

Question on Notice

No. 1436

Asked on Wednesday 7 October 2009

MS JOHNSTONE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES AND HOUSING AND MINISTER FOR WOMEN (MS STRUTHERS)—

With reference to the national partnership agreement on homelessness, in particular the 'Kids Under Cover' initiative—Will the Minister provide an update on 'Kids under Cover' for the Townsville region?

ANSWER:

Kids under Cover bungalows, known in Queensland as Youth Studios, are part of the Youth Housing and Reintegration Service initiative developed by the Department of Communities as part of the national partnership agreement on homelessness.

This is an innovative initiative that will provide support and accommodation in four locations around the State this financial year, including Townsville, to young people who are at risk of homelessness.

Over the next six months, a suitable organisation will be identified in Townsville to deliver the Youth Housing and Reintegration Service, and it is anticipated that, allowing time for the successful non-government organisation to undertake activities such as recruitment of staff, service delivery to young people will commence in April/May 2010.

As part of the implementation of this initiative, the Queensland Government's partnership with Kids Under Cover has recently been formalised, with Kids Under Cover being approved as a registered housing provider on 10 September 2009.

The department is now working to develop guidelines that will allow for the release of funds to Kids Under Cover, and subsequent construction of Youth Studios.

To ensure successful implementation of the Youth Housing and Reintegration Service, including Youth Studios, substantial work is also being undertaken to develop operational policies and procedures. This includes a review of the Kids Under Cover service agreement which is being tailored to the Queensland context. This work is crucial to the effectiveness of the initiative, and is in the best interests of the young people and families who will be the recipients of the Youth Studios.

Kids Under Cover has indicated its preference for the Youth Housing and Reintegration Service to be in place prior to the implementation of the Youth Studios and for a staggered implementation period to ensure the success of this initiative.

It is anticipated that the first Youth Studio will be in place in Townsville in May 2010, allowing sufficient time for the Youth Housing and Reintegration Service to be operational, and to identify young people and families eligible for a youth studio.