

## Question on Notice

No. 148

Asked on 18 February 2020

**MR D JANETZKI** asked the Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence (HON D FARMER)

### QUESTION

With reference to residential care—

Will the Minister advise (a) what was the total funding provided to residential care providers in 2017-18 and 2018-19 (reported separately by year and child safety region), (b) what was the total spend for residential care in 2017-18 and 2018-19 (reported separately by year and child safety region) and (c) how many unique children were in residential care in 2017-18 and 2018-19 (reported separately by year and child safety region)?

### ANSWER

Resi-care services might seem expensive but this story about one young girl who lives in care provides a good example of why. We will call her Chloe.

Chloe is 16 and came into our care when she was 14. She was malnourished, her mouth was a mess and it hurt her to eat – she had never seen a dentist in her life. We covered the cost of the expensive dental care she needed. She has Autism Spectrum Disorder, Attention Deficit Disorder and an intellectual disability. She wears an adult nappy, because she has no control over toileting.

She is non-verbal and communication is severely impaired. She cannot tell us what she experienced before she came into care, but her parents were almost completely disengaged at that point. She probably did not come to us from a loving, caring, supportive home. Chloe cannot express when she is frustrated or hurt or angry or scared. Instead, she acts out in very extreme ways—hitting, punching, kicking, scratching and biting, wiping her faeces everywhere and spitting on carers. She punches walls and throws furniture and smashes windows. She displays inappropriate sexualised behaviours. If she is in a car, she will attack the driver. To keep her safe and to keep others safe, she has to live in a placement with no other children, with two staff rostered on at all times, including an awake shift overnight. Staff cannot safely go to sleep. Thanks to residential care workers, Chloe feels safe with her current placement. Her medical and care needs are looked after and she has learnt to communicate simple needs like hunger with hand gestures or noises. That for Chloe is a good result. Chloe's care costs a lot, but Chloe has no-one to look after her except us and that is what we are doing.

#### **(a) Total funding provided to residential care providers in 2017-18 and 2018-19**

The table below provides the per annum funding provided to residential care providers as contracted under a Service Agreement, as well as residential care providers that are contracted under fee-for-service arrangements.

<b>Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women (DCSYW) Region</b>	<b>2017-18</b>	<b>2018-19</b>
Central Queensland	28,657,478	42,750,226
Moreton	57,079,535	69,361,579
Northern Queensland	52,171,098	57,266,404
South East	44,970,795	59,344,692
South West	51,545,244	69,532,320
<b>Total</b>	<b>234,424,150</b>	<b>298,255,221</b>

(2)

**(b) Total spend for residential care in 2017-18 and 2018-19**

The table below provides the per annum funding (annual contracted spend or expense) for residential care providers and the fee-for-service arrangements spend.

DCSYW Region	2017-18	2018-19
Central Queensland	29,036,782	42,835,980
Moreton	55,261,610	66,860,093
Northern Queensland	51,468,420	54,197,145
South East	45,567,127	58,130,553
South West	51,200,578	64,528,113
<b>Total</b>	<b>232,534,517</b>	<b>286,551,884</b>

The variance between the total funding and the total spending is due to fluctuations in emergent residential care demand and the complexity of support needs for young people who have experienced trauma. The 2017-2018 variance is \$1,889,633 and the 2018-19 variance is \$11,703,337.

**(c) Unique children in residential care in 2017-18 and 2018-19**

The Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women reports publicly on the number of young people in a residential care placement on the last day of every quarter, but does not normally produce the requested information. On 30 June 2018 there were 814 young people in residential care, and on 30 June 2019 there were 951 young people in residential care.

This data is therefore not a count of the total number of young people placed in residential care throughout the year, which will be significantly higher. For example, a young person may enter residential care on 1 January 2019 and exit on 30 May 2019. This young person will not be included in the count of young people in residential care on 30 June 2019. As such, the figures provided cannot be used to calculate an average cost per child (per year) in residential care.

**Number of children in residential care, by region, Queensland**

DCSYW Region <sup>(a)</sup>	As at 30 June 2018	As at 30 June 2019
Central Queensland	137	150
Moreton	146	201
Northern Queensland	178	207
South East	176	204
South West	177	189
<b>Total</b>	<b>814</b>	<b>951</b>

Source: Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women

Notes:

(a) Region responsible for the case management of the child during ongoing intervention.

**GLOSSARY**

**Residential care services**

Non-family-based accommodation and support services funded by the department to provide placement