

Question on Notice

Number. 105

Asked on Thursday 24 February 2005

MS JARRATT MP asked the Minister for Communities, Disability Services and Seniors (**Mr Pitt**)

How has the LAC program been expanded in the Whitsunday Electorate?

ANSWER:

In the 2004-05 budget, \$0.5M was allocated for the further expansion of the Local Area Coordination program, allowing for the establishment of four additional positions.

Accordingly, I am pleased to announce that an additional Local Area Coordinator Supervisor will be appointed and based in the Whitsunday Shire. This position will supervise a new Local Area Coordinator based in Bowen and allow for future expansion of positions into surrounding areas.

It is anticipated that the recruitment and selection of these staff will occur in late April with commencement in Whitsunday and Bowen areas in late May 2005.

The expansion of the program to the Whitsunday Shire will provide ongoing assistance to up to 75 people with a disability and their families and provide one-off support and assistance to a greater number of people.

The expansion of the program successfully builds upon the existing and proposed coverage in North Queensland. It, will on completion, be a part of a cohesive system of coverage that extends from Cape York through outlying areas of central and south west Queensland, to the New South Wales border.

The role of the Local Area Coordinator is to work with people with a disabilities, their families and the local community to bring about positive changes that: assist people with a disability to live and participate in the community and to assist families in their continued provision of care and support. The Local Area Coordinator works at the community level to assist communities to become more welcoming and inclusive of people with a disability and their families.

There are currently 35 Local Area Coordination staff employed in rural and remote communities across Queensland.