

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES — OLDER CARER SUPPORT

2529. Hon Lynn MacLaren to the Minister for Disability Services

- (1) Has the Government indicated that the needs of family members of older carers will be a major focus in 2010/11?
- (2) Have specific strategies been detailed and funds been allocated to this group to meet these needs?
- (3) Can the Minister please advise how the Government will meet the specific needs of people with a disability, who are being supported by older carers?
- (4) Is the Minister aware that a lack of appropriate, accessible and affordable housing is a barrier to a number of eligible people with disabilities, accessing their accommodation support packages?
- (5) What strategies have been identified to improve access to appropriate, affordable housing for people with disabilities?

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN replied:

- (1) Yes. The Minister for Disability Services' Budget Bulletin 2010-2011 states that meeting the needs of family members of older carers will be a particular focus in 2010-11.
- (2) Older carers were a particular focus in the first Combined Application Process funding round for 2010-11, with 28 carers aged 75 years and over receiving Accommodation Support Funding, Individual Family Support or Alternatives to Employment. This represented close to 100 per cent of all carers aged 75 years and over seeking additional support under the Combined Application Process.

A Statewide network of Local Area Coordinators work closely with people with disability and their carers, and this includes specific support to older carers to plan for the time when they are no longer able to provide support for their son or daughter.

Community Living is a recent initiative that assists people with disability, including those with older carers, by providing tailored planning and individualised funding packages to enable them to live a lifestyle of choice and have their own homes.

Older carers are an identified priority within the National Disability Agreement. The Disability Services Commission works closely with its national counterparts to improve options and supports for this target group.

- (3) The government will meet the specific needs of people with disability who are being supported by older carers through initiatives such as those identified in part (2) above.
- (4) Yes. The 2010-2011 Budget papers acknowledge that the demand for appropriately designed and accessible housing for people with disability continues to significantly outstrip supply.
- (5) The Disability Services Commission is progressing work on several strategies to address the housing shortfall. These include —
 - ongoing liaison and consultation with the Department of Housing to ensure that the needs of people with disability are recognised and addressed; and
 - the State Government recently approved the re-prioritising of disability funding to enable the transfer of funds from the Disability Services Commission to the Department of Housing to enable the commencement of all outstanding specialist disability housing projects.