

Question on Notice

No. 75

Asked on Wednesday, 7 February 2007

MS PALASZCZUK 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**) -

- (1) How much funding has been directed to strengthen the non-government organisations operating in the disability sector over the past two years?
- (2) How much funding and what programs have been directed for children with a disability over the past two years?

ANSWER:

In 2006-07 the Queensland Government, through the Disability Services Queensland-operated Strengthening Non-Government Organisations initiative, allocated an additional \$10 million to disability sector organisations to improve their service delivery to clients.

Combined with the \$20 million previously provided, from 2006-07 this increase brings funding to assist disability-specific non-government service providers to \$30 million.

This record level of funding to Disability Services Queensland is an acknowledgment by this Government of the vital services provided by funded service providers and will significantly boost the capacity of those organisations to provide high quality disability services.

In addition, the Department of Communities, in partnership with Disability Services Queensland, operates a whole-of-portfolio Non-Government Organisations Strategy. This strategy has assisted disability sector organisations develop and implement business cases for collaborative activities to increase service delivery and administrative efficiencies.

A feature of the strategy operated by the Department of Communities is the workforce development initiative aimed at attracting, developing and retaining a suitably skilled workforce. Forty-two of the eighty-five organisations participating in this initiative are from the disability sector. A further initiative provided through this strategy is online access to practical and user-friendly tools and resources to assist with day to day operations of a non-government organisation through the *Community Door* website.

In respect of funding and programs, I have made the provision of services to children a high priority for my portfolio and have increased the base budget for disability services to children and their families from:

- \$146 million to \$153 million in 2005-06, an increase of \$7 million
- \$153 million to \$167.5 million in 2006-07, an increase of \$14.5 million.

This is a boost of over \$21 million in funding over the past two years.

To achieve this unprecedented increase in funding to children, the Family Support Program for Children was allocated additional funding of \$4.465 million in 2005-06 and \$4.1 million in 2006-07. This program is a proven strategy to prevent family breakdown and avoid children with disabilities leaving their family home to receive the support they need.

In addition, in 2006-07 \$3.8 million has been allocated to establish and operate Child Safety Behaviour Support teams to help provide families with the skills to prevent and manage the challenging behaviours that some children with a disability may display.

Respite services play a crucial role in helping families and carers of children with a disability cope with the demands placed on them. Over the previous two years almost \$2 million has been invested in establishing 15 new respite services in locations across the state.

In 2006-07 I increased funding to provide services to children with a disability through engagement of specialist non-government organisations that provide information, linking and early intervention programs. For children under eight years of age with physical disabilities and high support needs \$3 million was provided. For children under five years of age with autism, \$2 million will be provided over two years.

To further improve new and enhanced early childhood and therapy services for children aged 0 – 6 years with developmental delay, early childhood services operated by Disability Services Queensland were allocated \$1.394 million in 2005-06 and \$0.776 million in 2006-07.

I look forward to continuing to improve this Government's strong record in relation to the provision of disability services to people with a disability, their families and carers.