



Amanda Rishworth MP

Member for Kingston

APPROPRIATION BILL (NO. 1) 2008-2009

Consideration in Detail

16 July 2008

[Ms RISHWORTH](#) (Kingston) (4.31 p.m.)—I want to discuss today the issue of cancer and ask questions directly of the minister. We know that cancer is Australia's biggest killer, with more than 38,000 deaths and 98,000 people diagnosed with cancer each year. It is particularly of concern in my electorate. One in three men and one in four women will be directly affected by cancer before the age of 75. I was very pleased to see that this budget marks the beginning of a new era to meet the challenges of fighting cancer head-on, by a strong national effort aimed at producing the best outcomes in cancer care through focusing on prevention, early intervention and evidence based cancer treatment to reduce the burden of this major killer. I am particularly pleased to see a number of specific initiatives in the budget and I will ask the minister to elaborate on these when I have finished my remarks. I note that there is a boost of \$87.4 million for the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program to continue free bowel cancer screening tests for all Australians turning 55 to 65 and to extend it to all Australians turning 50 between 2008 and 2010. Of all the cancers, this is one where perhaps we can make the most difference. I have been speaking with people in my electorate who have been affected by bowel cancer and who certainly welcome this measure in the budget. Bowel cancer claims more than 80 Australian lives each week. I am sure many of us in the House have been touched by someone who has lost a loved one or a friend to bowel cancer. It is also worth noting that, while the previous government delivered early funding for some of these screenings, they made absolutely no provision for bowel cancer screening in their forward estimates, which really raises the question of whether they were committed to this initiative at all. Had the Liberals and Nationals been elected, this program would have been scrapped, with no funding made available. That is certainly of concern to me and the constituents in my electorate. It is another failure of the coalition. I am pleased to see that the Rudd Labor government in this budget is forging ahead with the national bowel screening initiative. I also note that in the budget we provide \$50 million over three years for a focus on young people with cancer, and this is for the first time. CanTeen will establish youth cancer networks in Australia to improve the coordination of services, support and care for teenagers and young adults with cancer. I think this is particularly important. As I go around to the cancer support groups in my electorate, I notice that there are older individuals there, not young people. I do not believe that is because young people are not faced with cancer; it is more likely to do with the fact that they do not feel comfortable in a setting like that. So I am very pleased to see this initiative. The networks will include six new adolescent and young adult cancer centres in mainland states. I am very interested in and very pleased with that initiative.

To ensure Australia remains internationally competitive and at the forefront of research and discovery regarding cancer, its origins, treatment and the care of people affected by cancer, funding has been allocated for a range of cancer research and treatment centres around the country. I was very pleased to see the allocation of \$15 million over three years for independent clinical trials of drugs and research into cancer treatment and care; \$50 million over three years for a comprehensive cancer centre, co-located with the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital in Sydney; \$15 million over five years to set up two dedicated prostate cancer research centres; and \$15 million over two years to help build a children's cancer centre at the Women's and Children's Hospital in Adelaide. I would like the minister for health to know that the cancer centre is of particular interest to me, and I really look forward to working with her to progress that.

In addition, there is funding of \$15 million over two years towards the establishment of the Olivia

Newton-John Cancer Centre at the Austin Hospital in Melbourne and \$5.1 million over three years for the operation of the National Centre for Gynaecological Cancers, under the auspices of Cancer Australia. I am looking forward to hearing more from the minister. *(Time expired)*