

**Question on Notice  
No. 254  
Asked on 28 April 2004**

MS B STONE asked the Minister for Communities, Disability Services and Seniors (MR PITT)-

QUESTION:

With reference to special Queenslanders – Seniors:

1. What benefits does the State Government give to Seniors?
2. How does the State Government assist seniors to have an active and healthy lifestyle?

ANSWER:

1. Queensland Seniors are able to access a range of benefits from the State Government.

All resident seniors are eligible for either a Queensland Government Seniors Card or Seniors Business Discount Card. The Seniors Card enables holders to access State Government concessions and private business discounts, while the Seniors Business Discount Card enables holders to access private business discounts only. This card enables the holder to access generous discounts at over 20,000 business outlets around Australia, as well as the non-government Senior Shopper 'discount-finder' telephone service.

Queensland offers a generous range of State Government concessions to Seniors Card holders, including: motor vehicle registration fee discount; boat registration fee discount; public transport discounts within Queensland (bus, train, ferry fares); electricity rebate; Electricity Life Support Concession; free dental services; access to the spectacles supply scheme; medical aids subsidy; exemption on their principal place of residence from the community ambulance charge; exhibition fee discount to government museums and galleries; and fishing licence fee discount.

Seniors who are eligible for a Pensioner Concession Card or Veterans' Gold Card are eligible for the Pensioner Rate Subsidy Scheme (PRSS). The Department of Communities administers the PRSS, which provides a State Government subsidy on local government rates. The aim of the PRSS is to alleviate the impact of local government rates and charges on pensioners, thereby assisting them to continue to live in their own homes. The PRSS provides a subsidy equivalent to 20% (to a maximum amount of \$180 per annum) of the gross rates and charges levied by a local government. Seniors who receive a Pensioner Concession Card from Centrelink or the Commonwealth Department of Veterans' Affairs are also eligible for four free rail trips per year on Travel Train services within Queensland.

2. The Department of Communities' Seniors Interests Unit promotes positive attitudes to ageing in the community through the development and dissemination of resources and facilitation of events such as:

- Seniors Week, which promotes the participation of older people in their communities. Over 75 community groups are funded by the Department of Communities each year to take part in Seniors Week celebrations;

- the Premier's Awards for Queensland Seniors, which raise awareness of the contributions of older people to the community;
- the Older People Speak Out Awards, to recognise positive images of older people in the media;
- *Myth and Reality*, a publication that challenges myths that ageing equals frailty and dependence. This publication is widely distributed and freely available from the department;
- the Seniors Enquiry Line is an information and referral service for people seeking information about activities in their local area, funded by the Department of Communities; and
- 19 Older People's Projects in their local area to combat social isolation by: referring and linking older people with existing services; providing information and education to older people, families and the broader community; and developing and distributing resource materials and education seminars.

The Seniors Interests Unit also liaises closely with Queensland Health, Sport and Recreation Queensland and the Brisbane City Council in the development of healthy ageing programs, such as the Sixties and Better, Just Walk it and Steady Steps programs.