



# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

## FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY INCLUSION  
Mr Michael Pettersson MLA (Chair), Miss Laura Nuttall MLA (Deputy Chair),  
Ms Nicole Lawder MLA

### ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE (QTON)

#### Public Hearing - Inquiry into Loneliness and Social Isolation in the ACT

#### Tuesday, 07 May 2024

Asked by [Miss Laura Nuttall MLA] on 7 May 2024: Professor Jacki Schirmer (Health Research Institute, University of Canberra) took on notice the following question(s):

Ref: *Hansard - Uncorrected Proof Transcript (UPT)*, 7 May 2024 [page 7]

In relation to:

*the role of link workers*

**MS NUTTALL:** Thank you. So specifically on link workers, what sort of role—I know you have mentioned, as part of the design group, like the co-design process, you would be working this out, but are there particular roles you expect link workers to play in addressing the social isolation?

**Ms Schirmer:** I will have to take that question on notice and ask the people who are leading the work.

Professor Jacki Schirmer (Health Research Institute, University of Canberra): The answer to the Member's question is as follows: –

The first stage of the 'Connect Up' program will involve local young people, services and organisations in developing a model of how community 'Connect Workers' might initiate or link into activities and programs in Belconnen and Bruce to help make or strengthen social connections for young people. We have a Working Group of 12 organisations and young people reflecting a diversity of views from this region which has already identified a range of gaps, issues and possibilities. We're undertaking community consultations throughout May and June, the outcomes of which will help inform the co-design workshops in July. We will respond to the needs and ideas of the community in shaping the pilot, but the role of these workers could involve anything from personally facilitating connections for people to activities or groups, to generating community gatherings, to better promoting existing events in these areas, to helping stimulate local connection through community sports, art, culture, music, recreational or environmental activities.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Education and Community Inclusion

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JS', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Date: 10/5/2024

By Professor Jacki Schirmer