

Question on Notice
No. 1081
Asked on 28 September 2004

MR PURCELL asked the Minister for Health (MR NUTTALL)-

QUESTION:

With reference to my understanding that he recently launched the Queensland Centre for Mental Health Research-

Will he advise what role the centre will take in researching mental disease and maintaining a healthier Queensland?

ANSWER:

Queensland Health is well aware of the high burden of disease caused by mental illness. The World Health Organisation's *World Health Report (2001): Mental Health* reports that neuropsychiatric disorders account for 31% of the total burden of disease worldwide, and 12% of total years lost to disability. Depression is the fourth leading cause of disability in people of all ages, and is predicted to be the leading cause of disability in developed economies by 2020. Schizophrenia is the eighth leading cause of disability in people aged 15 to 44 worldwide.

The Queensland Centre for Mental Health Research (QCMHR) will take a lead role in conducting priority driven research into mental illness. It will focus on those disorders which have the highest burden of disease, the highest cost in pain and suffering to people who have them, their families and carers, and the highest associated health costs.

Developed over 17 years, QCMHR is a mature research organisation which recently celebrated its coming of age with a new name and new premises built by Queensland Health as part of the redevelopment of The Park Centre for Mental Health, Wacol. Since its inception it has been funded by Queensland Health, with additional projects funded by external grants.

The Centre conducts research in policy and economics to guide service planning across the spectrum of mental disorders, and basic research in the genetics, developmental neurobiology and epidemiology of schizophrenia. It provides an infrastructure for establishing research partnerships and collaborations Queensland wide, nationally, and internationally. It currently maintains 58 such partnerships, half of which are international. Intellectual property resulting from the research is retained in Queensland.

Ideally, people with mental illness are now supported in their community rather than placed in hospital. Obtaining work is one of the basic ingredients for healthy integration into the community for people with mental illness, and it is their basic right. Evidence based research indicates that policies and services may need redirection to achieve this goal. The Centre conducts research into current systems of employment support for psychiatric disability, and

is playing a leading role nationally in research to identify the processes which will achieve the best outcome from currently available funding.

The Centre takes seriously its commitment to building the Smart State, and Queensland Health's commitment to maintain the mental health of the community, to ease the pain and suffering of mental illness, and to spend its health dollars wisely.