



Speech by

**Mr D. BRISKEY**

**MEMBER FOR CLEVELAND**

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Hansard 3 September 2002

***LIVING WITH A DISABILITY IN MULTICULTURAL NORTH QUEENSLAND***

**Mr BRISKEY** (Cleveland—ALP) (10.28 a.m.): At the outset I would like to say what a great pleasure it is to be here at this historic sitting of the Queensland parliament in Townsville—bringing the people's parliament to the people. I take this opportunity to thank the people of Townsville for their warm welcome. People with a disability often face many barriers in taking an active role in their communities. For people who form a part of ethnic communities, these barriers can be further compounded by cultural barriers. Cultural difference and lack of community awareness and understanding can sometimes mean that people with a disability within ethnic groups can be cut off not only from generic community services but also from the specialist disability supports that exist. The barriers can be as obvious as language or as complex, sensitive and difficult to deal with as specific cultural mores regarding disability. People from non-English speaking backgrounds are often regarded as having a double disadvantage when it comes to access to community, specifically in the areas of education, training, employment and health care.

Later today on behalf of the Disability Services Minister, Judy Spence, I will launch *Living with a disability in multicultural north Queensland*, a report which makes a number of recommendations about the needs of culturally diverse people with disabilities. The report was commissioned by this government to establish the extent of unmet needs for disability service among people with a disability from culturally and linguistically diverse communities in the Burdekin, Hinchinbrook and Townsville-Thuringowa areas. The report contains a number of key recommendations which are being closely considered by Disability Services. It is hoped that the report's findings can be reflected in the department's work with disability service providers to meet the needs of people in these groups.

This government is already working in a number of other ways to improve the service, support and access to disability services for people with a disability from culturally diverse backgrounds. The recommendations to come out of this report, *Living with a disability in multicultural north Queensland*, seek to build on the work that is already being done.

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