

## **Question on Notice**

**No. 1253**

**Asked on Wednesday 16 September 2009**

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

Will the Minister outline how the government is assisting people with a mental illness upon leaving correctional facilities transition from these institutions into the community?

**ANSWER:**

The Bligh Government is working to ensure there is appropriate assistance available to people with a mental illness leaving correctional facilities to help them recover.

In 2009–10, \$400,000 is available to expand the Transition from Correctional Facilities Program. I recently approved \$200,000 of this 2009–10 allocation in recurrent funding to Richmond Fellowship Queensland to expand their existing service in south-east Queensland to include the Maryborough Correctional Centre.

This funding is in addition to more than \$900,000 already allocated to the program across three locations in south-east Queensland, Townsville and Cairns.

The aim of the program is to support eligible individuals on their return to the community to make links to accommodation, local health services, employment agencies and social supports. Eligible individuals referred from Prison Mental Health Services are supported for at least two weeks prior and up to six months following their release from correctional facilities.

People with a mental illness transitioning from correctional facilities may also be at significant risk of homelessness. The Queensland Government is working collaboratively with the Australian Government under the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness to roll out several new initiatives that will address this serious problem.

It is important to remember that people with a mental illness can and do recover and lead meaningful lives within our community. These programs are another example of the Bligh Government's commitment to support people with a mental illness.