

Resident Support Program Evaluation Plan Summary

Background

The Resident Support Program (RSP) is jointly funded by Disability Services Queensland (DSQ) and Queensland Health (QH). They contract non-government organisations to provide a range of external support services to residents with disability living in private supported accommodation, hostels, boarding houses and aged rental accommodation facilities.

RSP services include: Community Linking Project to support residents in mainstream community and leisure activities; Disability Support Services for support with basic self care and presentation; and Key Support Workers for support with health and well-being. The program is being trialled in five locations – Brisbane, Ipswich, Toowoomba, Gold Coast and Townsville.

Disability Services Queensland (DSQ) engaged a University of New South Wales Consortium to evaluate RSP throughout 2004. The researchers are from the Social Policy Research Centre UNSW, the Disability Studies and Research Institute and the University of Queensland.

Method

The evaluation researches the process of implementation of this program, the services provided to residents by the contracted support providers, residents' perceptions of the appropriateness of these services and impact on their quality of life, health and wellbeing, the impact on residential facility operators and staff and other human services providers and Departments, and the cost effectiveness of the program.

RSP is part of the larger residential services reform strategy. The design and conduct of the evaluation takes account of the complexities of these larger contextual changes. Sensitivity to the potential effects of reform on access to support and accommodation for residents, economic impact on funders and providers and the cost shifting impact on other services are acknowledged as the context of the evaluation.

The following methods are used:

- Longitudinal study of residents through interviews and resident focus groups;
- Interviews with RSP service providers; premises owners or managers and staff; other providers assisting similar clients; family members, carers or informal guardians; representatives of peak and regional advocacy organisations; representatives of SAPA and BHOMA; representatives of the Office of Adult Guardian, Community Visitor Program Team and the Public Trustee; state office DSQ and Health managers and DSQ and Health managers in each region;
- Observation at premises during the resident interviews;
- Collection or transfer of quantitative data from all services involved in the RSP coordinated through DSQ and Health for descriptive and cost effectiveness analysis; and
- UNSW, DSQ, QH and researcher publicity about opportunities for written, electronic and telephone responses from any interested person about the effectiveness of RSP to be made to UNSW.

Fieldwork is being conducted between February and November 2004.