

## Question on Notice

No. 983

Asked on 14 October 2015

Ms Farmer asked the Minister for Disability Services, Minister for Seniors and Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland (MS O'ROURKE)—

### QUESTION

Will the Minister advise how the Palaszczuk Labor Government is supporting Queensland's dedicated carers, including those in the Bulimba Electorate?

### ANSWER

The Palaszczuk Government acknowledges and values the hard work and commitment of carers all over the state, including those living in the Electorate of Bulimba.

It was a Labor Government that established the Queensland Carers Advisory Council, to provide government with advice on strategies for increasing recognition and support for carers. Most recently on 6 October, I attended the Council meeting to hear about the most important issues for carers from carers themselves.

The Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services has just appointed the members of the Council for the next two-year term (20 October 2015–19 October 2017) so the Queensland Government can continue to incorporate carers' advice into the way we deliver services.

This government was proud to support Carers Queensland to run community events across the state to raise awareness and support for carers during Carers Week (11–17 October 2015). This year, we provided \$10,400 in sponsorship towards events including carer-friendly business awards, expos, lunches, BBQs and high teas across Brisbane and in regional areas.

Carers Week events on Brisbane's south side included a forum, *Standing Beside You*, for carers of people with mental illness held at Southbank and *Carefest*, an event held at Mount Gravatt to celebrate carers. The winners of the Regional Carer-Friendly Business Awards were also announced at *Carefest*.

The Carer Business Discount Card scheme is a partnership between the Queensland Government and businesses to provide discounts on goods and services to eligible Queensland carers (those who receive the Centrelink Carer Payment or Carer Allowance, or are approved foster and kinship carers through Child Safety).

At the end of September 2015, there were 3861 business outlets across Queensland participating in the scheme, providing discounts to 20,330 Carer Business Discount Card holders (total includes eligible foster and kinship carers).

The Queensland Government's Companion Card entitles people with a disability who have a lifelong need for the significant assistance of a companion to receive a second 'companion' ticket at no charge to attend activities at participating venues and on public transport.

At the end of September 2015, 14,607 Companion Card holders had access to over 774 affiliated venue partners throughout Queensland and other states and territories across Australia.

In 2015–16, the government's Community Care Program allocated \$2.04 million in operating funding to Carers Queensland to provide counselling, support, advocacy, education, training and client care coordination services for carers. Under this program, \$23.3 million is allocated for the delivery of centre-based day care and \$21.88 million for home-based respite care for Community Care clients and their carers.

The Elderly Parent Carer Innovation Initiative assists elderly carers in securing sustainable living arrangements for their adult sons or daughters with a disability when they are no longer able to care for them.

Since September 2012, three funding rounds have been held resulting in \$13.9 million in funding awarded to create 94 places for adults with disability through 16 projects. When combined with the funding contributions of \$12.6 million from the 14 successful organisations, the total value of the projects is \$26.5 million.

A fourth and final, funding round is underway to allocate the remaining \$3.032 million.

This government has allocated \$500,000 each to Carers Queensland and Parent to Parent for the period 1 July 2014 to 31 December 2015 to assist people with disability, their families and carers to understand what the National Disability Insurance Scheme will mean for them in their own circumstances before they enter into the planning process with the National Disability Insurance Agency.

This initiative has proved to be successful and it has been extended for a further six months through to 30 June 2016.

I am proud to say that this government has also allocated a total of \$20 million over the four-year period, 2015–2019, for dementia respite. Funding includes the purchase of additional planned respite care hours from community-based organisations. The care will be for people with a formal or probable diagnosis of dementia and/or a neurological degenerative condition whose carers are in, or seeking to participate in, paid or unpaid work-related activities and are experiencing difficulties in obtaining enough respite care.

This broad range of initiatives demonstrates the Palaszczuk Government's strong commitment to supporting Queensland's carers.