

Question on Notice
No. 409
Asked on Tuesday, 19 May 2020

MS S BOLTON ASKED MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND PUBLIC WORKS; MINISTER FOR DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY; MINISTER FOR SPORT (HON M DE BRENNI)

With reference to emergency housing measures being introduced during COVID-19 demonstrating the very real and urgent need that already existed in our communities for emergency and long term affordable housing and accommodation—

Will the Minister advise what plans are being implemented to address this in the Noosa region after the emergency measures expire?

ANSWER

The Queensland Government is focused on keeping all Queenslanders healthy and safe in our response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

As a direct response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department of Housing and Public Works commenced a Rapid Housing Response program and is working directly with service providers, industry, peaks and other key partner agencies to deliver local responses across the State. This has been enhanced by the work already occurring through the multi-agency integrated service response, implemented last year, where Place-Based Response Teams and Care Coordination Groups are working in partnership with funded Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS) across nine priority locations in Queensland, including the Sunshine Coast.

In 2019-20, the department allocated \$4,215,148 (GST exclusive) in Homelessness Program funding to five non-government organisations to deliver nine SHS in the Noosa and Sunshine Coast Local Government Areas. These SHS deliver temporary supported accommodation and other support services to people who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

Seven of these SHS have received additional funding under the \$24.7 million Housing and Homelessness COVID-19 Immediate Response Fund to deliver emergency accommodation and outreach services to assist vulnerable Queenslanders during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

As at 27 May 2020, the department has worked with sector partners to help 1,913 Queenslanders with emergency housing assistance during the pandemic, including 143 in the Sunshine Coast region.

In partnership with the Sunshine Coast Council and local provider, Integrated Family and Youth Service, departmental staff have also coordinated the Sunshine Coast Community Hub with a focus on addressing longer-term solutions. A number of local agencies are providing support services in The Hub's 'one-stop shop', where individuals and families can receive support from the department in relation to their longer-term housing needs. Additional assistance being offered includes clothes-washing facilities, showers, medical consultations and flu vaccinations, emergency meal packs and financial advice.

Departmental staff are working with individuals and families in the Noosa and Sunshine Coast regions to determine their long-term housing needs and tailoring person-centred responses to ensure they have suitable housing beyond the COVID-19 pandemic.

Over the first five years of the Housing Construction Jobs Program, \$71 million is also being invested to deliver 243 new social housing homes in the Sunshine Coast region, including Noosa, and is expected to support approximately 40 full time industry jobs each year. To date, contracts have been awarded for the commencement of 105 new social housing homes in the Sunshine Coast region, with 44 of these already completed. One project totalling nine new homes has been completed in the Noosa region, with another project consisting of 17 new social homes forecast to commence in Cooroy in June 2020. The department is also working with Noosa Shire Council to explore how to achieve an increase in the supply of social and affordable housing in the area.