



Speech by

Shane Knuth

MEMBER FOR CHARTERS TOWERS

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DISABILITY SERVICES, FUNDING; AMBULANCE SERVICE, ROSTERING

Mr KNUTH (Charters Towers—NPA) (10.39 pm): I rise tonight to call on the government to allocate additional funding in the forthcoming budget for children with disabilities. We are all aware of the great benefits of early intervention and the profound impact that early support can have in later life. Children are often neglected in the funding maze or lost amongst the desperate bids for resources within the disability sector. Sadly, this means that some children are not able to receive the appropriate treatment and support that they desperately need.

Currently, funding allocated by the state government to services for children with disabilities makes up 26 per cent of the Disability Services budget. Many service providers receive only marginal funding to assist children. I welcome any funding grants that target adults. It is heartbreaking to turn children who are in need away because there are not the funds to provide services.

This is particularly tragic as we are all aware of the enormous benefits that early support can have on a child's life. I believe that there also needs to be improvements in services for adults with disabilities. Many families and individuals have approached me and told me of their difficulty in accessing support under the lifestyle support package. I believe that every attempt should be made to assist Queenslanders with a disability. I am calling on the government to deliver some real funding increases in the forthcoming budget.

I also raise the issue of ambulance reform. Roster reform for ambulance officers is not working as these officers are constantly fatigued due to continually being recalled to duty. If the government does not change the system then we could see a loss of life.

I would like to express my complete disappointment that this government has kicked the officer in charge of Charters Towers station out of the accommodation that was provided to him as part of his contract when taking up duty as the officer in charge there. This house was provided to this family and now they have been kicked out to help fill the government's coffers. Then the government has the cheek to threaten ambulance staff with a \$3,000 fine for speaking out against the roster reform and these heavy-handed tactics.