

## **Question on Notice**

**No. 1596**

**Asked on Wednesday 28 October 2009**

**MR WETTENHALL** ASKED THE MINISTER FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES AND HOUSING AND MINISTER FOR WOMEN (MS STRUTHERS)—

Will the Minister advise what services the Queensland Government provides to support seniors in the Barron River Electorate?

**ANSWER:**

The Queensland Government provides funding to support seniors through three key programs: Home and Community Care, the Concessions Program and the Seniors Participation and Support Program.

Two services are funded under the Seniors Participation and Support program to support seniors in the Barron River electorate:

- Seniors Legal and Support Service, Cairns received \$386,418 in 2009–10
- Marlin Coast, Older People's Action Program, Safe and Confident Living Program, located in Smithfield received \$70,678 in 2009–10.

The Seniors Legal and Support Service targets older people who are at risk of and/or experiencing elder abuse or financial exploitation. The Cairns Seniors Legal and Support Service is auspiced by the Cairns Community Legal Centre, thereby building on legal infrastructure, expertise and community knowledge. The service is staffed by a solicitor and a social worker and this multi-disciplinary approach assists in providing a tailored and holistic response to the needs of older people at risk of elder abuse or financial exploitation.

The Marlin Coast Safe and Confident Living Program provides older people who may be at risk of social isolation with activities and opportunities to extend and strengthen their personal and community connectedness.

The Home and Community Care Program is jointly funded by the Australian and Queensland Governments and provides 18 types of basic support and maintenance services.

There are three services funded through the Home and Community Care Program located in the Barron River electorate, namely: Blue Care Cairns-Douglas, Blue Care Cairns Continence Advisory Service and Marlin Coast Meals on Wheels, providing social support services, nursing allied health and personal care, centre-based day care and transport.

During the last financial year, 77 per cent of Queenslanders who accessed Home and Community Care Service were 65 years of age or older.

In 2008–09, the Queensland Government also provided a range of concessions totalling \$130.143 million to over 900,000 eligible pensioners, seniors and veterans throughout Queensland. These concessions are provided on a range of essential services such as the Pensioner Rate Subsidy Scheme, South East Queensland Pensioner Water Subsidy Scheme, Electricity Rebate Scheme, Electricity Life Support Concession Scheme and the Reticulated Natural Gas Rebate Scheme.

The Department of Communities also operates the Seniors Card and Seniors Business Discount Card Scheme which delivers savings to Queenslanders aged 60 years and older. Currently some 607,000 Queensland seniors hold one of these cards. The scheme provides discounts on goods and services across Queensland.