

**Question on Notice**  
**No. 732**  
**Asked on 11 May 2006**

MS STONE asked the Minister for Health (MR ROBERTSON)-

**QUESTION:**

Will he provide details on how the Queensland Government is providing Queenslanders with a strong voice in health policy, planning and delivery of the health system?

**ANSWER:**

Queensland Health commitment to the involvement of the Queensland community over the next five years is formally identified in the Action Plan (October 2005), *“Communities too will help to strengthen our health system and we will ensure that citizens will be more informed about the performance of the health system and involved in planning.”*.

Queenslanders will have a voice through Queensland Health District Health Councils, and involvement in the upcoming independent community based Consumer Health Council. There are also existing channels of communication available to patients at the District level for complaints and compliments through health facility Patient Liaison Officers, the patient satisfaction surveys conducted every two years; and through Mental Health Consumer consultants who provide an avenue for mental health patients to engage with the service.

Queensland Health District Health Councils provide information, gather feedback and engage the local community on health issues and community concerns. The Government intends to strengthen the involvement of District Health Councils to enhance local decision making.

The Government will also establish a Consumer Health Council as an independent body that will provide a statewide patient advocacy and support service and complement the work of the Health Quality and Complaints Commission.

This direct relationship with consumers will ensure that the Council is informed of issues, trends and consumer concerns. In addition the Health Consumer Council will support the role of consumer representatives in health forums and committees.

The role, function and organisational structure of the Council will be finalised following a period of community consultation. However, the proposed roles of the Consumer Health Council could include:

- providing support and information to individual consumers to enable them to access health care services;
- conducting consultations with the community and consumer groups to ascertain opinions;
- encouraging participation in health planning;
- participation in the development of health policy and programs; and
- provision of training and support to consumer representatives.

Queensland Health is committed to consumer involvement so that Queenslanders have a voice in the planning, development and delivery of health services.