

## Question on Notice

No. 827

Asked on 16 June 2021

**MR J KELLY** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister Multicultural Affairs (HON L LINARD)—

### QUESTION

Will the Minister advise what supports are in place from the Queensland Government for refugees and asylum seekers being exited from detention by the Federal Government?

### ANSWER

The Federal Government, through the Commonwealth Department of Home Affairs has full responsibility for refugees and asylum seekers.

Sadly, as a direct result of decisions by the Morrison Government to turn its back on some of our most vulnerable people, there are significant gaps in support when they are released from Department of Home Affairs' immigration detention programs. The Palaszczuk Government has stepped in to provide support and continues to do so.

People seeking asylum with a bridging or final departure visa and those with a temporary visa issued by the Federal Government have little or no income support.

This leaves them extremely vulnerable, with dire mental health issues due to years of social isolation and a lack of certainty about the future.

Under the *Queensland Multicultural Policy: Our story, our future*, the Palaszczuk Government has made a specific commitment to support refugees and people seeking asylum, including by reducing barriers and creating opportunities for them to participate and contribute to all aspects of life.

The Palaszczuk Government established the Asylum Seeker and Refugee Assistance (ASRA) program to ensure asylum seekers would not live in destitution while they lived in Queensland. I recently announced \$8.3 million in funding for ASRA from 2021-22 through to 2024-25. This funding includes providing continued support to vulnerable people seeking asylum and people with temporary protection visas residing in Queensland, and is in addition to the \$4.7 million provided to Communitify Queensland to deliver ASRA since 2017-18.

Based on regular progress reports, Communitify Queensland and its service partners have delivered support services to hundreds of people, including employment assistance, personal and family counselling, emergency relief and food supplies, clothing, medication, housing and allied health to alleviate financial and mental distress.

The Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs has continued to engage with key Queensland Government agencies, including in relation to support options for people released from the Kangaroo Point Place of Detention and Brisbane Immigration Transit Accommodation, as well as people released from community detention in late 2020.

Following the release of people from community detention in late 2020, Queensland Government agencies have provided short-term assistance in areas such as emergency housing, mental health and access to legal services.

The Palaszczuk Government remains committed to delivering inclusive support to all people in Queensland and has continued to advocate to the Federal Government in relation to vulnerable refugees and people seeking asylum.