

## **Question on Notice**

**No. 1273**

**Asked on 16 August 2016**

MS BATES asked the Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence (HON S FENTIMAN)—

### **QUESTION**

Will the Minister advise the number of nights accommodation in hotels/motels funded by the State in 2015–16 for women and children who have left the family home due to incidents of family violence?

### **ANSWER**

DVConnect Womensline reports taking over 4000 calls every month from Queensland women, many of whom are in fear of, or experiencing domestic or family violence.

Crisis support provided by DVConnect can include immediate assistance to help women and children get to a place of safety, such as a women's refuge, police station or temporary placement in a motel, as well as practical assistance with transport, food and accessing medical care.

There are many reasons why women and children are placed in temporary motel accommodation when refuge beds are unavailable or unsuitable, including lack of available refuge vacancies, time of night they are fleeing the violence or where they are travelling intrastate or interstate to an alternative place of safety, such as family or friends.

In 2015–16, DVConnect reported 9000 nights of motel accommodation were provided to 9000 women and 13,393 children who were escaping domestic and family violence. This is an increase from 3624 motel nights provided in 2014–15 and 2318 motel nights provided in 2013–14.

Since October 2014, DVConnect has reported a significant increase in calls to Womensline with calls increasing from 100–150 calls a day to 200–250 calls a day.

The timing of this increase is consistent with the elevated profile that domestic and family violence received after the establishment of the Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland. DVConnect reported a further spike in calls after the tragic, and public, murder of two women on the Gold Coast in September 2015.

This increase in demand has been felt across the Queensland domestic and family violence support system. That is why the Palaszczuk Government has elevated its commitment to address domestic and family violence with an across-government investment of almost \$200 million over five years to respond to the issue.

Of this investment, \$8.7 million has been allocated over four years to establish two new domestic and family violence shelters in rural and remote areas of Queensland. These new services will be located in Charters Towers and Roma.

This allocation builds upon the Government's previous investment in establishing new crisis shelters in Brisbane and Townsville, which became operational in December 2015. Collectively, these new shelters are the first to be established in Queensland in 20 years.

A critical component of the additional funding is the ground breaking mobile support and outreach service which provides specialist case management support to address the immediate safety and support needs of women and children temporarily placed in motels.

This enables greater choice and support for women for whom hotel accommodation is the most appropriate short term placement, allowing domestic violence services to work directly with them to determine their needs and plan their next steps.