

**HEALTH, COMMUNITIES, DISABILITY SERVICES AND DOMESTIC AND
FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION COMMITTEE**

2019 ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 1

THE HEALTH, COMMUNITIES, DISABILITY SERVICES AND DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES AND MINISTER FOR DISABILITY SERVICES AND SENIORS (HON C O'ROURKE MP)—

QUESTION:

With reference to page 6 of the Service Delivery Statement, what steps has Queensland taken in 2018-19 to transition existing Disability Services clients to the NDIS?

ANSWER:

The Palaszczuk Government has done all it can to assist existing clients under the *Disability Services Act 2006*, as well as other Queenslanders with disability, to transition to the NDIS.

Since 2015, the Government has invested over \$25 million in a range of readiness activities for people with disability, their families and carers and disability service providers to prepare for the NDIS. In 2018-19, \$1.45 million was allocated directly to participant readiness activities, with a particular focus on assisting people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and people living in hostels and supported accommodation.

To ensure a smooth transition for existing clients, the Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors provided to the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) client data ahead of the transition of each geographical area. During 2018-19, this data was provided for the five regions that completed transition during that year – Maryborough, South East (Beenleigh, Robina), Brisbane, Cairns and North Coast (Strathpine / Caboolture, Maroochydore). This meant that the NDIA could directly contact people and facilitate their access to the NDIS by checking they met NDIS eligibility requirements

This made the process of accessing the NDIS even smoother and ensured that people who had previously had a Disability Services assessment for their disability were not required to prove they had a disability.

During 2018-19, the department's regional offices continued to undertake extensive follow up work with existing clients, as they did throughout transition, to support those clients to transition to the NDIS. That work included contacting clients by phone, email, SMS messaging and media messaging, contacting service providers and next of kin, and home visits to the last known address in some cases. The department also sent letters to clients, both before transition started in their regions and during transition to raise awareness of the NDIS and offer support.

The department also assisted clients by providing them with assessment reports and other documents available on departmental files to support their NDIS access requests. The department's clinicians also carried out functional assessments for clients who needed them.

As a result of all this work, at 30 June 2019, almost 30,000 people with disability, who previously received state funded supports, received a NDIS plan of funded supports, and almost 20,000 of these people received plans in 2018-19.

Across all regions in Queensland, 93.8 per cent of all former *Disability Services Act 2006* clients who actively sought access were successful and another 3.1 per cent are in, or due to commence, the access process. Former clients who have chosen not to enter the NDIS at this time may still do so in the future.

The department will continue to support former funded clients under the *Disability Services Act 2006* under 65 years who are not NDIS eligible.

Former funded clients under the *Disability Services Act 2006* who were 65 years or over at the time of transition, transitioned to the Commonwealth Government funded Continuity of Support program.

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QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 2

THE HEALTH, COMMUNITIES, DISABILITY SERVICES AND DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES AND MINISTER FOR DISABILITY SERVICES AND SENIORS (HON C O'ROURKE MP) —

QUESTION:

With reference to page 6 of the Service Delivery Statement what steps are being taken in relation to Queensland's yellow card system to align it with the NDIS?

ANSWER:

The Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors (DCDSS) is working with the Commonwealth and other states and territories to develop and implement a nationally consistent worker screening system for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). This system is expected to commence in Queensland by mid-2020.

In the meantime, the existing yellow card system will continue to operate in Queensland in line with the requirements of the *Disability Services Act 2006* (DSA). The yellow card system is an important safeguard for people with disability by ensuring people engaged in the sector do not pose a risk to clients.

The *Disability Services and Other Legislation (NDIS) Amendment Act 2019*, which commenced on 1 July 2019, ensures laws are in place in Queensland to support the role of the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission in providing important protections for people with disability.

These amendments and changes to the *Disability Services Regulation 2017* expanded the scope of screening under the yellow card system to align with the screening requirements under the NDIS (Practice Standards – Worker Screening) Rules (WS Rules). These changes allow Queensland service providers to utilise the existing robust state-based screening systems to meet their worker screening obligations under the NDIS.

Further legislative amendments will be progressed in 2020 to implement nationally consistent NDIS worker screening in Queensland.

Queensland has invested \$1.7 million over three years from 2018-19 towards development of the central NDIS worker screening database and to ensure the Queensland Police Service system is able to interface with the national database.

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GOVERNMENT QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 3

THE HEALTH, COMMUNITIES, DISABILITY SERVICES AND DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES AND MINISTER FOR DISABILITY SERVICES AND SENIORS (HON C O'ROURKE MP)—

QUESTION:

With reference to page 6 of the Service Delivery Statement, what support has the Queensland Government provided to Queenslanders during the transition to the NDIS, to ensure that there are adequate transport options for Queenslanders with disability?

ANSWER:

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is responsible for the provision of reasonable and necessary funding associated with transport, including taxis and other private transport options. Despite this, we have heard that the NDIS is not including transport as a core support in NDIS plans and/or not providing sufficient funding in plans for transport supports.

The Palaszczuk Government has consulted widely to ensure the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) interface issues are well understood, through consulting with participants, their families and carers and service providers, as well as through forums such as the NDIS Transition Advisory Group and the Queensland and Regional Disability Advisory Councils.

While transport interface issues continue to be addressed at the national level, the Palaszczuk Government has stepped in and reinstated transport supports and services for those who were being let down. To date we have taken the following steps:

- reinstated the Taxi Subsidy Scheme, not once but twice, for approximately 10,000 eligible NDIS participants until June 2020, with funding of approximately \$6 million in 2019-20, despite cashing out \$8.1 million in funding per annum from 2019-20
- allocated \$6.8 million in 2019-20 to continue incentive payments for drivers of wheelchair accessible taxis; and
- allocated \$21 million over four years to 2023 for the Wheelchair Accessible Taxi Fund, to encourage taxi operators to make the state's fleet more accessible
- the Palaszczuk Government has also allocated \$7 million in 2019-20 in conjunction with the new Queensland Community Support Scheme to ensure community transport is available for people with a disability, mental health or

chronic health issues, who are unable to utilise private or public transport options.

- Continue to deliver specialist school transport.

The Palaszczuk Government is working with the Commonwealth, the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) and other states and territories to expedite resolution of this issue but, has had to do the heavy lifting to ensure that Queensland NDIS participants receive the transport supports they need now.

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QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 4

THE HEALTH, COMMUNITIES, DISABILITY SERVICES AND DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES AND MINISTER FOR DISABILITY SERVICES AND SENIORS (HON C O'ROURKE MP)—

QUESTION:

With reference to page 5 of the Service Delivery Statement, how many people received Community Recovery grants in 2018-19 and what was the total expenditure?

ANSWER:

My department assisted Queenslanders to get back on their feet following disasters and catastrophic weather events.

During 2018-19, grant applicants were paid to a total of \$35.49 million under the Commonwealth/State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements, benefiting 128,161 people. These events included:

Mareeba and Tablelands Bushfires, 17 September to 9 October 2018 – where around \$2,000 was distributed in Essential Household Contents grants to contribute to the loss of contents to one family whose home was damaged by fire.

Central Queensland Bushfires, 22 November to 6 December 2018

Total Emergency Hardship Assistance grant applications:	4,442
Total number of people benefited from EHA	10,405
Total paid in Emergency Hardship Assistance grants:	\$1,850,665
Total paid in Essential Services Hardship Assistance grants:	N/A
Total paid in Essential Household Contents grants:	\$23,850
Total paid in Structural Assistance grants:	\$19,982
Total paid in Essential Services Safety and Reconnection Schemes:	\$6,135
Total value of grants approved:	\$1,900,632

North and Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough, 25 January to
14 February 2019

Total Emergency Hardship Assistance grant applications:	65,092
Total number of people benefited from EHA	116,762
Total paid in Emergency Hardship Assistance grants:	\$20,715,690
Total paid in Essential Services Hardship Assistance grants:	\$1,947,570
Total paid in Essential Household Contents grants:	\$9,492,324
Total paid in Structural Assistance grants:	\$1,018,346
Total paid in Essential Services Safety and Reconnection Schemes:	\$110,258
Total value of grants approved:	\$33,284,188

Severe Tropical Cyclone Trevor, 19 to 27 March 2019

Total Emergency Hardship Assistance grant applications:	662
Total number of people benefited from EHA	994
Total paid in Emergency Hardship Assistance grants:	\$179,100
Total paid in Essential Services Hardship Assistance grants:	N/A
Total paid in Essential Household Contents grants:	\$129,195
Total paid in Structural Assistance grants:	\$0
Total paid in Essential Services Safety and Reconnection Schemes:	\$0
Total value of grants approved:	\$308,295

Financial support is provided to community through jointly funded Commonwealth/State Disaster Recovery Funding Assistance including:

- Emergency Hardship Assistance grant: \$180 per person up to \$900 for a family of 5 or more for people unable to meet their immediate essential needs for temporary accommodation, food, essential clothing and medication
- Essential Services Hardship Assistance grant: \$150 per person, up to \$750 for a family of 5 or more for people who have experienced loss of 1 or more essential services for more than 5 days
- Essential household contents grant: Grants of up to \$1,765 for single adults and up to \$5,300 for couples/families if you are uninsured, or unable to claim insurance
- Structural Assistance grant: Grants of up to \$10,995 for single adults and up to \$14,685 for couples/families. If uninsured, or unable to claim insurance, may be eligible for a one-off payment as a contribution towards repairs to home
- Essential Services Safety and Reconnection grant: If uninsured, or unable to claim insurance, home owners may be eligible for a grant:
 - up to \$200 for each connection to help them reconnect essential services that were damaged by a disaster
 - up to \$4,200 towards repair work to enable essential services to be reconnected (for example, electrical rewiring)

To assist communities to recover after the Central Queensland Bushfires, state and commonwealth non-recurrent funding of \$1.08 million over two years has also been provided to seven local governments to provide eight community development officers to work with communities to rebuild and recover.

To assist communities to recover after the Monsoon Trough, state and commonwealth non-recurrent funding of \$5.25 million over two years is being provided to seven local governments to provide eight community development officers to work with communities to rebuild and recover. The department is working to place an additional community development officer in another location.

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QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 5

THE HEALTH, COMMUNITIES, DISABILITY SERVICES AND DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES AND MINISTER FOR DISABILITY SERVICES AND SENIORS (HON C O'ROURKE MP)—

QUESTION:

With reference to page 4 of the Service Delivery Statement, what is the Queensland Government doing to assist people on low incomes to avoid the need to use pay day lenders?

ANSWER:

This government has partnered with Good Shepherd Microfinance, Australia's largest microfinance organisation to fund two Good Money Stores in Cairns and Southport. Good Shepherd Microfinance in partnership with National Australia Bank (which provides the microfinancial capital) deliver the No Interest Loans Scheme (NILS) in Queensland.

Good Money Stores, the first of their kind in Queensland offer people on low incomes an alternative to pay day lenders. Customers are supported to make responsible and sustainable financial decisions which lead to long-term financial self-management.

Good Money Stores offer safe, affordable and responsible financial services for people on low incomes who are otherwise excluded from mainstream financial services.

In 2018-19 funding for Good Money Stores was \$1.1 M. Funding of \$1.1 M will be recurrent in 2019-20.

Services offered include –

No Interest Loan Scheme (NILS) for loans of \$300 - \$1,200 for essential goods and services such as white goods, medical expenses or education expenses.

StepUp Loans – Low interest loans of between \$800 - \$3,000 with no fees and affordable repayment periods.

AddsUp – A matched savings plan of up to \$500 offered to people who have successfully repaid a NILS or StepUp loan.

Affordable insurance – Simple car and contents insurance with flexible payment options.

Referrals to other services – such as financial counselling which provides information and support to assist people in financial difficulty.

Between July 2018 to March 2019:

Number of Enquiries	5,683
Number of no interest and low interest loans	968 loans valued at \$999,435
Number of StepUp low interest loans	98 loans valued at \$291,000
Number of insurance conversations with clients	3,338

Note: Statistics for the April to June 2019 quarter are not due to be available until the end of July 2019

Note: Number of referrals is not reported on.

In addition to immediate assistance to prevent disadvantaged Queenslanders going to pay day lenders, the Queensland Government launched the Financial Literacy and Resilience initiative in 2017. This program provides sustainable and practical assistance to people experiencing financial stress or struggling with cost of living pressures.

Financial Literacy and Resilience program funds financial counsellors and financial resilience workers to provide financial literacy education, advocacy, case management and linkages with a wide range of supplementary supports such as No Interest Loans Scheme (NILS), the Home Energy Assistance Scheme (HEEAS), Gambling Help and community legal centres. Services have an early intervention focus, assisting people to address their financial problems before they reach crisis point.

Financial counsellors provide more complex support to people experiencing intractable financial difficulties. Financial counsellors must hold the nationally recognised Diploma of Community Services (Financial Counselling).

Financial resilience workers and financial counsellors have access to a pool of emergency relief funding of up to \$10,000 per annum per full time position that will complement the other forms of assistance they are able to offer.

While available to the general population, services pay particular attention to the needs of young people leaving care, homeless people, seniors and women escaping domestic and family violence.

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QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 6

THE HEALTH, COMMUNITIES, DISABILITY SERVICES AND DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES AND MINISTER FOR DISABILITY SERVICES AND SENIORS (HON C O'ROURKE MP)—

QUESTION:

With reference to page 2 of the Service Delivery Statement, what emergency relief funds were distributed in 2018-19?

ANSWER:

In 2018-19, \$1,741,756 in emergency relief funding was distributed through 82 non-government, community based organisations, including:

- Neighbourhood and Community Centres
- Church groups
- Emergency Accommodation providers
- Women's Centres
- Prisoner Transport Group
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Services

One hundred per cent of emergency relief funds are provided directly to those in need.

These funds are used to provide cash, food vouchers, food parcels and third party payments to clients experiencing immediate financial crisis. For example, when a person experiencing financial crisis has no money until pay day, a \$25 food voucher or food parcel may be the difference between their family eating that night or going hungry.

Emergency relief is not just about giving money and vouchers, it also provides an opportunity to refer people to appropriate services such as financial counselling, budgeting support, domestic and family violence services and housing services.

This funding provides these services with the capacity to offer immediate financial support to those in need. Clients receiving emergency relief funds are then referred to relevant workshops and budgeting assistance aimed at educating them on financial matters.

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QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 7

THE HEALTH, COMMUNITIES, DISABILITY SERVICES AND DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES AND MINISTER FOR DISABILITY SERVICES AND SENIORS (HON C O'ROURKE MP)—

QUESTION:

With reference to page 8 of the Service Delivery Statement, what is the ongoing role of Neighbourhood and Community Centres across regional Queensland?

ANSWER:

Neighbourhood and Community Centres form the fundamental base of social services infrastructure in communities across Queensland and are a key contributor to building and sustaining Thriving Queensland Communities. In many locations, these centres are capable of responding to the diverse needs of families, seniors, young people, homeless people and recent migrants and provide frontline services harnessing community effort to address local problems, drawing heavily on the input of volunteers.

While Neighbourhood and Community Centres provide universal supports such as playgroups, social activities and parenting programs, they can serve as an entry point to targeted or crisis services such as domestic and family violence assistance or financial counselling. Neighbourhood and Community Centres work closely with the local specialist services and are able to make supported referrals after undertaking an initial assessment and provide information on support options.

Community Connect workers provide additional vital supports to individuals and families accessing Neighbourhood and Community Centres, in particular, those experiencing domestic and family violence, by facilitating access to services and supports during these stressful times. This additional support frees up neighbourhood centre staff and volunteers to focus on the delivery of funded community activities.

As a dedicated resource, Community Connect workers are co-located in 12 Neighbourhood and Community Centres across the state, in high need communities – Emerald, Monto, Manoora, Mossman, Bowen, Upper Ross, Gympie, Eagleby, Nerang, Chinchilla, Laidley and Darra.

In many places, Neighbourhood and Community Centres provide a pathway into further education, skills acquisition and employment. Centres support life-long learning and use low (or no) cost activities and pre-accreditation courses to support people marginally connected to the labour force.

Neighbourhood and Community Centres also play a critical role in responding to disaster events, particularly in smaller communities where they serve as the natural service delivery hub for assisting affected residents.

Neighbourhood centres operate in a localised way to respond to a range of issues and opportunities and have the capacity, flexibility and responsiveness to shift priorities and resources as new needs emerge. They will play an increasingly significant role in place initiatives across the regions going forward.

The Palaszczuk Government is taking important steps to enhance the current work of Neighbourhood and Community Centres across the regions. This includes working with Centres to design a performance framework, build on existing strengths of individual centres and find ways to connect neighbourhood centres to one another to share learnings and support each other. Together with the work undertaken in partnership with Griffith University, this important work will identify and inform where and why increased investment should be dedicated.

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QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 8

THE HEALTH, COMMUNITIES, DISABILITY SERVICES AND DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES AND MINISTER FOR DISABILITY SERVICES AND SENIORS (HON C O'ROURKE MP)—

QUESTION:

With reference to page 4 of the Service Delivery Statement, what age-friendly initiatives have been conducted across Queensland?

ANSWER:

The Palaszczuk Government supports Queensland seniors using the World Health Organisation's age-friendly model used globally by many countries and jurisdictions. An age-friendly community is one where older people are valued, respected and actively supported to participate in their communities.

The Queensland age-friendly community Action Plan is an initiative that supports implementation of 93 actions by 13 state government agencies across all age-friendly domains, including housing, transport, outdoor spaces and buildings, social participation, respect and social inclusion, civic participation and employment, communication and information, and community support and health services. Some key achievements already delivered as a part of the Action Plan include:

- Development of the Health and Wellbeing Climate Adaptation Plan to manage risks with climate extremes for vulnerable groups including seniors.
- Age-friendly community grants funding to install the Magnetic Island Fitness Trail designed to meet seniors' health and fitness needs.
- Specialist Homelessness Services assisted 1118 seniors who were homeless or at risk of homelessness.

An age-friendly Report Card is published on our website annually, outlining all key achievements and deliverables for seniors. The 2018-19 report card on the progress of actions will be available by December 2019.

The Advancing Queensland: an age-friendly community grants program provides \$1 million per year since 2017-18 to fund innovative age-friendly projects. Over the past two years 29 projects have been funded. The 2019-20 age-friendly grants program has recently closed and successful applicants are due to be announced in August 2019.

There have been some outstanding successes from the grant projects, including:

- the Carers Journal app developed to help seniors stay at home longer
- the Pharmacy Guild of Australia Queensland Branch was funded to deliver a dementia training program to 30 pharmacies across Queensland, and
- Horizon Housing Company have produced a document titled, "My Home, My Place rural housing project across Maranoa region" from their community consultation about the housing needs of seniors.

A program of 13 regional age-friendly workshops have been held this year across Queensland. The workshops have engaged with councils, community organisations, services and business to understand and implement an age-friendly approach in their work to support seniors in local communities. A range of resources have been developed to assist any organisation or business use an age-friendly approach. Resources include an age-friendly toolkit, good practice documents and a series of Queensland Seniors Fact Sheets.

The B.OLD Short Film Competition was an age-friendly initiative that asked entrants to develop short films that challenge negative attitudes and stereotypes of ageing, and celebrate older people and their contributions. Eight short films have been screened at film festivals around Queensland over 2018-19.

The Queensland age-friendly Action Plan also includes delivery of a range of seniors' services including elder abuse prevention, seniors cards and concessions, social isolation, a seniors enquiry line, seniors legal and support services, and the tech savvy seniors program.

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QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 9

THE HEALTH, COMMUNITIES, DISABILITY SERVICES AND DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES AND MINISTER FOR DISABILITY SERVICES AND SENIORS (HON C O'ROURKE MP)—

QUESTION:

With reference to page 3 of the Service Delivery Statement, what Seniors' concessions and rebates schemes were available to Queensland Seniors in 2018-19?

ANSWER:

As Minister for Seniors, one of my key priorities is to provide cost of living assistance to older Queenslanders.

The 2018-19 State Budget included a significant commitment of \$383.8 million for my department to administer the following concessions and rebates:

Concession	2018-19 Budget (\$ million)
Electricity Rebate Scheme	195.5
Electricity Asset Ownership Dividend	100.0
Pensioner Rate Subsidy Scheme	53.6
South East Queensland Pensioner Water Subsidy Scheme	18.2
Home Energy Emergency Assistance Scheme	10.0
Electricity Life Support Concession Scheme	2.3
Reticulated Natural Gas Rebate Scheme	2.6
Medical Cooling and Heating Electricity Concession Scheme	1.6

Over 2 million Queenslanders, which included seniors who were experiencing financial hardship due to cost of living pressures and/or health reasons benefited from the support provided through these schemes.

The Queensland Government more broadly offers concessions to assist seniors, which includes:

- discounts on South East Queensland public transport and long distance rail;
- free dental care and access to basic spectacles;
- reduced vehicle and boat registration; and
- cheaper entry for ticketed Queensland Performing Arts Trust performances, and Queensland Museum and Art Gallery exhibits.

We also know there are still seniors out there who aren't aware that they are eligible for all these savings and we want to get the message to them. We're kicking off this plan at the Ekka, where a special team will be able to help Queenslanders apply for their Seniors Card.

Then, from September 2019 to June 2020, we'll be sending these teams out across Queensland to visit prominent shopping centres and help local seniors sign up for the service. Details and locations for this Seniors Card roadshow will be available soon.

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QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 10

THE HEALTH, COMMUNITIES, DISABILITY SERVICES AND DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES AND MINISTER FOR DISABILITY SERVICES AND SENIORS (HON C O'ROURKE MP)—

QUESTION:

With reference to page 6 of the Service Delivery Statement, what support does the Queensland Government provide to Guide Dogs Queensland?

ANSWER:

Queensland's peak and representative disability bodies have played a significant role in the state's successful transition to the NDIS. In recognition of the ongoing impact these organisations will experience during the first full year of NDIS in Queensland, the Government took the decision in the Budget to provide additional funding to these bodies for 2019-20 to ensure their important work can continue while the NDIS is further embedded in this state.

I was very pleased to be able to offer funding of over \$136,000 to Guide Dogs Queensland. This funding is intended to assist Guide Dogs Queensland to continue to deliver information services to people with disability, their families and carers and promote community awareness.

The Government also assists people with vision impairment, and people with a range of other disabilities, through the administration of the *Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs Act 2009*. This legislation aims to assist people who rely on guide, hearing or assistance dogs to have independent access to the community, and to ensure that training services for these dogs are accountable and of high quality.

Over 650 dogs have been registered as guide, hearing and assistance dogs in Queensland and the Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors is responsible for the approval of trainers and training institutions, processing handler card applications, raising community awareness and responding to inquiries from dog handlers, trainers and the general public. The department has retained responsibility for this work post NDIS-transition.

With Queensland's transition to the NDIS now complete, funding for people with vision impairment who require the use of a guide or assistance dog can be included as part of a participant's NDIS plan. Guide Dogs Queensland is a registered NDIS provider and NDIS participants are able to choose the organisation for services funded within their plan.

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QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 11

THE HEALTH, COMMUNITIES, DISABILITY SERVICES AND DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES AND MINISTER FOR DISABILITY SERVICES AND SENIORS (HON C O'ROURKE MP)—

QUESTION:

Can the Minister outline the actions that have been taken by the Palaszczuk Labor Government to renegotiate Queensland's yearly NDIS funding commitment, and when it is anticipated negotiations will be completed?

ANSWER:

Negotiations for the NDIS full scheme bilateral agreement were initiated following consideration of the Commonwealth-proposed agreement by the COAG Disability Reform Council in March 2018 and confirmation of the Queensland Government's negotiation parameters.

Bilateral negotiations at both an agency level and ministerial level between Queensland and the Commonwealth were finalised at the end of June 2019 with the Prime Minister and Premier signing Queensland's agreement on 9 July 2019 in terms that are equitable and provide value for money for Queensland.

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QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 12

THE HEALTH, COMMUNITIES, DISABILITY SERVICES AND DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES AND MINISTER FOR DISABILITY SERVICES AND SENIORS (HON C O'ROURKE MP)—

QUESTION:

Can the Minister provide the number of deaths in care of people with disability in the Department's provided/funded services since 2015-16 to now (separated by financial year)?

ANSWER:

I am advised the Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors has complied with all legislative and reporting requirements in relation to recording and reporting on deaths.

The *Coroners Act 2003* outlines how and when deaths in care must be reported to the Coroner.

Under the *Coroners Act 2003*, responsibility for reporting a death in care rests with the relevant service provider. This means that the Department is responsible for reporting the death of persons in care when they are a client of Accommodation Support and Respite Services or in the Forensic Disability Service.

For clients who received services through the department's Accommodation Support and Respite Services, the following number of deaths have occurred:

Financial Year	Number of deaths in care
2015-16	6
2016-17	7
2017-18	6
2018-19	11

For people detained to the Forensic Disability Service under the *Forensic Disability Act 2011*:

Financial Year	Number of deaths in care
2015-16	1
2016-17	0
2017-18	0
2018-19	0

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QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 13

THE HEALTH, COMMUNITIES, DISABILITY SERVICES AND DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES AND MINISTER FOR DISABILITY SERVICES AND SENIORS (HON C O'ROURKE MP)—

QUESTION:

Can the Minister outline how core state funding for Neighbourhood and Community Centres was determined for 2019-20?

ANSWER:

In 2019-20, the Queensland Government will invest \$17.7 million (including \$1.5 M for Community Connect Workers) in service delivery funds to 124 neighbourhood and community centres which provide fundamental social services infrastructure in cities and towns across Queensland.

Neighbourhood centres are not the same – all have different strengths – they respond to the needs and priorities of their communities and a place-based approach is required for each one.

The Queensland Government is working with, the Queensland Families and Communities Association and neighbourhood centres to co-design a framework which will further support the positioning of neighbourhood centres in communities. The framework will also help guide future investment and look at ways of strengthening their role in place-based initiatives.

While the framework is being developed, the Queensland Government is supplementing service delivery funds with an additional \$2.2M across three rounds of Thriving Communities Grants to funded neighbourhood centres. Round one was conducted in 2018 and provided 73 centres with a share of \$600,000. Round two grant recipients were announced in June 2019 and will provide 72 organisations with a share of \$800,000. Round three will open in early 2020 and will offer centres a share of \$800,000.

In 2019-20, the Queensland Government will also invest \$10.7 million Capital Funds for Neighbourhood Centre new builds or for the existing replacement and refurbishing of Neighbourhood Centres. This is in addition to the total investment of \$70 million in Neighbourhood and Community Centre assets across the state.

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QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 14

THE HEALTH, COMMUNITIES, DISABILITY SERVICES AND DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES AND MINISTER FOR DISABILITY SERVICES AND SENIORS (HON C O'ROURKE MP)—

QUESTION:

Can the Minister detail the 5 lowest core state funding allocations for Neighbourhood and Community Centres in 2019-20, and where each of these 5 centres are located?

ANSWER:

Neighbourhood and community centres often receive multiple streams of funding from a variety of agencies, such as state, commonwealth and local government.

In 2019-20, the Queensland Government has allocated service delivery funding to 124 funded neighbourhood and community centres across the state. Individual centres that have been allocated the following funding amounts

- one centre has been allocated \$116,064, (Gailes Residents Committee)
- 43 centres have been allocated \$119,116, (across the state)

The Queensland Government has supplemented service delivery funds through two rounds of Thriving Communities Grants to funded neighbourhood centres, with a further third round to be announced early 2020. Round one was conducted in 2018 and provided 73 centres with a share of \$600,000. Round two grant recipients were announced in June 2019 and will provide 72 organisations with a share of \$800,000. Round three will open in early 2020 and will offer centres a share of \$800,000.

Work to align core funding across all neighbourhood centres will be done during 2019-20 so there is consistency from 2020-2021.

**HEALTH, COMMUNITIES, DISABILITY SERVICES AND DOMESTIC AND
FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION COMMITTEE**

2019 ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 15

THE HEALTH, COMMUNITIES, DISABILITY SERVICES AND DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES AND MINISTER FOR DISABILITY SERVICES AND SENIORS (HON C O'ROURKE MP)—

QUESTION:

With regard to the 482 FTE disability services staff that are set to be cut in 2019-20, can the Minister confirm how many are anticipated to be a) redundancies, and b) how many are anticipated to be moved to other parts of the department/Queensland public service?

ANSWER:

The decrease in FTEs in 19-20 were determined by the previous government with the signing of the NDIS Heads of Agreement and aligned to the Commonwealth Government's schedule for transition.

The impacted Disability Services workforce providing services to Queenslanders with disability has been progressively transitioning, since 2016, to their chosen pathway as their clients move to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

Staff affected were guaranteed and received employment security by the Palaszczuk Government.

As at 30 June 2019, the majority of staff have already transitioned to their chosen pathway, with only 37 Disability Services impacted staff yet to transition. Of these there are:

- a) seven who are currently indicating a preference for a staff initiated voluntary redundancy; and
- b) 21 are being case managed with an aim for them to be placed into permanent roles in the department or other parts of the Queensland Public Service. 9 are not participating in case management processes because they are unwell. All 9 employees are being assisted by the Safety Wellbeing and Injury Management Team with a view to their future participation in the case management processes.

**HEALTH, COMMUNITIES, DISABILITY SERVICES AND DOMESTIC AND
FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION COMMITTEE**

2019 ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 16

THE HEALTH, COMMUNITIES, DISABILITY SERVICES AND DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES AND MINISTER FOR DISABILITY SERVICES AND SENIORS (HON C O'ROURKE MP)—

QUESTION:

Can the Minister provide a regional breakdown of the number of Seniors Card holders for the financial years of 2015-16 to 2018-19 (separated by year)?

ANSWER:

The Seniors Card provides eligible seniors with cost of living support through Queensland Government concessions and discounts on goods and services at over 6,700 business outlets across Queensland.

Seniors Card holders can access concessions on electricity, reticulated natural gas, public transport, long distance rail, vehicle and boat registrations, spectacles, dental, medical aids, life support, fishing permits and entry fees to Queensland Government museums and art galleries.

As outlined in the table below, the number of Seniors Card and Seniors Business Discount Card holders has increased each financial year since 2015-16.

Financial Year	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Number of Seniors Card holders*	693,213	700,715	761,019	769,129
Number of Seniors Business Discount Card holders	100,462	101,574	115,151	118,590

**Includes Seniors Card and Seniors Card +go.*

While a regional breakdown of Seniors Card holders by financial year is not available, around 88 per cent of Queenslanders over the age of 60 hold a Seniors Card, Seniors Card +go, or Seniors Business Discount Card.

**HEALTH, COMMUNITIES, DISABILITY SERVICES AND DOMESTIC AND
FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION COMMITTEE**

2019 ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 17

THE HEALTH, COMMUNITIES, DISABILITY SERVICES AND DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES AND MINISTER FOR DISABILITY SERVICES AND SENIORS (HON C O'ROURKE MP)—

QUESTION:

With regard to the Safe Night Precinct Support Services additional funding of \$3.324 million in the 2018-19 Budget, can the Minister confirm a) if all of this funding was provided and b) what measurable outcomes were delivered from this funding increase?

ANSWER:

The Queensland Government provided \$3.3M to eight funded organisations to deliver services in 15 Safe Night Precincts across the state in 2018-19. The remaining \$24,000 has been deferred to 2019-20 to implement improvements around data collection.

Support services consist of two distinct components:

- Static rest and recovery facility – provides support, assistance and supervision within a safe space for vulnerable intoxicated individuals to rest and recover.
- Assertive outreach (foot or mobile patrol) – provides rapid response and proactive intervention for patrons who are in crisis or where individual safety, personal health and wellbeing are threatened. Usually provided via foot patrol, however, in larger precincts can also be via a vehicle.

In 2018-19, across the 15 Safe Night Precincts:

- 6,591 people were assisted through assertive outreach, and
- 23,780 people accessed a Rest and Recovery service.

**HEALTH, COMMUNITIES, DISABILITY SERVICES AND DOMESTIC AND
FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION COMMITTEE**

2019 ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 18

THE HEALTH, COMMUNITIES, DISABILITY SERVICES AND DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES AND MINISTER FOR DISABILITY SERVICES AND SENIORS (HON C O'ROURKE MP)—

QUESTION:

Following the full implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) in Queensland:

- (a) how many Queenslanders with a disability continue to receive Departmental delivered and/or funded specialist disability support services due to ineligibility for the NDIS?
- (b) is the Department continuing to process new applicants and recipients of Departmental delivered and/or funded specialist disability support services, in circumstances where Queenslanders with a disability do not meet the NDIS eligibility criteria?
- (c) is the department aware of any instances or circumstances in which Departmental delivered and/or funded specialist disability support services or facilities are no longer available to Queenslanders with a disability, and equivalent funding or support services are not available through the NDIS?
- (d) Is the government intending to create a provider of last resort?

ANSWER:

- (a) 38 former Disability Services clients under the age of 65 (or under 50 years of age for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people) have now transitioned to the state-funded Continuity of Support scheme as they have been found to be ineligible for the NDIS. The scheme aims to provide at least the same level of support that was provided to each person prior to the introduction of the NDIS.

Approximately \$1M per annum has been allocated to support these former clients through the Continuity of Support scheme.

Former clients who were ineligible for the NDIS due to their age (65 years and over or 50 years and over for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people) are now supported under the Commonwealth Government's Continuity of Support Programme.

- (b) With the completion of the Transitional Bilateral Agreement on 30 June 2019, the Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors (DCDSS) does not now fund any new clients for specialist disability support services. However, the Queensland Government continues to provide a range of other

services of assistance to people with disability who do not meet the NDIS eligibility criteria.

For example, the Queensland Community Support Scheme administered by DCDSS provides low intensity supports to assist people with daily living and community participation. The Government has committed \$37.5 million to this scheme for 2019-20.

- (c) Queensland, along with other jurisdictions, has been impacted by the NDIA not adhering to the roles and responsibilities outlined in NDIS bilateral agreements in terms of essential supports for people with disability such as transportation and community nursing.

While these interface issues have been the subject of protracted negotiation at the national level, the Queensland Government has continued to provide a range of services – which the NDIA is responsible for and should be funded through the NDIS – to ensure Queensland NDIS participants are not disadvantaged.

If the Palaszczuk Government had not stepped in to ensure Queenslanders with disability can continue to access these critical supports, many NDIS participants might now be receiving a lower level of supports than what was available through state-funded programs. Many of these state-funded programs have been ‘cashed out’ to the NDIS on the understanding that these services would be funded under NDIS participant plans.

As part of the 2019-20 Budget, the Government is providing \$61.9 million to ensure Queenslanders are able to access essential disability supports, including those subject to national resolution of NDIS and mainstream interface issues:

- \$35.22 million for community health support programs (community nursing, Community Managed Mental Health, Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme, Housing and Support Program)
- \$13 million for transport (Taxi Subsidy Scheme, Community Transport)
- \$9.64 million for children with disability (child protection and voluntary out-of-home care)
- \$4 million to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and build capability of NDIS service providers.

The Queensland Government is continuing to provide Specialist School Transport and Personal Care in Schools while ongoing service delivery models in the NDIS are being finalised.

Following advocacy by Queensland and other states and territories, on 28 June 2019, the Council of Australian Governments Disability Reform Council resolved some of these interface issues. From October 2019, the NDIS will fund the provision of disability-related health services, including continence support and wound and pressure care supports, for participants.

- (d) The NDIA is responsible for creating a Provider of Last Resort.

The Queensland Government decided very early in the transition period to continue to operate the Accommodation Support and Respite Services for Queenslanders who need these services.

Until the Queensland market matures, we need to make sure people have the support they need, particularly in times of crisis.

Queensland continues to advocate to the Commonwealth about the need to ensure the availability of supports for people with disability in emergency situations. This includes the need to continue to build capacity of the service provider market in Queensland and development of a clear direction on the availability of emergency supports.

**HEALTH, COMMUNITIES, DISABILITY SERVICES AND DOMESTIC AND
FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION COMMITTEE**

2019 ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 19

THE HEALTH, COMMUNITIES, DISABILITY SERVICES AND DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES AND MINISTER FOR DISABILITY SERVICES AND SENIORS (HON C O'ROURKE MP)—

QUESTION:

With respect to the Queensland Government's commitment to Thriving Communities, as outlined on p4 of the SDS:

- (a) what is the total funding for partners delivering services across the state?
- (b) what funding is provided to each of the partner organisations under this initiative?
- (c) what is the approximate breakdown of funding provided across various areas of service delivery, as listed in the SDS, "such as financial inclusion; safety and wellbeing (public intoxication; gambling help; safe night precincts; food rescue and security); community resilience and recovery; social participation and cohesion; and peak bodies to support community industry development, carers, capacity building and volunteering"?
- (d) what is the total amount of funding available for gambling help services?

ANSWER:

- (a) \$175.6 million has been allocated in 2019-20 for Community Services and Seniors Services.
- (b) Thriving Communities is not an initiative. Thriving Communities Queensland is a Queensland Government vision for inclusive Queensland communities where people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities, can participate, and are able to enjoy high levels of social and economic wellbeing.

All funding across the department contributes to the Thriving Communities vision. Specifically, from time to time, one-off grants may be budgeted for, such as, the Thriving Communities grants that were distributed in 2018 and 2019.

- (c) The table below summarises the breakdown of the funding provided across various areas of service delivery:

Areas of service delivery	2019-20 Budget
Financial Literacy	\$4.9M
Other Financial Supports	\$3.3M
Public Intoxication	\$15.8M

Areas of service delivery	2019-20 Budget
Gambling Help	\$6.1M
Safe Night Precinct	\$3.6M
Food Rescue and Security	\$1.9M
Community Resilience and Recovery	\$0.5M
Social Participation and Cohesion	\$1.5M
Peak Bodies	\$1.6M

- (d) The Gambling Help service system was designed to ensure Queenslanders who experience difficulties associated with gambling can access effective, culturally appropriate services, seven days a week. Organisations are funded to provide interventions such as community education, information and referral and face-to-face counselling to individuals, and their families and friends, who are adversely affected by gambling. The services aim to reduce the severity and impact of problem gambling, improve personal wellbeing and strengthen resilience and self-reliance.

This department administers the Gambling Help program on behalf of the Department of Justice and Attorney-General (DJAG) through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The current MoU is from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2021. Total funding is \$13,212,300. Any questions relating to this program should be referred to Attorney-General and Minister for Justice.

**HEALTH, COMMUNITIES, DISABILITY SERVICES AND DOMESTIC AND
FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION COMMITTEE**

2019 ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 20

THE HEALTH, COMMUNITIES, DISABILITY SERVICES AND DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES AND MINISTER FOR DISABILITY SERVICES AND SENIORS (HON C O'ROURKE MP)—

QUESTION:

Noting the support offered to the communities of the North West Minerals Province to adapt to changing economic conditions through the co-production of a community strategy and local action plan, as set out on p4 of the SDS:

- (a) does the Department offer any similar support to communities whose local economy will be affected by the transition away from fossil fuels, particularly thermal coal mining communities and those currently reliant on employment from coal-fired power generation facilities?
- (b) has the Department been involved in the work of the Just Transition Group established by the Queensland Government?
- (c) what involvement, if any, has the Department had in the development by the Just Transition Group of a Just Transition Policy Framework to help workers and communities as the economy transitions to renewables?

ANSWER:

- (a) The Palaszczuk Government is focused on developing an economic plan for the next decade. Sound, sustainable economic opportunities, including access to employment, are critical foundations for improving wellbeing and outcomes in communities across Queensland.

Being able to respond flexibly to the unique needs of communities underpins the *Queensland Government's Our Future State: Advancing Queensland's Priorities*.

As Minister for Communities, Disability Services and Minister for Seniors, I am committed to supporting thriving communities as places where people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities can participate, be included and resilient, and enjoy high levels of social and economic wellbeing.

The Minister for State Development Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning is leading the Palaszczuk Government's Strategic Blueprint for the North West Minerals Province. The Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors contributes to this work through the development of local community action plans and a broader strategy to support and strengthen community development and resilience across the Province.

The Queensland Government is partnering with the Australian Government to deliver place-based initiatives in Gladstone, Rockhampton and Logan. This initiative will support these communities to take the lead in creating long-term social change and reduce disadvantage over time.

In the 2019-20 State Budget the Palaszczuk Government allocated \$3.9 million over the next five years to support place-based initiatives in Gladstone and Rockhampton, along with \$3.8 million over five years for the existing initiative in Logan. The Australian Government has matched this funding commitment.

- (b) My department has not been involved in the work of the Just Transition Group nor the supporting policy framework.
- (c) My department has not been involved in the work of the Just Transition Group nor the supporting policy framework.