

Question on Notice

No. 328

Asked on Wednesday, 7 March 2007

MS MALE 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 advise the rationale behind moving the responsibility of mental health care to the Department of Communities and what benefits this will afford to providing services to people with a mental health issue?

ANSWER:

After extensive consideration, on Thursday 15 March 2007, the Queensland Government finalised details of functions to be transferred from Queensland Health to the Department of Communities as part of changes made after the 2006 state election.

Contract management for services provided by non-government organisations, including mental health services, will be transferred from Queensland Health to the Department of Communities, while mental health policy, legislation and strategy will remain with Queensland Health.

The government made its decision based on the best interests of patients, clients and the wider community, and the intention to focus efforts and resources on actions that deliver clear results for Queenslanders. In respect of mental health policy, legislation and strategy remaining with Queensland Health, the government's decision took into account the additional costs, the impacts on staff, the predominant alignment of these functions with health services and the views expressed in the consultation process.

Contract management for mental health services provided by non-government organisations is closely aligned with the current policy directions and business focus of the Department of Communities and can be moved with minimal disruption and cost. The move will help to coordinate policies and programs and provide a more cohesive approach to service delivery.

It is expected that the transition of this element of Queensland Health transferring to the Department of Communities should be completed by 30 June 2007.