

Question on Notice

No. 61

Asked on 15 February 2017

MRS D FRECKLINGTON asked the Minister for Disability Services, Minister for Seniors and Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland (HON C O'ROURKE)—

QUESTION

With reference to the Disability Services Queensland (DSQ) Toowoomba physiotherapist role—

Will the Minister clarify (a) whether the role is currently vacant, (b) if the role will be filled and timeframes involved and (c) if the role is not to be filled, how many families eligible for physiotherapy through DSQ Toowoomba can access these services?

ANSWER

- (a) The Disability Services Queensland Toowoomba physiotherapist role is currently vacant. The substantive employee (who is a physiotherapist) has been on secondment since 1 August 2016. A secondment request was initiated by the employee because the introduction of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) will progressively result in Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services (DCCSDS) disability sector clinical positions ceasing to exist. Transition to the NDIS commenced in Toowoomba from 1 January 2017, and DCCSDS is supporting staff to take up opportunities that will assist them in obtaining ongoing employment.
- (b) The physiotherapist role was advertised in August 2016 as an interim measure to fill the position during the transition to the NDIS. No applications were received. Rolling recruitment of vacant positions was initiated, with continuous advertisement on Smartjobs seeking expressions of interest for temporary clinician positions, including physiotherapists, until 1 February 2017. No applications from physiotherapists were received.
- (c) Physiotherapy services are currently being sourced from private practitioners for three families. This arrangement will continue until the families transition to the NDIS. Additionally, a senior physiotherapist from the Centre of Excellence Clinical Innovation and Behaviour Support visited the Toowoomba Service Centre from 17 January 2017 to 20 January 2017, and from 6 February 2017 to 10 February 2017 to provide a physiotherapy service to eligible families. Eleven families were offered the opportunity to have an appointment. Appointments have occurred for families living in Toowoomba, Allora, Dalby, Chinchilla and Tara.

Transition to the NDIS is scheduled to be completed in Toowoomba on 30 June 2017. An agreement between Toowoomba Disability Services and the Centre of Excellence Clinical Innovation and Behaviour Support is in place so that continued physiotherapy support is provided during the transition period to the NDIS. The following dates have been tentatively booked for the Centre of Excellence senior physiotherapist to visit Toowoomba:

- 27 to 31 March 2017
- 24 to 28 April 2017
- 29 May to 2 June 2017.

Services and supports in the NDIS will be principally provided by the disability sector. Participants in the NDIS will have choice and control over who provides their supports and when they are provided.