



Media Release  
May 4, 2012

## **Outback art creates a home-away-from-home for South West Queensland cancer patients**

Talented Glenmorgan artist Carol McCormack is passionate about supporting her fellow rural Queenslanders, especially when it comes to health and wellbeing.

When Ms McCormack found out that people in rural or regional areas had faced difficulties in accessing life-saving health services and how Cancer Council Queensland was helping them through the construction of the Olive McMahon Lodge in Toowoomba, she was determined to do whatever she could to contribute to the facility.

Ms McCormack said she decided to donate a 55m long frieze after touring the facility last year.

"I really wanted to brighten up one of the corridors and so I've made the frieze a river theme with birds, fisherman, bridges and trees, something that country people can relate to," she said.

"It can be difficult being away from home, especially while receiving treatment, so I thought this would bring a bit of the country back to the lodge."

Ms McCormack has also donated several pieces of artwork to the lodge, which she continues to swap and change.

"When my work isn't on display in galleries I like to rotate them through the lodge and I make an effort to ensure I always keep those spaces filled," she said.

"I can't speak more highly of the facilities and the team at the Olive McMahon Lodge and I hope that my artwork helps to make this into a home-away-from-home for South West Queensland cancer patients."

Carol would like to acknowledge the invaluable assistance of Marg Bowden from Dalby who freely gave her expertise with curtains and soft furnishings to enable professional installation of the frieze.

Just months after opening its doors, Cancer Council Queensland's Olive McMahon Lodge in Toowoomba has been a heaven sent haven for more than 50 South West Queensland cancer patients and their carers.

The \$3 million accommodation lodge, which opened its doors to patients on December 19, provides accommodation and access to cancer support services, at no cost, for South West Queensland cancer patients traveling away from home to receive treatment in Toowoomba.

The Olive McMahon Lodge has the capacity to accommodate up to 50 people at any one time, providing over 15,000 bed nights for patients and carers each year.



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Cancer Council Queensland Manager of Accommodation and Practical Support, Alex Woodland, said the accommodation and support lodges are crucial to cancer survival in Queensland, enabling regional patients to access life-saving services.

"Evidence shows that cost is a major barrier preventing regional people from accessing life-saving health services," Mr Woodland said.

"For regional patients who have to undergo months of treatment away from home, the financial costs can be devastating, compounding the physical and emotional strain of a cancer diagnosis.

"Our state-wide network of lodges gives regional patients better access to life-saving cancer treatment and support services, such as cancer counselling.

"I encourage all local locals to continue to share news of the lodge with their rural and regional family and friends so that we can provide a home-away-from-home for people who have to travel to receive cancer treatment."

The lodge has been named in memory of Olive McMahon, a local education pioneer who survived breast cancer in the 1960s and died in 2010 at age 87, leaving more than \$1 million to Cancer Council Queensland.

Cancer Council Queensland is still seeking sponsors for rooms, furniture and ongoing operating costs.

Donations to the lodge can be made online via [www.cancerqld.org.au](http://www.cancerqld.org.au) or by phoning CCQ's Toowoomba office on 4690 5800.

For information about cancer or support, please call the Cancer Council Helpline on 13 11 20 from 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday.

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