



Speech by

**Hon. Curtis Pitt**

**MEMBER FOR MULGRAVE**

Hansard Wednesday, 15 February 2012

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## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

### **Home and Community Care**

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Minister for Disability Services, Mental Health and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (2.20 pm): This morning I visited Blue Care Ashgrove to announce a \$39.8 million expansion of the Home and Community Care program. I was joined by the hardworking member for Ashgrove for this announcement, which will benefit thousands of Queenslanders, including many in her electorate. This \$39.8 million funding boost marks an important expansion of the HACC program. It will support more services for people with a disability and older Queenslanders in communities throughout the state. That is right: right across the state these extra funds will help to deliver the care and support that thousands of Queenslanders need to live independently in their own homes and communities.

The joint state-Commonwealth Home and Community Care program is worth \$523 million to Queenslanders in 2011-12, with funding going to 800 service providers. These dedicated workers provide crucial care and support to 170,000 Queenslanders. This care and support includes domestic assistance, personal care, social support, home modifications, transport and respite care. For many of us, going to the shops, cooking our own meals or having a bath or shower are things we take for granted, but the reality is that thousands of Queenslanders need help to do these simple things. That is what the HACC program is all about. It is about providing essential services to vulnerable Queenslanders.

I have seen firsthand the difference these services can make to people's quality of life. In many cases, they are the difference between someone remaining in their own community among family and friends and someone living in residential aged care. Queensland's Home and Community Care workers are the backbone of communities throughout the state. For them to continue their important work they need proper funding and resources from government. The Bligh Labor government is committed to providing this support. Since the Nationals and Liberals were last in power, we have increased funding for disability and community care services by 495 per cent. We are getting on with the job of supporting Queenslanders who need it the most, and that is what Labor governments do best—not just in Ashgrove but in communities right throughout Queensland.