



Speech by

# Hon. PETER BEATTIE

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

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Hansard 2 December 1999

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

### Disability Services Queensland

**Hon. P. D. BEATTIE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier) (9.42 a.m.), by leave: Tomorrow is the United Nations International Day of People with a Disability. This day aims to promote the human rights of people with a disability and thereby help them live their lives with dignity. With this in mind, I am proud to announce that my Government has met another election commitment that will help improve the lives of Queenslanders with a disability. At 1 o'clock today, the Minister for Disability Services, Anna Bligh, and I will officially launch Queensland's first department solely dedicated to disability issues, Disability Services Queensland.

Disability Services Queensland will drive the reform of disability services in this State. This department will be responsible for raising community awareness about disability services. It will also work closely with communities to improve the delivery of services and information to people with a disability, their families and carers. People can call a 1800 number for help and information about services available across Government.

This new department will be funded out of existing budget allocations. In other words, services will not be affected. The emphasis is on improving service delivery and, as a result, new offices and signs will appear gradually in regional centres as the new department comes online. There will be eight departmental regions. Six will be operational immediately, with the other two coming online by December next year. These changes will be of great benefit to people in the regions in this State, many of whom have missed out on disability services for years. In fact, they have never had those services. It will mean that Cairns will have its first disability services area office. It will mean that Wide Bay will no longer have to rely on Rockhampton for regional support, because by next December it will have its own regional director. It will mean new shopfront offices in Cooktown, Mount Isa, Murgon, Mundubbera, Hervey Bay and Gympie. In addition, regional Queenslanders will have a voice on the new Disability Council, which includes members from all parts of the State. Today that council will meet for the first time.

We have delivered the first framework for disability services across Government. I congratulate the Minister on the announcement today and the work she has put into making this a reality. This whole-of-Government approach aims to put Queensland at the cutting edge of disability service delivery. I seek leave to table a copy of the framework for the information of the House.

Leave granted.

**Mr BEATTIE:** In conjunction with the launch of the new department, we will run a multimedia community awareness campaign, which is logical and would be expected. The ad campaign, called "Just Like You", will promote acceptance of people with a disability. Today's announcement underscores my Government's commitment to improving the lives of Queenslanders with a disability. The campaign "Just Like You" is designed to make people with a disability part of the community, and not only in terms of how they see themselves but also in terms of how they are perceived by the rest of the community.

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