

## Question on Notice

No. 424

Asked on Tuesday, 13 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 what assistance the Queensland Government is providing to grandparents who are raising their grandchildren?

### ANSWER:

The Queensland Government has assisted the growing number of grandparents who are performing the vital role of raising their grandchildren by providing \$0.58 million in triennial funding for the *Time for Grandparents* respite initiative.

The *Time for Grandparents* initiative is a statewide program which offers a broad range of fully-funded recreational and respite activities to grandparents and grandchildren. The program links a range of activity providers throughout Queensland to one central referral agency operated by *Seniors Enquiry Line*, via a 1300 phone line, for the cost of a local call. The program is flexible, allowing families to choose activities which suit their individual respite needs.

The initiative includes camps designed to provide grandparents with information, networks and experiences that will enhance their ability to cope with their new role, ultimately helping to increase the sustainability of their care arrangements.

The camps give grandchildren access to activities that may otherwise be unavailable to them due to the physical and financial barriers faced by their grandparents. Grandparents participating in camps can attend information sessions covering a range of issues, such as, family law, grandparents' legal issues and how to access financial support and other government and community services. Possibly the most valued aspect of the camps is the availability of group and individual counselling sessions with psychologists.

In addition to the *Time for Grandparents* program, the Queensland Government has implemented the \$100,000 *Information for Grandparents* initiative. This initiative creates a centralised information and referral service relevant to grandparents raising children.

In 2006-07, the Queensland Government has allocated \$180,000 in one-off funding from within the \$0.58 million, for the provision of additional support services targeted towards grandparents raising children. Funded initiatives will complement the *Time for Grandparents* program.

Finally, grandparents who are at risk of elder abuse or financial exploitation will soon be able to access the \$1.9 million pilot *Seniors Legal and Support Service*. It is anticipated that service centres will be operating in Brisbane, Hervey Bay, Cairns, Townsville and Toowoomba by the end of the 2006-07 financial year.