

Question on Notice
No. 624
Asked on 21 April 2006

MR FINN asked the Minister for Health (MR ROBERTSON)-

QUESTION:

How will the newly created Consumer Health Council benefit people in my electorate of Yeerongpilly who access health services?

ANSWER:

The establishment of the Consumer Health Council is in the development phase. Queenslanders will be able to contribute to the development through a consultation process to determine what functions and services will best serve the interests of the community.

Queensland Health is preparing a discussion paper outlining options for the function and structure for community consideration.

The Consumer Health Council will be an independent organisation providing a voice for consumers and will compliment the work of the new Health Quality and Complaints Commission.

While community consultation is critical in determining the final role for the Council, features of the Council could include:

- Advocating for the rights of consumers both at the individual and systemic level;
- The provision of support and information to individual consumers to enable them to access health care services;
- A focus on consultation with Queensland community and consumer groups to ascertain opinions, encourage participation and build capacity;
- Fostering consumer engagement in the development of health policy and programs;
- Liaison with communities, government and non-government agencies on health issues; and
- Recruitment, support and training for consumer representatives.

Queenslanders from all electorates will have access to the Consumer Health Council providing an opportunity for ongoing consumer participation.

Importantly, prior to the Council being established the community consultation process will provide an opportunity for the community to have a say in determining factors that will result in an effective Consumer Health Council.