

Question on Notice

No. 657

Asked on 25 May 2021

MR R KATTER ASKED THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND AMBULANCE SERVICES (HON Y D'ATH) –

QUESTION

With reference to the Palaszczuk State Government's election commitment of a further \$171m to be invested over six years for palliative care in Queensland—

Will the Minister confirm where and when the following allocations will be delivered (a) \$102.5m to employ more front-line palliative care staff, (b) \$54.8m immediately for community-based service providers to deliver home-based care for adults and children and after-hours services delivered through our public hospital system, (c) \$500,000 to develop a new Palliative and End-of-Life Care Strategy, (d) \$7.2m to improve palliative care digital services and telehealth, (e) \$4.3m to provide 24/7 secondary consultation for palliative care practitioners and (f) \$1.6m for additional palliative care public education and advocacy?

ANSWER

The Queensland Government acknowledges that the provision of compassionate, high-quality and accessible palliative care for persons at their end of life is a fundamental right for the Queensland community.

The Government's commitment to new additional funding of \$171 million 2021-22 to 2025-26 in palliative care will complement and build on ongoing existing investment in the Queensland palliative care system through Hospital and Health Services (HHSs) and contracted non-government organisations.

By 2025-26, it is anticipated that the Queensland Government expenditure for palliative care will be more than \$230 million each year through specialist services in our public health system, and with non-government partner organisations for community-based services.

Queensland Health has already commenced work on the development of the new Palliative and End-of-Life Strategy (the Strategy) that will guide and over-pin the investment, including a workforce plan and other initiatives. The Strategy will enable local service delivery to support Queenslanders to have better access to high-quality palliative care and achieve their goals for care at the end-of-life.

A key component of this new funding is allocating \$102.5 million over three years from 2023-24 for the employment of more front-line palliative care staff under a workforce plan which will be developed and activated in partnership with hospital and health services.

The workforce plan will include development, attraction, recruitment and retention strategies and is expected to both increase the number of frontline specialist palliative care workers, as well as build the capability of the broader workforce to provide appropriate palliative care across the state from 2023-24 onwards.

Workforce development processes, including the attraction of specialists from other jurisdictions, or the development of specialists through new training and career pathways is required to deliver on this commitment. These processes take time with consultation and development work being done at the grass roots level in each HHS commencing from July 2021.

The Queensland Government will also allocate \$54.8 million over the period 2021-22 to 2025-26 for the delivery of after-hours and home-based hospice care through new partnership arrangements with non-government palliative care services.

New home-based services enabled through this initiative are targeted at children and adults, including first nations people, particularly in regional and remote Queensland. This initiative will see new investment activated in 2021-22 to increase access and equity across Queensland, particularly in regional and remote locations.

Other initiatives under the forthcoming Strategy, such as improved public education, telehealth, and secondary consultation will build on existing investment, including support for Ambulance Wish Queensland and programs delivered through the Care in the Right Setting.