

## Question on Notice

No. 257

Asked on Thursday, 22 February 2006

**MR FENLON MP** asked the Minister for Communities, Minister for Disability Services Queensland, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Minister for Seniors and Youth (**MR PITT**) -

Will he detail funding that is available to carers of people in the Queensland Community with intellectual disabilities?

### **ANSWER:**

The Queensland Government does not provide any funding directly to carers of persons with an intellectual disability. Such persons are usually family members who are eligible for Commonwealth Government assistance through Centrelink programs such as the Carer Allowance.

In 2003, a Carer Recognition Policy was released by the Queensland Government. This has led to the development of a Carer Action Plan which will address six priority areas: ageing carers; young carers; carers as partners in care; information; cross-government coordination; and balancing learning, employment and caring responsibilities.

A significant initiative for carers in 2006-07 was the allocation of \$1.5 million for the introduction of an Access Card and a Carers Card. The Access Card will be issued to people with a disability who need assistance from a carer or companion in order to attend venues and entertainment activities. The Carers Card is modelled on the existing Seniors Card and will provide carers with discounts from participating businesses and will enable carers to officially identify themselves in the formal role as a carer, to government departments and participating businesses.

Disability Services Queensland provides services to over 18,000 individuals with a disability. Of these, approximately 7,800 identify as having an intellectual disability as their primary disability whilst over 2,500 identify as having an intellectual disability as a secondary or other disability. Queensland Government funding for disability support services is provided on a priority of needs basis, not by disability type.

However, the Queensland Government does provide substantial funding to non-government organisations, many of which provide support services to persons with an intellectual disability. These services include day services, in-home support, community access, accommodation and advocacy. Individualised funding is also provided through the Family Support Program and the Adult Lifestyle Support Program.

In addition, the Queensland Government provides some support services and accommodation directly through the Accommodation Support and Respite Services Directorate of Disability Services Queensland and currently, almost 600 individuals are accommodated in over 220 households. The majority of these accommodation facilities are typical suburban houses and over 90 per cent receive 24 hour support services from the department.

To assist families with children aged 0-6 years with an intellectual disability or developmental delay, Disability Services Queensland provides services through its Family and Early Childhood Services teams. The 2006-07 budget of \$3.4 million provides 13 teams, located in major metropolitan and regional centres across the State. These also provide outreach services to adjacent areas in a number of rural locations. Approximately 900 families and children are receiving assistance through these teams.

As many parent carers age, they are concerned as to who will care for their son or daughter when they are no longer able to. Accordingly, the Queensland Government provided funding of \$1 million in 2005-06, increasing to \$6 million over four years, to implement a Succession Planning initiative. This involves developing a vision for the person with a disability and planning formal and informal networks to support the person and his or her family as their needs change over time.