

## Question on Notice

Number. 327

Asked on Tuesday, 22 March 2005

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

What funding initiatives have been released by the State Government to address the issue of homelessness in Queensland?

### **ANSWER:**

The Queensland Government is working to reduce homelessness and has recently committed funds of \$40 million to increase services for homeless people in Brisbane.

The Lady Bowen complex at Spring Hill will be redeveloped to provide services for homeless people in the inner city. This redevelopment is a significant investment by the Queensland Government to help homeless people build a better future.

The redevelopment will take place in three stages over four years. The first stage will upgrade the former nurses' quarters into a short-term shelter for homeless people with complex needs who might be excluded from other services. Stage 1 of the project is expected to be completed and operating early in 2006. When completed the shelter would be open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Stages 2 and 3 of the redevelopment will provide bed-sit style and longer-term accommodation as well as office space for government-funded organisations to support homeless people.

The Department of Housing will fund the construction work and the Department of Communities will provide ongoing operational funding.

In addition, the Queensland Government has doubled a previous commitment of a new service for homeless people in Brisbane. Last year Premier Beattie promised the establishment of a 'one-stop' shop in Brisbane for homeless people.

The Queensland Government will now provide almost \$3 million in capital and recurrent funding over three years to establish and operate two services, one centre at South Brisbane and another service operating throughout the inner city.

One of the challenges for homeless people is to make contact with the housing and support services they need. A 'one-stop' shop will provide information about community services available for homeless people and, where appropriate, provide an initial assessment and referral to specialist health, housing and legal services.

The establishment of these information and referral services will make it easier for homeless people to access services, at the same time as improving coordination among groups that are funded to work with homeless people. Up to 13 community organisations will team up to operate these services.

The Department of Communities allocated \$48.6 million to nearly 200 community agencies in 2004-05 to address homelessness in Queensland. These initiatives, the Lady Bowen Hostel and the two information and referral services, will build on this investment the Queensland Government has already made to preventing homelessness.