



Speech by


Hon. Curtis Pitt

MEMBER FOR MULGRAVE

Hansard Wednesday, 26 October 2011

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Disability Services

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Minister for Disability Services, Mental Health and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (2.13 pm): The Bligh government is committed to improving disability and community care services. We want to provide equality and opportunities for all Queenslanders. This morning I visited Synapse, formerly the Brain Injury Association of Queensland, in West End to announce a further expansion of our Home and Community Care program. I was pleased to announce that Queensland and the Commonwealth will deliver a \$16.7 million boost to this initiative. This is a joint state-Commonwealth program targeting older Queenslanders and people with a disability, and it is worth \$523 million to Queensland in 2011-12.

This program funds critical support services to 170,000 Queenslanders through a network of 800 home and community care workers across the state. The services delivered under this initiative help people to live independently in their own communities. I have seen firsthand the difference they make to people's quality of life. I speak of services such as domestic assistance, personal care, respite care, social support, client care coordination, home modification and transport services. There is also a focus on training a skilled workforce. For Synapse, this funding boost will mean an extra \$268,750 to create a virtual classroom which will provide online training and education to organisations delivering HACC services throughout Queensland. We are also funding the Deadly Connect program, which is about providing culturally appropriate services to Indigenous Queenslanders.

It is critical that we actually support the growing number of Queenslanders who need our help to live independently. Improved home and community care services not only help to give these people a better quality of life; they also reduce pressure on residential aged-care facilities. Our home and community care workers are the backbone of many Queensland communities. They support thousands of Queenslanders who need a helping hand to retain their independence. They can count on the continued support of the Bligh Labor government.