implement this important law reform and we welcome it to the fold. Early last week, the WA voluntary assisted dying implementation leadership team had its final meeting to finalise arrangements for this law to commence on 1 July. I want to thank everyone in the leadership team for the work that they have done to bring these laws into being. Through the engagement with stakeholders, the implementation leadership team has undertaken several projects to ensure a smooth transition process come 1 July.

I will outline the key areas. The voluntary assisted dying care navigator service will put in place the people who will be charged with the responsibility of assisting people to navigate the complex route that they will have to participate in. There are practitioner guidelines, and I want to thank the Victorian government for all the guidance it provided us with, as we used a lot of its base documents for providing information. The WA Voluntary Assisted Dying Board's ICT system will assist practitioners, regulators and everyone involved in the process to have the proper information technology support. The WA voluntary assisted dying statewide pharmacy service has been developed to ensure safe and appropriate access to the voluntary assisted dying substance. The implementation conference, which I have reported on before, was held on 22 and 23 May. Nearly 200 people attended the conference in person and online to get information about how they could participate in the process. Medical practitioners and nurse practitioners seeking to participate in the voluntary assisted dying process were able to check on their eligibility. I am pleased to say that we now have 78 practitioners who have applied to access the training. The first of those completed their training earlier this week, and 25 are currently involved in the course at the moment to be involved in the voluntary assisted dying process.

[Interruption.]

Mr R.H. COOK: This is the last time that we will have an opportunity to acknowledge the great work that has gone into putting these laws in place. On behalf of everyone in Parliament, I thank the implementation leadership group and everyone within the department who has worked to bring our laws into being. I wish everyone all the very best as they take these laws forward from 1 July.

The SPEAKER: Attorney General, I hope you have found the off button for your iPad.