

Communique – March 2023

The Queensland Carers Advisory Council met on 23 March 2023, the fourth meeting of its 2022–24 term.

Ms Kathy Parton, Acting Director-General, Department of Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships (the department) chaired the meeting.

Ms Slawka Bell (Deputy Chair), Ms Natalie Bird, Ms Melissa Williams, Dr Nancy Spencer, Ms Debra Cottrell (Carers Queensland), Mr Adam Campbell (Wellways Australia), Ms Robynne Cooper (Anglicare, Central Queensland) and Ms Irene Clelland (Arafmi) attended the meeting. Queensland Health was also represented. Representatives from the Office of the Public Guardian and the Department of Education were not able to attend the meeting.

In a recorded message Minister Crawford welcomed members and acknowledged their valuable advice based on their lived experience as carers. He thanked members for their commitment to promoting the interests of carers.

The Chair updated members on actions taken by the department out-of-session and members provided updates on their carer advocacy and support projects. It was noted that working carers are a cohort that needs to be considered in deliberations.

Ms Mel Williams showed a video clip about My Health Record which is a central digital place for the storage of health information about a person that can be accessed by the person or health care providers. Members discussed the usefulness, difficulties and challenges for carers associated with using My Health Record. The clip is at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cj1DKxOJPj0>

Members discussed the findings of the 'Kitchen Table discussions', a project commissioned by QCAC. Ten facilitated discussions with carers identified gaps in services and supports. They highlighted the importance of integrated community responses, local coordinators and face-to-face interaction with carers to help navigate services for improved long-term outcomes for carers and the people they care for.

To advance the interests of carers QCAC has commenced the following for projects that will:

- develop and undertake an awareness campaign focussing on the diversity of carers, the people they care for, the social and economic value of carers, and services available to them
- promote the Carer Business Discount and Companion cards
- develop and distribute resources to assist grandparent carers to access supports and services
- develop and deliver an enhanced campaign for Grandparents Day in 2023
- develop and distribute resources that provide guidance and practical tips for clinicians, GPs, services in Queensland on how to engage families, carers and kin in a person's care.

In response to advice provided by QCAC members, Minister Crawford has embraced the development and public release of a Carers Action Plan which demonstrates the commitment of the Queensland Government to continue to act on Carers issues. Members provided feedback on a draft version with a Carers Action Plan expected to be released shortly after this meeting.