



STUART GRIMLEY MP

Member for Western Victoria
State Leader of Derryn Hinch's Justice Party

MEDIA RELEASE



Thursday 19 March, 2020

'2-Up' System for At-Risk In-Home Carers Needed

Stuart Grimley has asked the Government to implement a "2-up" system for at-risk in-home carers, as a result of a vicious attack in Geelong on an in-home aged care worker.

Mr Grimley asked the Health Minister (on behalf of the Minister for Ageing and Carers) if the Government would implement a '2-up' system – similar to that of police and ambulance officers - in situations where patients need assistance but their carers may feel uncomfortable or unsafe.

Mr Grimley said that if an in-home carer raises a concern to their employer about a patient becoming aggressive or similar, that the employer should be bound by law to ensure the safety of the carers, including the option to send two carers into a patients' home.

This followed contact between Mr Grimley's office and a Geelong man – Ross Yockins - who was stabbed eight times by an elderly man in 2018 after complaints were made that the patient was becoming aggressive. There reportedly wasn't enough funding to cover another carer to go with Mr Yockins to provide in-home care.

Mr Yockins praised WorkSafe who are still assisting him in recovering expenses, however rightfully is looking for a way to ensure this doesn't happen to an in-home carer ever again.

Mr Yockins is still affected by the incident; he has had two knee operations and can no longer kneel, has severed arteries in his forearm with numbness as a result, has continued issues in his neck where nerve damage occurred and has ongoing psychological difficulties. He continues to see an orthopaedic surgeon and psychologist.

Mr Grimley acknowledged that the in-home and aged care sectors are already excessively underfunded and the current Royal Commission may provide more solutions for in-home carer safety.

The Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality & Safety Interim Report (p63) was scathing on in-home care providers, saying they were rarely penalised for wrongdoing.

Quotes Attributable to Stuart Grimley MP:

"In the event that reports are made to an employer about aggressive or violent patients receiving in-home care, there should be the option for carers to be part of a '2-up' system.

No one should feel unsafe in their workplace and this includes those who are being subcontracted or are working casually to complete a job.

I hope the State Government can work with their Federal counterpart to ensure in-home carer safety is paramount.

Although Mr Yockins' case may not be commonplace, understandably he and I want to make sure in-home carers are not injured in their workplace."

Media Contact: Olivia Nicholls / Olivia.nicholls@parliament.vic.gov.au / 0459 419 755