

Question on Notice

No. 1064

Asked on Tuesday 1 September 2009

MS GRACE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR DISABILITY SERVICES AND MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS (MS PALASZCZUK)—

With reference to the increasing number of Queenslanders affected by dementia – will the Minister advise what the Department is doing to help people with dementia who choose to remain living in their own homes?

ANSWER:

The Bligh Government supports people living with dementia and their carers, to stay living in their home if they choose to, through the Home and Community Care Program, known as HACC.

The HACC program is a joint Australian and Queensland Government initiative, which provides a continuum of care to frail aged and younger people with a disability who, without basic maintenance and support services, would be at risk of premature or inappropriate long-term residential care. It provides funding for important services such as home-based care, advocacy and support for carers.

Dementia affects people's ability to live independently and places significant demands on carers, whose needs for support often increase over time. People living with dementia also often find it more difficult than most clients to access services due to the nature of the condition.

In April the Federal Minister for Ageing, Hon Justine Elliot MP and I announced ongoing funding to Ozcare of \$1.3 million, effective from 2008-09, for the establishment of seven new regional Dementia Advisory and Support services across Queensland.

Dementia is a national health priority through the HACC program and we have made a strong commitment to addressing this issue through the Dementia Services Development Strategy being implemented from 2007 to 2011.

A key element of the HACC Dementia Services Development Strategy is the establishment of new HACC services specifically targeted to the needs of people with dementia and their carers and will have a particular focus on educating and training other HACC service providers across Queensland. This will strengthen their capacity to provide appropriate assistance to people living with dementia and their carers.

Implementation of the Home and Community Care Dementia Services Development Strategy over 2007-11 involves the establishment of new Dementia Advisory and Support services in the Central, Darling Downs/South West, North Brisbane, Northern Queensland, Peninsula, South Brisbane and West Moreton/South Coast regions of the state in addition to three existing services in North Brisbane, South Brisbane and Northern Queensland.

The regional spread of HACC Dementia Advisory and Support services will ensure that people in rural and remote communities who are living with dementia –including carers – will be able to access appropriate information, counselling and advocacy services.

The provision of these new Dementia Advisory and Support services is underpinned by the fundamental belief at the heart of the HACC program – that supporting people to remain living among friends and family, in the comfort of their own homes and communities, enhances their dignity and allows a better quality of life.

The Bligh Government is working with the Rudd Government and service providers to deliver an integrated approach of support to people living with dementia and their carers. Family care givers remain the cornerstone of support for people with dementia ensuring that the best outcomes occur by keeping the person with dementia in a familiar environment supported by familiar people.